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Yes Bank: ED summons Anil Ambani, Subhash Chandra, Naresh Goyal, 3 others

SANDEEP SINGH & DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

WITH FORMER MD and CEO of Yes Bank Rana Kapoor under its custody for alleged money laundering and quid pro quo deals with various business groups, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has summoned promoters of at least six leading corporates — Anil Ambani (ADA Reliance Group), Subhash Chandra (Essel Group), Kapil Wadhawan (DHFL/Wadhawan Group), Naresh Goyal (Jet Airways), Gautam Thapar (Avantha Group) and Peter Kerkar (Cox & Kings Group) — for questioning over the next five days.

Anil Ambani, who was called by the agency on Monday, sought more time citing personal reasons. He has now been asked to appear before the agency on March 19. ED sources said Yes Bank had extended loans to the tune of Rs 12,800 crore to nine companies of Anil Ambani.

"We are summoning representatives of all such companies that have taken big loans from Yes Bank, but defaulted on

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BUDGET 2020

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SOCIAL DISTANCING GETS PUSH ACROSS STATES

Ban on flights from Europe, UK: Lockdown & shutdown tighten

Govt says put off exams, advises closure of gyms, theatres, pools

ABANTIKA GHOSH & PRANAV MUKUL
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

TIGHTENING THE lockdown to check the spread of novel coronavirus cases (Covid -19), the government Monday imposed fresh travel restrictions, prohibiting the entry of all passengers from "the European Union, the European Free Trade Association, Turkey and United Kingdom" and extending compulsory quarantine for passengers from Qatar, the UAE, Oman and Kuwait too.

As the number of Covid-positive cases touched 114 (including 13 who have recovered and two deaths), with four new cases being confirmed — one each from Odisha, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh and Kerala — the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare also issued a detailed advisory on measures to enforce social distancing, including closure of all educational institutions.

The Railway Ministry has empowered its zonal units to suspend trains with low occupancy and on not-so-important routes.

In its latest travel advisory, the government said: "Expanding compulsory quarantine for a minimum period of 14 days for passengers coming from/ transiting through UAE, Qatar, Oman, and Kuwait. This will come into

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

At Vadodara Station on Monday. Trains with low occupancy may be suspended. *Bhupendra Rana*

Why ICMR will not expand tests: Not rational given India size

KARISHMA MEHROTRA & HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

AS EACH country debates own testing strategy to combat Covid-19, the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) has decided to monitor community transmission by random sampling rather than expanding testing. This decision has been taken to avoid "futile testing" as well as hospitalisation for mildly

EXPLAINED

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Delhi bans gathering of more than 50, CM hints at Shaheen Bagh as well

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

MOVING TO tighten measures aimed at checking the spread of coronavirus, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Monday announced that any gathering — be it religious, family, social, political or cultural — of more than 50 people will not be allowed in the national capital.

The ban on gatherings, Kejriwal indicated, will cover the Shaheen Bagh protest as well. "It will be applicable to everyone, be it protest or any other gathering,"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

114
POSITIVE CASES

2 DEATHS | **13** RECOVERED

INSIDE

LONG AIRPORT WAIT; BMC STAMPS THOSE QUARANTINED AT HOME P 4, 6, 9, 10, 13, 16

Ex-CJI Gogoi's post-retirement benefit courtesy Govt: RS seat

APURVA VISHWANATH & LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

FORMER CHIEF Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, who headed benches that heard important and sensitive cases such as the Ayodhya land title dispute, the Rafale case, the Assam NRC issue and the Sabarimala matter, was nominated to Rajya Sabha by the government Monday.

The nomination comes four months after his retirement on November 17, 2019. His tenure as CJI was marred by allegations of sexual harassment levelled by a Supreme Court woman employee — he was cleared of the charge by an in-house panel before he demitted office.

Nominated to Upper House 4 months after retirement

In a notification, the Ministry of Home Affairs announced his nomination to Rajya Sabha: "In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-clause (a) of clause (1) of article 80 of the Constitution of India, read with clause (3) of that article, the President is pleased

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Has last bastion fallen, asks Justice Lokur

SEEMA CHISHTI
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

REACTING SHARPLY to the nomination of former CJI Ranjan Gogoi as a Rajya Sabha member by the government, his former colleague Justice (retired) Madan B Lokur told *The Indian Express*: "There has been speculation for sometime now about what honorific would Justice Gogoi get. So, in that sense the nomination is not surprising, but what is surprising is that it came so soon.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Let telcos pay in instalments over 20 years: Govt to SC on AGR dues

AASHISH ARYAN
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE DEPARTMENT of Telecommunications (DoT) Monday approached the Supreme Court with a plea that the telcos impacted by the court's judgment on adjusted gross revenue (AGR) be given up to 20 years to complete the payment of pending dues as calculated by the Telecom ministry. These dues, the DoT suggested, could be paid by the telcos in annual instalments.

In its plea before the SC, the DoT has also suggested that the interest on the past unpaid amount, penalty and the interest on penalty with respect to past dues, may be frozen as of October 24, 2019.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

BJP goes to SC as Speaker defies Governor, cites virus to adjourn MP House

MILIND GHATWAI & LIZ MATHEW
BHOPAL, NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE BJP turned to the Supreme Court on Monday for a floor test in Madhya Pradesh after Governor Lalji Tandon's directive on this was ignored by Speaker N P Prajapati, who adjourned the Assembly till March 26 citing the coronavirus scare.

The BJP also paraded 106 of its MLAs before Tandon, barring Maihar legislator Narayan Tripathi, who was seen with the Congress.

In a late-night letter to Kamal Nath Saturday, Tandon had said that prima facie he was convinced that the Congress government

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BUSINESS AS USUAL
BY UNNY

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A QUESTIONABLE DELAY PAGE 14

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WEB EXCLUSIVE

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For people who are suffering from anxiety disorders, this can be an extremely stressfultime. Aperson who is already susceptible to panic and anxiety attacks, can get triggered by all the information coming in. In a crisis situation, it is important to consume information that is coming to you from credible sources only.

ENTERTAINMENT

WESTWORLD 3: FIRST IMPRESSION
The Aaron Paul-starrer looks like a whole new show

TECH REVIEW

QUBO SMART INDOOR CAMERA AND SENSORS
Qubo's connected devices are a smart investment

EXPRESS AUDIO
How South Asia is coming together to battle Covid-19
NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY
On today's episode of the 3 Things podcast, we detail how SAARC countries are coming together to tackle the novel coronavirus outbreak.

FROM PAGE ONE

Gogoi

to nominate Shri Ranjan Gogoi to the Council of States to fill the vacancy caused due to the retirement of one of the nominated members," the notification said. The vacancy was created following the retirement of K T S Tulsi.

Gogoi is the second CJI to become a member of the Upper House. Former CJI Ranganath Misra was nominated to the Rajya Sabha by the Congress and served from 1998 to 2004. Former Supreme Court judge Fathima Beevi was appointed Governor of Tamil Nadu from 1997-2001, while ex-CJI P Sathasivam was Kerala Governor from 2014 to 2019. While Justice K Subba Rao contested the fourth Presidential elections, Justice Mohammad Hidayatullah became Vice President from 1979 to 1984.

Justice Gogoi's nomination announcement drew sharp reactions. Congress spokesperson Randeep Surjewala, on his Twitter handle, juxtaposed the report of the nomination with an article on India's judiciary facing an increasing lack of trust by the public.

AIMIM leader and Lok Sabha MP Asaduddin Owaisi tweeted: "Is it "quid pro quo"? How will people have faith in the Independence of Judges? Many Questions." Former Union Minister Yashwant Sinha too took to Twitter: "hope ex-cji Ranjan Gogoi would have the good sense to say 'NO' to the offer of Rajya Sabha seat to him. Otherwise he will cause incalculable damage to the reputation of the judiciary."

Incidentally, in one of his tweets in 2013, BJP leader and current Union Minister Piyush Goyal had said: "We have gone too far in creating post retirement avenues for judges. Desire of a post retirement job influences pre-retirement judgments."

The first CJI from north-east India, Justice Gogoi headed a five-judge bench that ruled on the Ayodhya title dispute, awarding it unanimously to parties in favour of building a Ram temple.

CJI Gogoi had also presided on the bench that oversaw implementation of the NRC in Assam and citizenship — he himself is an Assamese. The process concluded under his watch in Assam was rejected by the ruling BJP in the state. His nomination comes at a time when a proposed nationwide NRC and the new citizenship law have sparked protests.

In the Rafale aircraft deal matter — the Congress used it as its main campaign issue in the 2019 elections — a bench headed by Justice Gogoi declined to order a probe. The verdict came as a massive respite to the Modi government. The bench also initiated criminal contempt proceedings against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for wrongly attributing to the apex court his "*chowkidar chor hai*" remark against Prime Minister Narendra Modi in connection with the Rafale case.

His tenure as CJI was rocked by allegations of sexual harassment by a Supreme Court woman employee. The court's handling of the issue also drew criticism. After the complainant sent a letter to all judges of the Supreme Court, CJI Gogoi convened an extraordinary hearing on a Saturday and said the allegations were an attempt to target the independence of the judiciary. An in-house committee that looked into the allegations gave him a clean chit. The complainant, however, was reinstated after his tenure ended.

Lokur

This redefines the independence, impartiality and integrity of the judiciary. Has the last bastion fallen?"

In January 2018, Justices Gogoi, Lokur, J Chelameswar and Kurian Joseph, the most senior judges then in the Supreme Court, in an unprecedented step, called a press conference to question the conduct of then CJI Dipak Misra.

Justice Gogoi surprised his brother judges because he was then next in line to become the CJI. The judges also made public a letter they had written to the CJI two months ago.

Another of his colleagues from his days at Gauhati High Court, Justice J Chelameswar who has also since retired, refused to comment on the nomination. The fourth judge at the press conference, Justice Kurian Joseph, could not be reached for comment. While in office, both Justices Joseph and Chelameswar had said they would not accept any position by the government post retirement.

Ban on gathering

he said, when specifically asked about the sit-in against CAA, NPR and the proposed NRC. Meanwhile, Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar appealed to MNCs in Gurgaon to allow as many people as possible to work from home as a precaution.

Seven people have tested positive for coronavirus in Delhi so far — while two have been discharged, a 68-year-old woman has died.

"Any gathering social/cultural/political/religious/academic/sports/seminar/conference and family mass gathering (except marriages) is restricted to a maximum of 50 persons in NCT of Delhi till March 31, 2020," states the order issued by the Delhi Health Department.

"Marriage functions will be out of its purview as of now but we appeal to people to postpone weddings if possible," Kejriwal told a press conference after reviewing his government's efforts with officials.

The government has also ordered the shutting of gyms, night clubs and spas in the city until March 31. On possible closure of shopping malls, Kejriwal said a decision will be taken in a day or two, though the managements have been directed to disinfect the premises daily and ensure visitors are sanitised.

The Delhi government had previously ordered closure of schools, colleges and cinema halls until March 31. The CM said the government is implementing the guidelines of the Centre and working with it closely. "We are quarantining people wherever needed. For possible large-scale hospitalisation, we have made arrangements, including setting aside 500 beds. There is no need for them as of now. People who came in touch with patients have been home quarantined. I appeal to people to ensure home quarantined people abide by norms," he added.

MCD commissioners and SDMs have also been directed to arrange mobile wash basins in public places. Asked about the possibility of a sudden spike like in Italy, Kejriwal said, "We can only learn from other countries. Italy has seen exponential growth. But in India, community transmission has not started."

"I have directed all DMs, SDMs and municipal commissioners to set up portable wash basins with automatic soap dispensers in public spaces that have not yet been shut," Kejriwal later tweeted.

He also advised people not to gather in large numbers during the upcoming Navratri festival. The DMs and SDMs have powers under the Delhi Epidemic Diseases, COVID-19 Regulations, 2020 to act against such gatherings, he pointed out.

On complaints of travellers from Spain and France being put up in an unhygienic quarantine facility in Dwarka, the CM said the government has taken note of the grievances. "People flying in from abroad mostly belong to the affluent class. In some cases, the facilities may not be up to their expectations. But there are shortcomings also. So we have made arrangements for them in certain hotels," he said.

"Many people coming from abroad who are being quarantined require high-end facilities. Delhi government has asked three hotels near the airport to set aside 182 rooms for this purpose, at a fixed price," he added in a tweet.

Kejriwal said the Delhi Metro services will function normally. However, responding to a question, he said the government will consider getting commuters thermally screened at security checkpoints at the stations.

Ban on flights from Europe, UK, Turkey

effect from 1200 GMT on 18th March 2020 at the port of first departure."

Until now, quarantine was mandatory only for passengers from China, Italy, Iran, Korea, France, Spain and Germany.

"Travel of passengers from member countries of the European Union, the European Free Trade Association, Turkey and United Kingdom to India is prohibited with effect from 18th March 2020. No airline shall board a passenger from these nations to India with effect from 1200 GMT on 18th March 2020. The airline shall enforce this at the port of initial departure," it said.

Both these instructions are temporary measures and shall be in force until March 31, and will be reviewed subsequently, said officials.

Proposing social distancing measures till March 31, the Health ministry advised closure of all educational institutions, gyms, museums, cultural and social centres, swimming pools and theatres, postponing of examinations, encouraging private sector organisations/employers to allow employees to work from home wherever feasible, meetings through video conference and physical distancing of minimum one metre.

While some states have already implemented some of these measures, more states followed on Monday.

"Social distancing is a non-pharmaceutical infection prevention and control intervention implemented to avoid/decrease contact between those who are infected with a disease causing pathogen and those who are not, so as to stop or slow down the rate and extent of disease transmission in a community. This eventually leads to decrease in spread, morbidity and mortality due to the disease," it said.

The ministry said online education should be promoted, and asked local authorities to prevent mass gatherings. The number of testing laboratories has been increased to 62.

Meanwhile, Joint Secretary, Health Ministry, Lav Agarwal denied reports about missing patients in Punjab.

The government had earlier suspended all visas, barring select categories, till April 15. The new advisory effectively means that even Indians who are currently in these countries may find it difficult to return home.

Indian carriers flying to these countries are expected to cancel their flights, as they will have to return empty. Industry officials are of the view that home carriers of these countries may continue to operate flights on their India sectors in order to ferry their citizens back.

Last year, almost 3 million passengers arrived in India from Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK and Turkey, according to official data.

Major airlines from these countries operate over 170 flights per week to various airports in India. Air India, on the other hand, operates over 70 flights per week to European airports. In addition, IndiGo operates 2 flights daily to Istanbul.

But over the last two weeks, many airlines had curtailed their operations.

Meanwhile, the fourth batch of 53 Indians was airlifted from Iran, and is being quarantined. All are reported to be asymptomatic at present.

— WITH INPUTS FROM AVISHEK G DASTIDAR

'Won't do futile tests, not rational in India'

symptomatic, positive patients, ICMR scientist Nivedita Gupta said, adding that the random surveillance strategy was used in China as well.

"This has been sufficiently debated. Till date we have not documented community transmission. Why should we go on testing people who have no history of travel or any contact with an actual case?" Gupta said. "In this process, in a huge country like India, I'm not able to test people who genuinely may need testing because I'm wasting it on futile testing. Though we are maintaining a stringent inventory, we also need to make sure that we are not in a situation where I exhaust all my capacity in futile testing and, tomorrow, if there is an upsurge in cases, I say that I have exhausted all my (testing kits)... For the whole country, I cannot put in place (maximum) aggressive measures, because I have to be rational in a country like India."

India has conducted roughly 6,000 tests so far, lower than the US (8,000), Japan (9,600), France (12,000), the UK (13,000), and Italy (23,000). South Korea has conducted as many as 2 lakh, which experts see as the reason for their significantly declining numbers.

The government currently has 1.5 lakh testing kits, with a capacity of roughly 6,000 tests per day, and has ordered 1 million more. Gupta said the ICMR is also in discussion with private facilities to provide testing, and this could be in place in a week.

NITI Aayog member V K Paul said the government is set to examine commercial testing kits for their "accuracy and validity" as well, in a bid to ensure that a sufficient number of such kits is available. India is currently using kits developed by the National Institute of Virology in Pune. Asked if India had sufficient kits, Paul said, "For the present, they are sufficient. We are obtaining more... we will see if these (commercial kits) are accurate according to our needs... We are also examining the relevant cost of these kits," Paul told *The Indian Express*.

Testing kits for coronavirus are manufactured mainly by American healthcare company Roche and some Chinese firms.

The Health Ministry maintains that the country is at stage 2, "local transmission at the community level", or virus among those connected to someone with a travel history. "Community transmission" means any transmission that cannot be sourced back to an imported case from a traveller, and is feared to be the next level of Covid-19 spread.

The ICMR will begin receiving results from the second surveillance period — March 1 to 15 — Tuesday. If they detect any positive cases, in those localised areas, potentially everyone would be tested. Gupta said they hold a review every five days, and are prepared to find some amount of community transmission in certain places.

The ICMR Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme labs currently randomly test 10 samples every week of patients with severe acute respiratory illness pneumonia as well as influenza-like illnesses.

Paul also said that apart from examining the option of commercial kits, the government has placed an order to import from Germany a key component used in coronavirus testing, which would reach in the next couple of days. "The ICMR has placed an order for a million of those," Paul said.

Asked about private labs being allowed to test for coronavirus, he said mass, open access to tests is "unnecessary" and may interfere with contact tracing. "Our strategy is for Stage 2. Our priority is to contain and trace contacts," he said.

ED summons

payments," an ED official said. The agency wants to get more information on their total borrowing from Yes Bank, its terms and conditions, and the end use of funds.

According to sources, while DHFL's Wadhawan has been asked to present himself at the ED office in Mumbai on Tuesday (March 17), Jet's Goyal and Essel's Chandra are learnt to have been called on Wednesday. Kerkar is likely present himself at the ED office on Thursday. Thapar has been called on Saturday, the sources said.

Last Saturday, Yes Bank had announced a sharp 19 per cent rise in its gross NPAs to Rs 40,709 crore for the quarter-ended December 2019. It had increased by just 2.1 per cent to Rs 5,158 crore in the corresponding quarter previous year.

On March 10, The Indian Express reported that Yes Bank's exposure to 10 corporate houses amounted to around Rs 34,000 crore. Subhash Chandra's Essel Group has borrowings of around Rs 8,000 crore from Yes Bank, Wadhawan Group Rs 4,700 crore, IL&FS Group Rs 2,500 crore, Jet Airways Rs 1,100 crore, Kerkar Group (Cox & Kings) Rs 1,000 crore and Avantha Group Rs 500 crore.

Responding to a query sent by The Indian Express, the Essel Group said, "Essel Group wishes to confirm that the Enforcement Directorate has requested Dr. Subhash Chandra's presence on 18th March 2020, to make a statement on the information which is already available with them. Dr Chandra will certainly be present to make the statement and will be more than happy to extend any support or co-operation requested by ED. The Group wishes to clarify that most of the credit facilities were availed for its infrastructure business and there is no debt on ZEEL, ZMCL, etc. The Group also wishes to cite that all credit facilities availed were fully secured. The Group has never made any transactions with Mr Rana Kapoor or his family or for that matter any private entities controlled by them."

According to PTI, Reliance Group had last week said in a statement that its entire debt from Yes Bank was fully secured and was availed in the ordinary course of business. "Reliance Group is committed to honouring repayments of all its borrowings from Yes Bank Ltd through its various asset monetisation programmes which are all at advanced stages," the statement had said. The group stated that it has "nil direct or indirect exposure to Rana Kapoor, former CEO of Yes Bank, or his wife or daughters, or any entities controlled by Rana Kapoor or his family".

Messages sent to Jet's Goyal did not elicit any response. Kapil Wadhawan, Gautam Thapar and Peter Kerkar too did not respond to emails.

AGR dues

"However, the TSPs (telecom service providers) shall continue to be liable for interest, penalty, and interest on penalty for unpaid dues of LF (license fee) and SUC (spectrum usage charges) which arise prospectively after the date of judgment," the DoT said.

The DoT has also cited concerns voiced by banks. With the telecom sector under stress as it is, the DoT has said that if forced to pay AGR, the companies could face insolvency which would have a ripple effect on the overall economy, as well as the overall service quality of all telcos.

Though the court was scheduled to hear the AGR matter Tuesday, it is unclear when the matter will be taken up as lesser number of judges have been sitting as a preventive measure to contain the Covid-19 outbreak. The matter, Justice Arun Mishra said Monday, would be listed before the same three-judge bench which initially heard the matter.

The plea by DoT seeks SC's permission to modify its October 24, 2019, order to the extent that it relaxes the payment schedule. On October 24, the apex court had upheld DoT's definition of AGR, and said that all telcos must pay their dues within three months, that is by January 23. None of the telcos, however, paid the said dues by the deadline, in hopes of a bailout package by the DoT.

On January 23 the DoT issued a notification saying there would be no coercive action against the telcos. The non-compliance of its orders by companies as well as the DoT notice enraged the apex court. After the SC rap, both Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea scrambled to pay their dues.

In a separate affidavit filed Monday, the DoT official who had issued the January 23 notification asking no coercive action against telcos tendered unconditional apology. In his affidavit, the staffer said he did not intend to go against the court, and that it was a bonafide mistake on his part.

BJP goes to SC

was in a minority and that a floor test should be held Monday, the first day of the budget session, and in no circumstance should it be cancelled or postponed.

After the Speaker adjourned the session Monday, the Governor issued another directive for a floor test on Tuesday, saying, "or else it will be considered that you actually don't have a majority in the House". On Monday night, Kamal Nath called on Tandon and, claiming his government enjoys majority, ruled out a floor test. "Those who claim that we don't have a majority should move a no-confidence motion against my government," he told reporters.

A senior BJP leader said they were confident of the Supreme Court ruling in their favour, and accepting the resignations of 22 Congress MLAs holed up in Bengaluru, reducing the effective strength of the House to 206. The BJP has 109 MLAs. The plea was filed in the Supreme Court by former CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan and nine other BJP MLAs, within an hour of the Assembly being adjourned. They sought a floor test within 12 hours.

On Monday, as the Assembly began, Tandon read out barely a few lines of his speech and left.

The House erupted immediately after, with BJP MLAs seeking a floor test. In the commotion, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Govind Singh moved a motion demanding adjournment of the session over coronavirus threat. Prajapati, who had indicated on Sunday that a floor test was not likely, agreed, saying, "Given the Central advisory and wide public interest, the Assembly is adjourned till March 26."

Earlier, before the Assembly proceedings began, Kamal Nath wrote to the Governor, accusing him of exceeding his brief and saying he had prima facie assumed that his government was in a minority based on information collected from BJP leaders.

The Speaker, Kamal Nath and most Congress legislators came to the House wearing masks.

Chouhan and Leader of Opposition Gopal Bhargava led the BJP MLAs who met the Governor, and submitted a letter signed by all of them. When Tandon asked if they had come voluntarily, the MLAs raised their hands to affirm this.

The Congress asked how the BJP could prove its numbers by parading 106 MLAs, arguing that the strength of the House remained 222 (in the 230-member House, two vacancies have been caused by deaths, while the resignation of six Congress MLAs has been accepted by the Speaker). The Speaker has said he would take a call on the resignations of 16 other Congress rebel MLAs when they appear in person before him.

Kamal Nath, who did not speak in the House, has been saying he has no problems with a floor test but that it was the Speaker's prerogative to call one. Addressing Congress MLAs at his residence later Monday, he accused the BJP of desperation. "It talks a lot about floor test but is silent on 16 kidnapped legislators," he said, adding that he had faith in the judiciary.

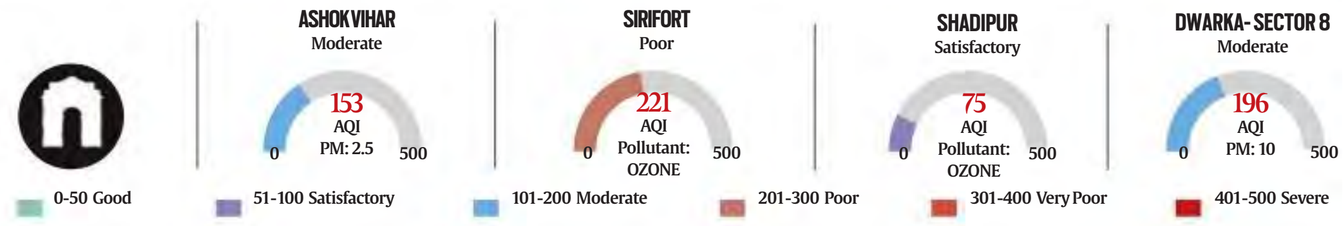
The BJP is hoping that its case in the Supreme Court will see a repeat of Karnataka, where resignations of 10 Congress and three JD(S) MLAs had not been immediately accepted by then Speaker K R Ramesh. The rebel MLAs had moved the Supreme Court, which asked the Speaker to consider the resignations but did not say these must be accepted. The court also said the MLAs could not be compelled to attend the trust vote. Consequently, the JD(S)-Congress government had fallen and the BJP returned to power.

BJP leaders held extensive discussions before deciding the course of action. Sources said Solicitor General of India Tushar Mehta was a part of the talks.

A senior minister told *The Indian Express* that the Supreme Court was clear in the Karnataka case on resignations of MLAs. A minister pointed out that even if the MLAs who have resigned were disqualified, the situation was still in the party's favour. The BJP is confident that the new numbers also leave it in a good position to win the two Rajya Sabha seats from the state up for election.

Party leaders said Chouhan would be the natural choice to head a BJP government. "With re-election (of the MLAs who have resigned) crucial for the stability of the government, we have to rely on a bankable face," a senior leader said.

Contact for Advt. Booking: M/s Friends Publicity Service 23276901, 23282028 (M): 9212008155, 9212665841.



SUBMITS ACTION TAKEN REPORT ON DEC 15 INCIDENT TO COURT

Entered Jamia to save students: Police

ANAND MOHAN J
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE DELHI Police, in their action taken report (ATR) submitted to a Delhi court on the violence at Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) last year, have claimed that they were "constrained" to enter the campus to contain the violence and save innocent students trapped inside.

Metropolitan Magistrate Rajat Goyal had directed police to file an ATR on a plea by Jamia, which sought registration of an FIR against police action on students at the university on December 15.

The plea was filed by advocate Asghar Khan, who submitted that Delhi Police beat up students, hurled abuses and made derogatory comments. He also submitted that some police personnel broke open the main library gate and lobbed teargas shells.

In their reply to the court, Delhi Police submitted, "With a view to contain the violence and maintain law and order, police was constrained to enter the university campus. Police personnel could successfully contain the violent activity by temporarily apprehending 52 persons under Section 65 of the Delhi Police Act... It is submitted that the said action was required to be taken in light of the ongoing violence from within the university campus and to rescue innocent students trapped inside, and to ensure normalcy."

Delhi Police said it could not distinguish between students trapped inside and rioters who carried petrol bombs. *Reuters*

JMI had submitted that despite several requests and complaints to police seeking registration of an FIR and action against the accused persons, neither has any FIR been registered nor has a probe been carried out.

Police, in their reply, stated the complaint filed by Jamia's registrar was "generalised in nature, and since the individuals have already filed writs in the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi seeking redressal of their general grievances, it is, therefore, requested that the present application may be kindly dismissed".

The ATR also stated that police could not distinguish between students who were trapped and rioters who carried petrol bombs. "All were asked to evacuate with their 'hands up' since this exercise was undertaken as it was already dark in the late evening," the report read.

JMI submitted that there was huge loss to government property, and there is video and photographic evidence that shows police vandalising university property. Police claimed they had to disperse a mob by resorting to "mild force and teargas shells".

They said the mob "strategically entered the campus as a cover, started pelting stones, tube lights, and other objects", and "police had reached outside the university campus to avoid any untoward incident".

JMI also submitted to the court a list of photographs of students with injuries, and said, "The injuries received by the students are grievous in nature, and one of the students even lost an eye."

The ATR stated: "All individuals (which include students) were taken to the hospital from where most of them left... after taking necessary treatment."

Police submitted that no student was arrested in the case. They said two FIRs have been registered and 10 persons arrested in connection with both cases. The ATR stated: "Rioters had destroyed/damaged lights within the campus and, therefore, it was difficult to distinguish (between) innocent students and rioters."

On December 15, teargas shells were fired on the campus and students were lathicharged. Videos had also emerged showing uniformed personnel in riot gear beating students with batons and lathis inside the library. Special CP (Crime) Praveer Ranjan had said: "We have to verify the footage, see if it's been doctored."

JNU divided over 'Savarkar Marg' on campus

ARANYA SHANKAR
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE JAWAHARLAL Nehru University (JNU) administration has named a road inside the campus after Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, the proponent of Hindutva ideology.

While the students' union has raised an objection to the move, Registrar Pramod Kumar said the decision to name the road after Savarkar had been taken in an Executive Council (EC) meeting held on November 13 last year.

This meeting was held outside the campus and had also approved the hiked hostel charges. Five deans and three elected EC representatives had then claimed they were not told that the venue had shifted from the University's Convention Centre, where they had reached, until more than an hour after the meeting was scheduled to begin. The three elected representatives boycotted the meeting after they were asked to sit in a car to be taken to an undisclosed location.

"It is a shame to the legacy of JNU that this man's name has been put in this university," said JNUSU president Aishe Ghosh. Its general secretary Satish Yadav said the university "rejects this politics of saffronisation".

The NSUI unit of JNU has said it would change the name of the road to 'Sorry Marg' on Tuesday.

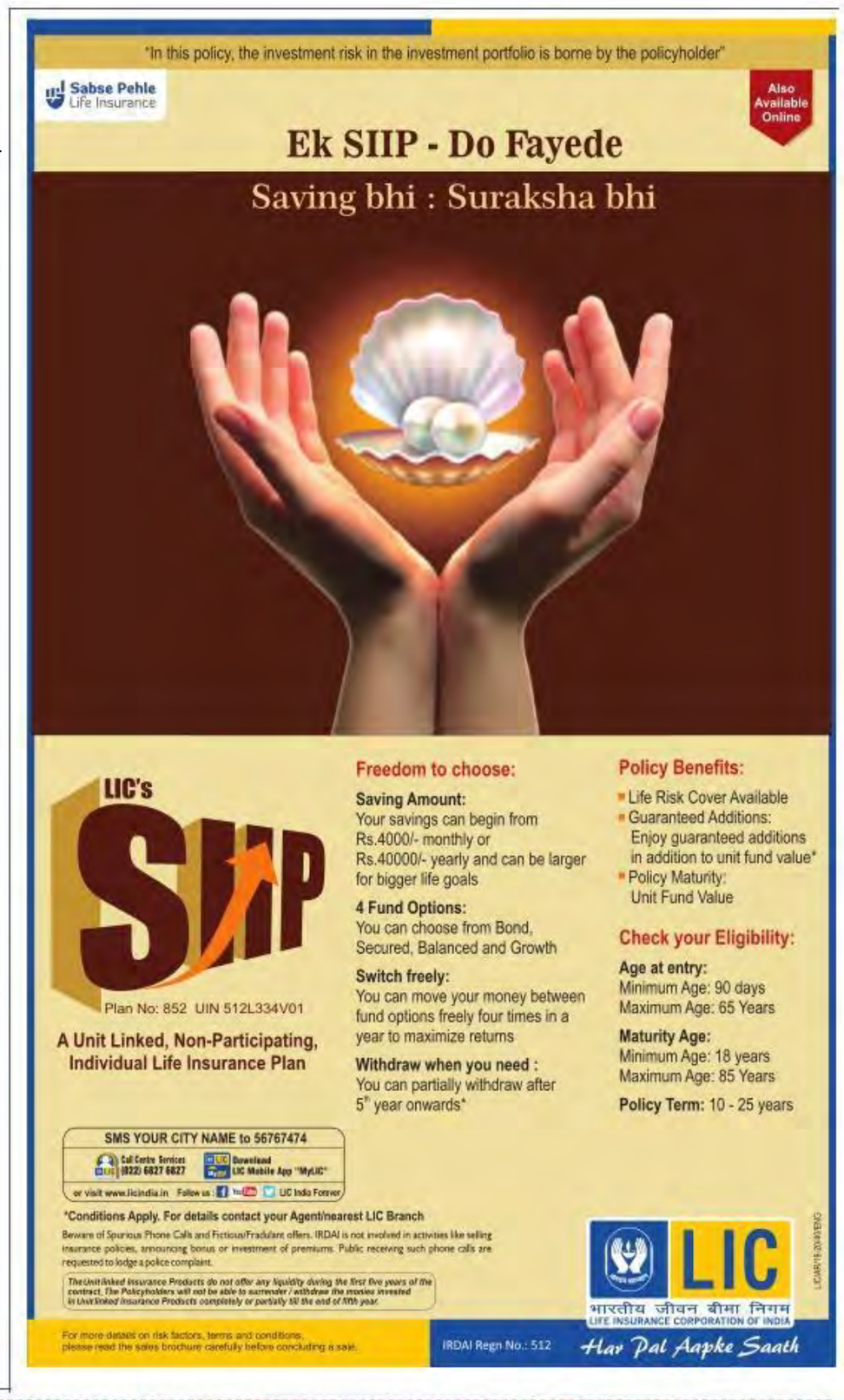
Minutes of the meeting of the five-member committee chaired by Professor U C Kulkshrestha, held on July 24 last year, show that Savarkar's name featured among the list of 13 names recommended by the committee for naming roads.

The signboard inside campus

The other names featured on the list included Dayanand Saraswati, Chhatrapati Shivaji, Maharana Pratap, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Guru Ravidas, Rani Abbakka, Abdul Hamid, Maharishi Valmiki, Gargi Vachankavi, Gopinath Bordoloi, and Sardar Patel. The same was ratified by the EC in its meeting on November 13, and an additional name — of Dara Shikoh, Mughal emperor Shah Jahan's son — was added to the list.

Reacting to the development, JNUTA secretary Surajit Mazumdar said, "When the decision to name roads after personalities was first raised in 2017, elected representatives had generally advised against it."

The ABVP said, "May it be a reminder of the sacrifices that Veer Savarkar endured to release India from the shackles of political and cultural slavery."



You may cut this out and paste in your office/public place/home

405 TRAVELLERS ARRIVE FROM PARIS AND FRANKFURT

At IGI airport, long wait before quarantine

SHIVAM PATEL & ASHNA BUTANI
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

HUNDREDS OF passengers who arrived from Paris and Frankfurt Monday morning were kept in a hall at the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) for over eight hours as authorities scrambled to quarantine them.

In what were described as scenes of confusion, 405 travellers from two Air India flights arrived at the airport around 9 am and faced several hours of delay in being transferred to the quarantine facilities.

As a precaution to prevent the spread of novel coronavirus, the Union health ministry had directed that travellers arriving from or having visited China, Italy, Iran, South Korea, France, Spain, and Germany would be quarantined for at least 14 days from March 13 onwards.

Several passengers found the health ministry officials' process at the airport going against the idea of prevention.

Several passengers claimed that the process adapted by health ministry officials at the airport went against the idea of prevention.

Tarun Pant (21), a postgraduate student from Paris, claimed, "They took away our passports, and about a thousand people were put in one hall, which increases the chance of infection. The authorities did not have any idea what was to be done. They told us after four hours that we were to be quarantined."

Vinod Ramanarayanan (30), who was flying from Frankfurt and spent nearly 12 hours at the airport, said travellers including the elderly and children were kept in one place, which is something that should have been avoided.

All passengers were screened for body temperatures and kept in a special section of Terminal 3, which was cordoned off from the rest of the terminal.

A health ministry official said they were taken in groups in buses to four quarantine facilities set up by the Delhi government in Narela, Saket, Dwarka and Gurgaon. He said his staff was prepared to handle the situation but the delays were caused after passengers who were taken to the quarantine facilities refused to stay there and get off the buses.

The approach being taken by the health ministry is to isolate travellers who show symptoms of the virus and quarantine the rest after doing a risk assessment.

Young and healthy persons are being asked to self-quarantine for 14 days at home, while those seen at a risk are quarantined either at the Delhi government facilities or at rooms set aside at three premier hotels in Aerocity near IGIA for a fixed price.

"They were told that they had the option to go to the government facility or the hotel. They opted for government facility, but on reaching there, they found it was not suitable for them so they refused to get off the bus. When they were brought to the hotels they started negotiating the tariff with the staff. All this caused delays," he said.

Travellers claimed they were not presented with the option of going to a hotel room. Those who were taken to the facility in Dwarka said it was unhygienic and infested with mosquitos.

Sonalika Sood (23), a student from Paris, also claimed that passports from all passengers were taken by the authorities, put in one box, and not returned until late evening Monday.

She said she was taken to a facility in SGT Medical College in Gurgaon, where the travellers were kept in a ward of 30 beds. Sood said that around 9 pm, the passengers were allowed to go home and self-isolate after signing a declaration that they did not have any symptoms of Covid-19.

Court acquits AAP MLA in molestation case

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

A DELHI court Monday acquitted AAP MLA Dinesh Mohaniya in an alleged molestation case from 2016. The MLA was booked for allegedly misbehaving with a group of women, who had approached him with a complaint pertaining to water crisis in their locality.

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Vishal Pahuja acquitted Mohaniya on furnishing a bail bond of Rs 20,000 and a surety of like amount.

"In the instant case, there are material discrepancies and contradictions in the testimonies of star witnesses, and none of the other independent public witnesses have supported the version of the complainant, leaving a big cloud of doubt. It is, therefore, held that the prosecution has not been able to successfully build the case against the accused persons beyond reasonable doubt. Accordingly, all accused persons are entitled to be given the benefit of doubt," said the court. It also acquitted co-accused Satish and Subhash Shukla in the case.

Mohaniya, the Sangam Vihar MLA, was booked on June 23, 2016. He was arrested under IPC sections 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 506 (criminal intimidation), 509 (word, gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman), 354 (assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty), 354A (sexual harassment), 354B (assault or use of criminal force to woman with intent to disrobe) and 354C (voyeurism).

BRIEFLY

HC notice to Centre, state on preserving riot footage

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court Monday sought the responses of the Centre and the Delhi government on a plea seeking preservation of all video footage pertaining to the communal violence that broke out in Northeast Delhi last month.

2 held for attacking cop, home guard

New Delhi: Two men were arrested Monday for allegedly firing at a police constable and attacking a home guard in Dwarka. The policemen had allegedly caught them with a pistol in a shop. **ENS**

182 Aerocity hotel rooms for quarantine, at a price

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE DELHI government has ordered three premier hotels in Aerocity, near the Indira Gandhi International Airport, to set aside as many as 182 rooms for paid quarantine facilities for those flying in from abroad.

New Delhi District Magistrate Tanvi Garg told *The Indian Express* that the orders were issued under the Delhi Epidemic Diseases, COVID - 19 Regulations, 2020 after detailed consultations with the authorities of the three hotels.

The hotels that have been picked for now are Ibis, Lemon Tree Premier, and Red Fox. Garg said the authorities are expecting people to start moving to the paid facilities in a short while. According to the orders, Ibis will have to set aside 92 rooms, Lemon Tree Premier 54 and Red Fox 36 rooms. The per day rate of the rooms have been capped at Rs 3,100 (plus taxes), which includes breakfast, lunch, dinner, two bottles of mineral water per day, tea, coffee, and other facilities such as WiFi and TV.

Government officials said the room occupancy at these hotels had "significantly reduced in any case. So after detailed discussions, we arrived at the figures such as the number of rooms per hotel. They are expected to implement the orders smoothly".

The hotels have also been asked to ensure that the laundry of the passengers taking up these rooms be separated so that it is not mixed up with the laundry of other guests.

The order stated: "Meals to such guests shall be served in their rooms only in disposable platters/containers. The plates/containers used for this purpose should be disposed as bio-medical waste ensuring due protocol. The security personnel of the hotels shall ensure that the movement of these guests is restricted to the confined areas. The management shall also observe the movement of these guests through CCTVs in their control rooms."

Garg also cited Section 30 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, "which empowers the district authority to perform such functions", in her orders.

When contacted, Red Fox Hotel management said in a statement that the rooms will be made available to travellers who are asymptomatic and are being isolated as a precaution.

"We have defined a special operations process to service rooms of these guests, in agreement with the Delhi government, to ensure the safety and health of these guests, of our employees and of other hotel guests as well… The request was for rooms at both our hotels in Aerocity; we are assigning all rooms at Red Fox Hotel for easy management of requirements and operations," it said.

Fight over property leaves brothers dead

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

TWO BROTHERS allegedly killed each other over a property dispute in North Delhi's Civil Lines Sunday night, police said.

Police identified the victims as Rahul Nagar (35) and his younger brother Tanuj Nagar (24). While Rahul lived in Timarpur with his wife and children, Tanuj lived with their parents and two other siblings at the DDA flats near Civil Lines.

At 12.09 am Sunday, Rahul was returning home when Tanuj stopped him on the road. DCP (North) Monika Bharadwaj said CCTV of the incident has been recovered. "There were no eyewitnesses to the incident. Looking at the footage, we suspect Tanuj first fired at Rahul, who then grabbed the pistol. The brothers got into a scuffle and the gun went off, with a bullet accidentally hitting Tanuj in the chest. Rahul then tried to escape but fell on the road. Tanuj followed him and fired at him again. After some time, Tanuj also fell down due to the bullet injury," said the DCP.

Police said the family wasn't aware of the fight or firing until neighbours informed them. The men were rushed to different hospitals and were declared dead on arrival. A case of murder was registered at Civil Lines police station.

The post mortem was conducted at Sabji Mandi mortuary Monday. Though police said the brothers had fought over property, the family denied this. Police have recovered the weapon, which they say belonged to Tanuj.

Their father, Nandram, who works at the Tis Hazari court, claimed the brothers didn't fight over property and police must find the people who "killed them".

Police claimed Tanuj was upset as Rahul was planning to shift to the Civil Lines residence and he wanted the house to be in his name. Police sources said a court hearing on the dispute was to take place this week.

While Rahul worked at Saket court, Tanuj was unemployed.

Tahir Hussain sent to 4-day police custody

ANAND MOHAN J
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

Tahir Hussain

A DELHI court Monday sent suspended AAP councillor Tahir Hussain to four-day police custody in connection with the murder of Intelligence Bureau staffer Ankit Sharma, noting that his custody was required to unearth the alleged conspiracy behind the Northeast Delhi riots.

Hussain was produced before Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Pawan Singh Rajawat for the first time. On previous occasions, he was produced before the judge at his residence following his arrest in connection with a riot-related case.

Hussain appeared before the court with his face wrapped in a shawl with his legal team. He was questioned inside the courtroom for an hour, following which police moved an application seeking his custody for five days.

Last week, police had arrested Nand Nagri resident Salman alias Haseen in the murder case. After police questioned Salman, they arrested Hussain on Monday.

Police told the court, "We need to confront him (Hussain) with Salman. Everything was done on his command."

Hussain's lawyers opposed the police remand, stating that identifying the other accused and recording Hussain's confession cannot be a ground for remand. The court, while granting four-day police custody, said, "I find force in the submissions of the IO that to unearth the conspiracy, which led to the riots and massive loss of life and property, police remand is required."

Hussain's lawyer Javed Ali told the court that the suspended AAP councillor should be sent to judicial custody, and police must show a strong case if they want his custody.

He also argued that the police custody was nothing more than "humiliation".

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Dip/Shabdarth/D/355/19-20

In view of the outbreak of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), Transport Department, Government of NCT of Delhi has decided that the facilities of Disinfection of Public Service Vehicles ***(Auto Rickshaw, Gramin Sewa, Phat-Phat Sewa, Maxi Cab, Eco Friendly Sewa)*** shall be extended in the DTC and Cluster Bus Depots under Transport Department, Government of NCT of Delhi ***free of cost*** to the vehicle owners. Operators/Owners of these vehicles are advised to avail this facility.

This Disinfection Drive will Start from
17th March 2020

Timings:
1st Shift: 10 AM to 12 PM
2nd Shift: 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM
All Days (Monday to Sunday)

दिल्ली सरकार
आप की सरकार

Department of Transport, Government of NCT of Delhi

A youth-centric budget for new India's new Uttar Pradesh

The budget focuses on youth, employment, infrastructure building and social welfare

Budget 2020, the fourth budget of Yogi Adityanath government, is designed to give impetus to the overall development of the state to make it New India's New Uttar Pradesh. The Rs. 512,860.72 crore budget is the largest budget of the state so far. Budget focuses on rural development, infrastructural development and creation of employment opportunities for the youth.

Appreciating the budget, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said it takes important initiative towards preparing the youth for employment and providing them with opportunities of self-employment through the internship promotion scheme and the Yuva Udyamita Vikas Abhiyan (YUVA). Under the Chief Minister's Internship Promotion scheme, youth aspirants will be provided with paid internship in industries. The YUVA scheme focuses over creation of self-employment opportunities and hand-holding the youth entrepreneurs for a period of one year.

Emphasis on rural development

The budget lays maximum emphasis on rural development. A total of Rs. 61,926.50 crore has been provided for various schemes focussing rural and agricultural development. The budget also incorporates new schemes worth Rs. 10,967.87 crore. A sum of Rs. 2,305 crore has been provided for construction, widening and re-inforcement of rural roads. Apart from this, the budget has allocated Rs. 1,357 crore for the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), another scheme for rural connectivity. In total Rs. 3,662 crore will be spent on rural roads. Another important scheme of rural development MNREGA has been allocated funds to the tune of Rs. 4,800 crore.

Irrigation

More than Rs. 3,542 crore have been allocated for development of irrigation facilities in the state. Out of this Rs. 1,554 crore has been provided for the Saryu Canal Project, Rs. 1,736 crore for Madhya Ganga Canal Project and Rs. 252.65 crore for the Arjun Sahayak Project. The budget has made provisions for distribution of 61.43 lakh quintals of high-quality seeds and 102 lakh metric tonnes of fertilizers.

Rural Housing

Speeding up the process of providing housing facilities to the rural poor, the budget allocates Rs 6,240 crore for the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Rural) scheme. The state has targeted to build five lakh rural housing units in the fiscal 2020-21. Apart from this, an allocation of Rs. 369 crore has also been made for the Mukhyamantri Awas Yojana (Gramin).

Chief Minister Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath and Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna before presentation of UP Budget 2020

Drinking Water

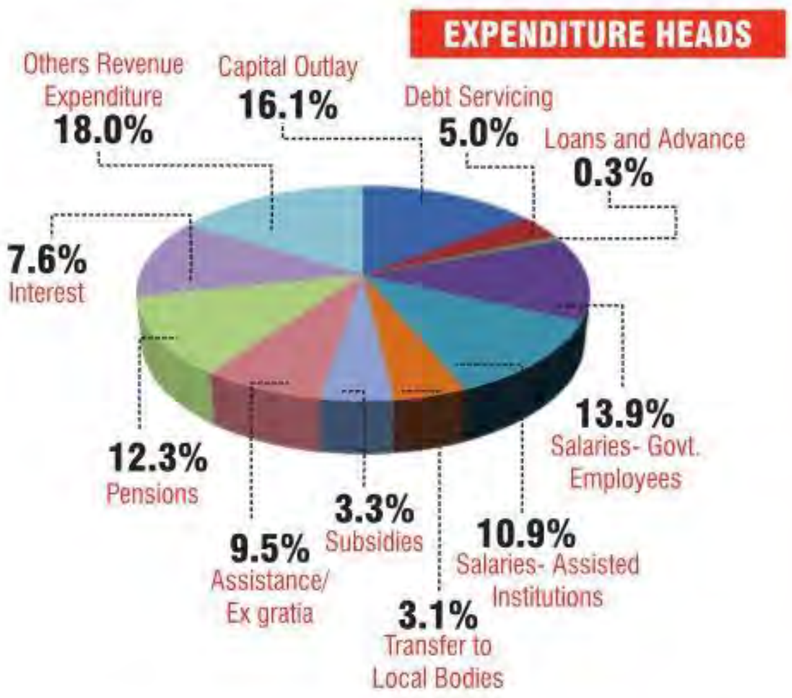
The budget has allocated a fund of Rs. 5,791 crore for the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), Rs. 3,000 crore for drinking water supply schemes in rural areas under the Jal Jeewan Mission; Rs. 3,300 crore for piped supply of drinking water in Bundelkhand and Vindhya regions as well as in villages affected by low-quality water availability.

Area specific Funds

The budget has also taken care of area-specific needs and allocated Rs 300 crore for the Purvanchal Nidhi as well as Rs. 210 crore for the Bundelkhand Nidhi. These funds are utilised for specific needs of districts falling under the defined geographical areas.

Disaster Relief

The budget allocated Rs. 2,578 crore for the State Disaster Relief Fund while making a provision of Rs. 1,000 crore for National Disaster Relief Fund to deal with losses suffered during unexpected disasters and natural calamities.



Highlights

Registering for a house under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana has been made easier by reducing the cost of registration. Now an eligible person may register with Rs. 5,000 only. Earlier, the cost of registration in the scheme was Rs. 25,000.

Rs. 50 crore has been allocated for establishment of Yuva Udyamita Vikas Abhiyan (YUVA) hubs in each district of the state. These hubs will provide guidance and financial assistance for setting up and running enterprises for a period of one year.

Rs. 783 crore allocated for improving education, sanitation, health, drinking water and basic facilities in minority dominated areas. Also, Rs. 479 crore has been provided for education of modern subjects along with religious education in recognised madarsas.

The budget provides Rs. 1,459 crore for old age / farmer pension scheme. Apart from it, Rs. 621 crore allocated under Pension Scheme for the persons with disabilities and a provision of Rs. 1,251 crore made for the National Old Age Pension Scheme.

Public Comments

This is an ambitious budget that provides employment opportunities to the educated unemployed youth. This budget has taken care of all sectors of society, as well. It also covers entire UP geographically. This budget is likely to help achieve state government's goal to become a trillion-dollar economy.

R.P. Pandey, Lucknow

Plan to create YUVA hubs will positively help provide employment to youth. Farmers and the youth are in the focus in this budget. Steps taken to provide better health services are commendable. Allocations for new medical colleges shall help end scarcity of medical practitioners in remote areas in next two years.

Rupali, Kanpur

Impetus to infrastructural development in the State

The UP budget-2020 has made provisions for development of infrastructure in the state. An allocation of Rs. 2,000 crore has been earmarked for the ambitious Jewar Greenfield International Airport project while Rs. 2,000 crore has been allocated for the Ganga Expressway connecting Meerut with Prayagraj.

The 637-kilometre Ganga Expressway from Meerut to Prayagraj has been planned as the country's largest expressway. It will open new vistas of investment and employment in the western parts of the state. The expressway will also connect Hapur, Bulandshahr, Amroha, Sambhal, Badaun, Shahjahanpur, Hardoi, Unnao, Rae Bareli and Pratapgarh. This six-lane expressway can be extended up to eight lanes.

Allocation of Rs. 200 crore has been done to develop industrial corridors on both sides of the Gorakhpur Link Expressway. Rs. 160 crore has been provided for safety measures, technology, toll plazas and other facilities on Agra-Lucknow expressway. Ballia Link expressway has also been allocated an amount of Rs. 200 crore.

Budgetary allocation of Rs. 1,357 crore has been made for the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) and provision of Rs. 2,080 crore has been made under the central roads fund scheme (Kendriya Marg Nidhi Yojana) for construction, widening and refurbishing the roads.

The power sector improvement project has been given Rs. 300 crore in the budget.

Metro and rapid transit system

The state government has provided funds to the tune of Rs. 844 crore for various metro and monorail projects in the state. Allocation of Rs 200 crore has been made for metro/mono rail projects in Varanasi, Gorakhpur and other major cities. Rs. 286 crore has been allocated for Agra Metro network and Rs. 358 crore for Kanpur metro rail project. Both, Agra and Kanpur metro rail projects have been sanctioned by the Central government.

The Kanpur metro rail project is planned for 32 kilometre routes at a cost of Rs. 11,760 crore and work is in progress. The Agra metro rail project is comparatively smaller. It is planned for total 29 kilometres of routes at a cost of Rs. 8,379 crore.

Also, the work on the regional rapid transit system from Delhi to Meerut is in progress. For this, the government has allocated a sum of Rs 900 crore. This rapid rail system will benefit commuters in Meerut, Modinagar, Muradnagar and Ghaziabad.

Health & Education emerge as priority areas

The Yogi Adityanath government's concern for public health and education is reflected in allocations to these sectors in the budget-2020 that provides for expansion of health services and medical education.

Budgetary provisions have been made to provide complete medical facilities in the rural areas. A provision of Rs 30 crore has been made for establishment of 100-bedded joint hospitals in newly-formed districts. A total of Rs 65 crore has been given for CHC buildings and equipment. Apart from it, CHCs in rural areas will be upgraded to 100-bedded hospitals with a provision of Rs 50 crore.

Upgrading facilities

The budget also provides Rs 70 crore for improvement, expansion and renovation of men's and women's district hospitals. Besides, Rs 12.5 crore have been provided for construction of Trauma Centre building in Shyama Prasad Mukherji Civil Hospital, Lucknow.

Allocations have also been made to establish diabetic retinopathy treatment centres at the King George's Medical University (Lucknow), MLN Medical College, Prayagraj and LLR Medical College, Meerut. Funds have also been allocated to set up a Centre for Advanced Diabetes and Endocrine Sciences at SGPGI, Lucknow.

Besides these allocations to upgrade the health infrastructure in the state, the present budget makes a provision of Rs 291 crore for the Pradhan Mantri Matri Vandana Yojana. A sum of Rs. 40 crore has been allocated towards free medical services for treatment of incurable diseases.

Medical Education

As far as medical education is concerned, the budget has provided Rs. 919 crore for the King George's Medical University, Rs 820 crore for SGPGI, Rs 309 crore for Saifai Rural Institute of Medical Sciences, Rs 477 crore for Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Institute of Medical Sciences, Rs 187 crore for Cancer Institute (Lucknow) and Rs. 96 crore for Government Medical College (Azamgarh). A provision of Rs 73.86 crore has also been made for establishing medical colleges by upgrading district hospitals.

Seven new universities to be set up

Funds have been provided to set up seven new universities in the state. These include a university each in Saharanpur, Azamgarh and Aligarh districts and four specialised universities, viz. Police Forensic University in Lucknow; a Law University in Prayagraj; Atal Bihari Vajpayee Medical University in Lucknow and an Ayush University in Gorakhpur. An allocation of Rs. 111 crore has been made under the head National Higher Education Campaign.

Primary Education

Budgetary allocation of Rs. 18,363 crore has been made for Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan to upgrade school education at the primary and upper primary levels. The state government has also set a target of distributing free textbooks and notebooks to about 1.9 crore students in the ensuing academic session. The primary education department was given Rs. 55,064 crore and the secondary education department got Rs. 12,988 crore. Apart from this, the budget-2020 has made a provision of Rs 270 crore for establishment of Atal residential schools in eight divisions.

Long queues outside RML, most return without being tested

ANANYA TIWARI
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

WITH SYMPTOMS such as cough, cold, fever and shortness of breath, hundreds of people have been lining up for coronavirus screening at the Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) Hospital since last week to check if they have the disease. Only a select few are being screened.

In Delhi, only RML and Safdarjung hospitals offer sample collection facilities at the moment. But unless one has travelled abroad or been in contact with a confirmed coronavirus case, he or she is not being tested.

According to hospital authorities, 25-30 samples are being collected every day.

Among those at RML on Monday was a 29-year-old from Rohini, who returned from Italy on February 29, and has had a sore throat and a runny nose since Sunday. "I just want to be sure, so I am getting tested," he said, while in line.

With the registration counter set up behind the emergency block, people have to wait for hours for a screening process that takes a few minutes. They are made to fill a self-reporting form and declare symptoms, foreign travel history and contact with any positive case.

Once their turn comes, they are led into a room at the registration counter, where a medic consults them. If they have travelled abroad or been in touch with a positive case and have the symptoms, they are led to screening ward 5 in the adjacent building, through a passage away from the registration, a spokesperson of the hospital said.

This is where they are tested for the virus — samples are then sent to AIIMS in Delhi or NIV in Pune. If the symptoms are serious, they are put in the isolation ward in the hospital. Others are allowed to go home and advised home quarantine until the results come back.

At the screening centre at RML Monday. *Praveen Khanna*

"After I went inside the screening ward on the second floor in the adjacent building, the throat and nose swabs took 15 minutes," said a 20-year-old who got tested on March 7 after she developed flu-like symptoms on returning from a trip to Indonesia on February 21.

"They asked me if I wanted to get admitted. I declined," she said. The doctor told her to quarantine herself at home. "I got well after one-two days, so I am assuming I am fine, even though I have not gotten the results yet or heard back from the hospital," she said on Monday.

Fearing he may have the virus, a 29-year-old working for a company at Gurgaon came with his sister and mother on March 7 — after one of his colleagues tested positive for the virus following a trip to Malaysia and Thailand. He said, "The doctor said that since I do not have any symptoms, I do not require screening."

A 34-year-old IT professional from Gurgaon, who returned from the US on March 13 and had symptoms of cough and shortness of breath but no fever, said on Monday that he was not screened despite a recommendation from a private hospital to get a test done.

"Around 10 people went with me inside the room after registration. Of us, only one person, who still had a boarding pass in his hand, was isolated and taken away in an ambulance."

He claimed that only those exhibiting all three symptoms of cough, fever and shortness of breath, and having foreign travel history or contact with a positive case, were screened.

"I've been so scared that I have been keeping away from my three-year-old daughter ever since I returned a few days ago. I live with my parents and wife, and my mother has asthma," he said.

Many people without either a travel history or contact with a positive case, but with flu-like symptoms or shortness of breath, have been trying to get tested, only to be referred to the OPD or the emergency. A 30-year-old resident of Laxmi Nagar with a cold and sore throat was turned back. "They told me to go to the emergency," he said.

With only a handful of medics present, the process takes time, leading to a long queue. Most people lining up took more than three hours to get consulted or tested.

A 49-year-old man from Delhi, who works at a Chinese company and came back from Shenzhen on January 20, went to RML March 7 to get screened after he developed some symptoms weeks later. "I first went to Safdarjung, but was told to come here. It was confusing. I feel like they have not provided adequate facilities — it is taking so long to get things done here."

CORONA WATCH

HC to limit hearings till March 20

New Delhi: After efforts to decongest the Delhi High Court and district courts across the national capital to contain the spread of COVID-19 virus failed, the Delhi High Court Monday issued fresh directive and restricted its functioning till March 20. As per the new roster, the high court will function with 18 judges on March 17 and 19. For March 18 and 20, there will 16 judges, who will take up only emergent matters. Upon a resolution passed by the Delhi High Court Bar Association Monday, the HC's Administrative and General Supervision Committee held an emergent meeting to discuss and implement urgent measures to contain the spread of COVID-19 virus. The HC passed the directions for immediate implementation. "The courts subordinate to the High Court of Delhi would take up only bail matters and matters requiring urgent stay/injunction, till March 31, 2020 and rest of the matters would be adjourned. Final argument matters (including time bound matters) be postponed beyond March 31, 2020," the HC said.

MCDs to use community centres for isolation

New Delhi: The three MCDs Monday enforced different measures such as converting community centres into isolation wards for coronavirus patients, and instructing shops and malls on how to prevent the spread of the virus. South MCD Mayor Sunita Kangra said the community centres are being identified. "Initially, two to five such isolation centres will be started in Dwarka and Tilak Nagar. Later, we will convert more community centres," she said. There are 103 community centres under the jurisdiction of the South MCD. Kangra said she had also received reports that several sanitation workers have not been given masks: "Officials said they had given masks but workers don't wear them. They have been tasked to give all such details. Else, I will ensure that all safai karamcharis are given masks."

Govt drive to disinfect autos, e-ricks

New Delhi: The Delhi government will extend disinfection service to vehicles like autorickshaws, gramin sewa, maxi cabs and e-rickshaws starting Tuesday. The service will be free of cost at all DTC and cluster bus depots on a daily basis in two shifts – 10 am to 12 pm, and 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm.

Foreigners banned in gurdwaras

New Delhi: The Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee will not allow entry to foreigners who have not completed a 15-day stay in India in view of transmission of COVID-19. Manjinder Singh Sirsa, President DSGMC, also said that the langar served by individuals/different Sikh organisations in different places in gurdwara premises will be stopped and devotees told to take langar from the main halls only. The committee will also ensure that railings, lifts and chairs are disinfected repeatedly. **ENS**

CORONAVIRUS: KHATTAR ASKS FIRMS TO LET PEOPLE WORK FROM HOME

Gurgaon woman 1st to test positive as Haryana steps up measures

SAKSHI DAYAL
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE FIRST case of coronavirus in Haryana was confirmed from Gurgaon district Monday, with officials from the health department stating that a 26-year-old woman who recently returned from a holiday in Malaysia and Indonesia has tested positive.

As per officials, the woman, who lives in New Gurgaon and works at a private firm in the city, returned from her holiday on March 4 and submitted samples on March 12, despite being asymptomatic. "She tested positive, and the final confirmation in this regard came from Pune today. Her family is also being tested, and her colleagues at the company are under observation," said a senior official.

Although 2,992 people have been kept under observation in Haryana so far, of whom 2,401 are still "under surveillance", this is the first case to be confirmed in the state. A total of 66 samples have been sent for testing, of which 54 are negative and results of 11 are awaited.

Khattar speaking at an event in Gurgaon Monday

Meanwhile, a day after the Haryana government shut down all cinema halls, gyms, swimming pools, theatres, clubs, and schools in the state until March 31, also prohibiting a gathering of more than 200 people, Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar Monday appealed to MNCs in Gurgaon to reduce the attendance at their offices, and allow as many people as possible to work from home as a precaution against the spread of coronavirus.

"A large number of people are working in big offices of multinational companies in Gurgaon. The government has already directed that more than 200 people should not gather at one place. Similarly, I appeal to managers at MNCs to keep attendance low at their offices, and allow as many people as possible to work from home. Jobs related to IT can definitely do this. I appeal to MNCs to take a step forward positively," said the Chief Minister.

He was speaking to the media during a visit to Gurgaon on Monday, before heading into a meeting of the Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA).

According to officials from the health department, Haryana reported one positive case of coronavirus Monday. But shops have seen hand sanitisers and masks fast disappearing off the shelves, leading to a shortage. The Chief Minister, however, offered reassurance that arrangements are being made to provide these "where needed", and appealed to people to avoid hoarding, calling on them to "prepare" but not "panic".

"This virus has emerged suddenly. Routinely, people keep as much stock of masks and sanitisers as required, but the demand has increased massively, because of which supply is falling short. We have already made efforts to arrange for these, and have also told manufacturing units to increase their speed. People are now stocking up, but I believe that instead of stocking up, these should be kept where they are needed. I appeal to people to not panic, they should prepare definitely but should not panic," said Khattar.

"The masks that are there will be made available at the right places. Masks are needed where there is scope for infection of this virus, not everywhere," he said.

Commenting on arrangements made to increase the number of doctors providing healthcare facilities, he said, "The primary attention of all doctors is on this, but if more doctors are needed, they will be deployed from wherever they are available."

The Government of Haryana has so far arranged for a quarantine facility of around 3,000 patients, and 1328 beds have been arranged in isolation wards at government hospitals. The Chief Minister had on Sunday additionally directed that these figures should be increased and 2,500 to 3,000 beds should be identified in isolation wards set up in Government Hospitals in the state, with each district having at least 100 beds each.

Quarantine norms tightened for those from abroad

ASTHA SAXENA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

TAKING STRINGENT steps towards entry of passengers from coronavirus-affected countries, the Delhi government has started taking all passengers from China, South Korea, France, Germany, Spain, Italy and Iran to two quarantine centres. The decision was taken after a new set of guidelines was provided by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to state governments.

As per the new guidelines, all passengers travelling from the seven countries will be directly taken to quarantine centres and divided into three categories - A, B and C — depending on their medical condition.

Those falling under Category A (high risk) will be segregated from other passengers and sent for isolation and further treatment to Safdarjung Hospital. This category includes passengers with fever, cough, shortness of breath, with a history of travel to or residence in a country/area or territory reporting local transmission of COVID-19 during the 14 days prior to symptom onset. It also includes any patient with acute respiratory illness who has been in contact with a COVID-19 case in the last 14 days.

"Earlier, segregation was done at the airport, but now all passengers will first be moved to the quarantine centre and then a team of doctors will examine them for at least 24 hours. If they are at high risk, they will be immediately shifted to Safdarjung Hospital for the treatment. Those who are symptomatic will be quarantined for 14 days and the rest will be sent back after a detailed counselling session," said a health official from the Delhi government.

Under Category B (moderate risk), an asymptomatic passenger coming from the above-mentioned countries and who is above 60 years, having hypertension, diabetes or asthma, will be quarantined at the facility for 14 days. "They will be monitored daily by doctors. In case they develop symptoms, they will be shifted to the designated hospitals," added the official.

People belonging to the low risk, ie Category C, are asymptomatic passengers coming from any COVID-19 affected country. They will be kept under observation for 24 hours and then under home quarantine for 14 days. "We will keep monitoring them. If they develop fever, cough or difficulty in breathing within 14 days after return, they are asked to immediately call the helpline for further management," said the official.

ACROSS THE CAPITAL

	RML	Safdarjung	Total
Passengers from affected countries under observation	130	120	250
Asymptomatic passengers isolated at home	103	79	182
Symptomatic passengers hospitalised	27	21	48
Positive cases (from Delhi)	0	4	4
Total cases (from across India)	0	6	6

In shutdown season, Metro footfall dips too

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE DELHI Metro has registered a daily average of 46.53 lakh journeys in March so far, as against the average of 57.13 lakh recorded in February, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation said in a statement Monday, while attributing the dip to "natural factors" and coronavirus-related restrictions.

While the DMRC regularly shares line utilisation data via social media, it had not been doing so for around two weeks following the restrictions announced by the government in terms of shutting down schools, colleges, cinema halls and other establishments to contain the spread of Covid-19.

On Monday, DMRC chief spokesman Anuj Dayal, in a statement, said: "Every year, the month of March witnesses a natural dip of 10-15% in comparison to the figures for February. The same trend is visible up to March 15 this year too, with passenger journeys going from 57.13 lakh (February 2020) to 46.53 lakh (March 2020). However, as the government has announced several measures to combat coronavirus which include closure of malls, cinemas, schools, colleges etc, it may be natural to witness some variation in passenger journey figures of the Delhi Metro in the coming days."

The daily average journeys or line utilisation was 46.22 lakh in March, 2019, Dayal added. Line utilisation is a concept developed by the Metro to factor in a person's commute across corridors as opposed to counting ridership, where a person is counted only once irrespective of the lines used to reach a destination.

For instance, a passenger travelling from Gurgaon's MG Road station to Noida's Sector 16 would be counted only once as part of the ridership count. But the same person would be counted thrice as part of the line utilisation matrix - under which his ride on Yellow Line till Hauz Khas, on Magenta Line till Botanical Garden and on Blue Line till Noida 16 would be considered separately.

Despite alert, Shaheen Bagh sit-in continues

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

HOURS AFTER Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced that "a gathering of more than 50 people will not be allowed in Delhi" in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak, Shaheen Bagh protesters released a statement where they indicated they would "continue the protest." At the press conference on Monday, when asked about Shaheen Bagh, the CM said that "this also applies to people protesting".

The anti-CAA protest at Southeast Delhi's Shaheen Bagh has been on since December 15, and has resulted in similar protests across the country.

At 9.15 pm Monday, the Twitter handle of the Shaheen Bagh protest released a statement: "Alongside our fight, we are keeping a close watch on the developments of the coronavirus pandemic. Legal and medical experts are in dialogue with us at the moment to find the best ways forward for our protest."

The number of protesters has been thinning over the last few days. *Praveen Khanna*

Through the statement, protesters demanded that "the Delhi government take adequate and immediate measures to ensure the safety of those in Northeast Delhi who have lost their homes and are living in relief camps".

Both the central and Delhi governments have stressed on the importance of social distancing.

The protesters, however, said that "while keeping in mind the health hazards of a congregation, we want to stress on the importance of continuing this struggle to protect the lives and statehoods of those marginalised by the policies of the central government".

DCP (Southeast) R P Meena said efforts are on to sensitise people, including the Shaheen Bagh protesters, about coronavirus. A senior police officer said, "We won't do forceful eviction, we are in dialogue with them, but they do not want to leave."

A visible thinning of the crowds at Shaheen Bagh has been seen in the last few days, but the sit-in continues. A volunteer, who has been at the Shaheen Bagh sit-in since the beginning, said that despite interaction with medical and legal experts on coronavirus, protesters are "determined to continue the protest. Vulnerable age group is a part of the sit-in but they are refusing to leave. We are looking at alternative ways of protesting; some were discussed today but they were rejected."

JNU, Jamia ask hostel students to go home

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

AFTER IIT-Delhi asked students to vacate hostels and head home amid the coronavirus scare, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and Jamia Millia Islamia have also followed suit.

In a notice Monday, JNU Registrar Pramod Kumar said, "All students are strongly advised to return to their homes... Hostel services will be limited to only basic mess facility and will be available in a few hostels for foreign nationals and those who stay back for valid reasons."

"Such students should observe the following: not allow outside guests in the hostels or food deliveries; each hostel should form a volunteer committee, under the supervision of senior warden, to monitor compliance of preventive measures being issued from time to time; avoid any type of gathering in the hostels," he added.

Kumar said "all common facilities, such as library, gym, yoga centre, all canteens/eateries etc" will remain closed till March 31.

On Sunday, Jamia too advised students to return home.

"... places of collective gathering like libraries, and canteens in Jamia are likely to be closed. Therefore, all students are advised to understand the seriousness of the prevailing circumstances and for their own safety, they may consider to proceed to their homes for a more secure environment," Jamia Registrar A P Siddiqui said in the advisory.

"It is beyond the capacity of the university to take commensurate measures and contain this danger. Places of large gatherings like hostels, dining halls, libraries, kitchens are highly vulnerable to the threat," he added.

Meanwhile, the Delhi University administration also paid heed to demands by four Academic Council members asking that teachers be allowed to work from home. DU's Acting Registrar said "teachers have the option to work from home", adding that libraries would be closed for students till March 31.

While "welcoming the response", the four AC members said: "It merely addresses our concerns in a selective way. (DU) must devise a way to protect salaries of hundreds of guest teachers employed across colleges, departments, SOL and NCWEB. Secondly, it must seriously consider extending the semester session by a fortnight to make up for lost teaching time."

Classes have already been cancelled by all three universities as a preventive measure against the virus.

At Dwarka camp, Indians back from France and Spain raise issues, some head to Aerocity hotels

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

A GROUP of at least 20 Indians, who arrived last night from Spain and France, wrote to the Delhi government Monday alleging unhygienic conditions at a police training facility in Dwarka where they were moved for the mandatory two-week quarantine period.

In a letter to the Dwarka subdivisional magistrate, they complained about dirty bedsheets, washrooms flooded with water, and dusty floors. "We do not want to stay here and we demand a proper hygienic facility and proper food," the letter states.

When contacted, one of the travellers told *The Indian Express* that they were brought to the facility in two DTC buses, "in which we were forced to wait for around four hours", after landing around 1.30 am. "They were red DTC buses with no windows. We were served water after six hours, after repeated reminders. The first meal we got was bread pakodas after 12 hours. Most importantly, we have still not been tested. At the airport, just our temperatures were recorded," the person claimed.

They alleged unhygienic conditions at the police training facility in Dwarka

At the Dwarka facility, he alleged, "there are flies buzzing around, rotten vegetables in the cupboards, stained bedsheets like someone has puked, stinking toilets". Around 6-10 beds have been put up in each room.

"Is it our mistake that we were truthful to authorities about our travel history? Our flights were routed through Abu Dhabi. We could have easily written in the forms that we are coming from Abu Dhabi," he added.

By evening, over 70 travellers decided to move to hotels in Aerocity, where 182 rooms have been designated by the Delhi government to be set aside for paid quarantine facilities. Later, the traveller, who was on his way to Aerocity, said: "Five buses, carrying around 22 passengers each, are going to the hotels." He also said 50 of them underwent tests.

At a press conference during the day, the CM, when asked about the complaints, said: "People flying in from abroad mostly belong to the affluent class. In some cases, the facilities may not be up to their expectations. But there are shortcomings also. So we have made arrangements for them in certain hotels."

FROM THE GALLERY

FROM THE CHAIR

RAJYA SABHA

"That is why this honourable distance has been kept."

M VENKAIAH NAIDU, Chairman, to TMC MP Sukhendu Sekhar Ray who said there is a distance of more than 3 metres between him and the Chair

LOK SABHA

"Hon'ble Member, address only the Chair while speaking, not in the direction of Mantriji, here or there or the Press above..."

OM BIRLA, Speaker, to Congress MP Shashi Tharoor during Question Hour

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"The House is not serious. The House should be very serious while discussing this matter. What is going on? This discussion... is about the welfare of the SCs and hon. members of the ruling party are laughing. What is this?"

KODIKUNNIL SURESH, Congress MP, during a discussion on demands for grants of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

ROLL CALL

PRIME MINISTER: Not present
SONIA GANDHI: Not present
RAHUL GANDHI: Present

5 QUESTIONS

RAJYA SABHA CONGRESS MEMBER **M V RAJEEV GOWDA** SPEAKS TO **SHUBHAJIT ROY** ON RAISING THE ISSUE OF HUNGER AND CHRONIC MALNUTRITION AMONG CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN THE UPPER HOUSE

What was the issue you flagged in the Zero hour?
I raised the issue of worsening statistics on nutrition and the urgent need to eliminate hunger and chronic malnutrition among children and adolescents. In 2019, India slipped seven places in the Global Hunger Index to rank 102 out of 117 countries, placing us in the 'serious hunger' category.

Has the government done anything so far?
The government launched Poshan Abhiyaan three years ago. But as of December 31, 2019, only 37 per cent of funds released under the scheme have been utilised by state and UT governments since its launch

If there is a policy and funds are allocated, why are things getting worse?
Firstly, information needs to be disseminated more effectively at the village level for effective behaviour change. For example, even when iron and folic acid tablets are provided, they are not taken because of side-effects like nausea. People need to be made aware that these tablets should be taken along with Vitamin C. Secondly, prevention is better than cure. Why are we not investing more in education? ...Children must learn what it really means to be healthy...Thirdly, addressing this problem requires convergence of several Ministries — Health, Women and Child Development, Food Affairs, Water and Sanitation, even HRD and Information and Broadcasting.

If it doesn't happen at the ministry level, how can we expect it to happen on the ground?
There must be a civil movement. People need to understand what they need and this must be reflected in the formulation of village-level plans to effect true behaviour change. Therefore, it cannot be a district plan, definitely not a state plan, but a community-owned plan...

What was the response to your intervention?
There was lot of support among members.

Ruckus in LS after Rahul asks govt to name top 50 wilful bank defaulters

Effort by senior member to question entire banking system speaks of his *nasamjhi*: MoS Anurag Thakur

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE LOK Sabha witnessed stormy scenes on Monday after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi raised the issue of bad loans and sought the list of 50 top wilful bank defaulters.

The ruckus began when Speaker Om Birla did not allow Rahul to ask a second supplementary query during the Question Hour. The Congress members first protested in the Well and later staged a walkout.

Asking the first supplementary question, Rahul said he had asked who are the 50 top wilful defaulters, the funds given to them and the amount written off by banks, but had not got a proper response from the government. "The Indian economy is going through a difficult period. Our banking system is practically not working anymore. Banks are failing, and I suspect, more banks are going to fail as a result of the current global situation," he said. One of the main reasons for the failure of banks, he said, was "stealing of bank money" by a large number of people. "The Prime Minister had said those who have stolen the money will be brought back and punished. But I have not got the answer to my simple question," he said.

When Minister of State for Finance Anurag Thakur started replying to the question, Rahul and Congress leader in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury protested. They demanded that Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who was present in the House, reply to the question. However, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Arjun Ram Meghwal argued that Thakur be allowed to continue. Birla maintained that normally Ministers of State answered questions.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi at Parliament on Monday. *Anil Sharma*

Thakur said the Congress was trying to blame the NDA government for irregularities committed during the UPA regime. He added that the Narendra Modi government had reviewed the asset quality of banks and their performance had improved to a great extent due to the steps it had taken. "The list of all bank defaulters above Rs 25 lakh loans is available on the website of the Central Information Commission. I have the list and if the Chair allows me, I am ready to table it in the House."

Thakur said defaulting loans worth Rs 4.8 lakh crore had been recovered by the Modi government and added that the government had enacted the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act so that the guilty can be punished. The effort by a senior member of the House to put a question mark on the entire banking system speaks of his *nasamjhi* (lack of understanding), Thakur said.

Regarding the Yes Bank crisis, Thakur said Sitharaman had already stated that banks were safe and the money deposited in Yes Bank was also safe.

Pointing at the treasury benches, Thakur said he was being prompted to refer to the sale of paintings — an apparent reference to the sale of a Rajiv Gandhi portrait drawn by M F Husain by Priyanka Gandhi Vadra to Yes Bank promoter Rana Kapoor for Rs 2 crore.

As Congress members responded to the painting remark with a loud protest, the Speaker ended the Question Hour and moved to the next item on the agenda. Rahul insisted that he be allowed to ask the second supplementary in accordance with the usual practice. However, the Speaker continued with the listed business.

At least a dozen Congress members rushed to the Well and started raising slogans. They alleged that grave injustice had been done to the Congress leader. "We want justice," they shouted. With the Speaker continuing with the next item, the Congress members, nudged by Rahul, staged a walkout. They were joined by members from DMK, NCP, Left parties and the National Conference.

"I was not allowed to ask supplementary question in Lok Sabha, this takes away my right as MP," Rahul told the media outside Parliament. He also sought to know the government was "scared" to name wilful bank loan defaulters.

Centre working on policy for senior citizens, says minister

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE CENTRE is working on a national policy for senior citizens, Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thaawarchand Gehlot announced in Lok Sabha on Monday. He was replying to the debate on the Demands for Grants for his ministry.

The proposed policy, he said, will improve the existing law on the welfare of senior citizens. Gehlot said Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (Amendment) Bill, 2019, which had several new provisions for the welfare of the elderly, was being examined by the standing committee. The Bill provides that every police station must have at least one official to deal with issues related to senior citizens. It also has a provision to ask state governments to constitute a special police unit for senior citizens in every district.

The National Policy on Older Persons had been announced in 1999. The new policy also seeks to incorporate issues like financial and food security, healthcare and nutrition, safety and security and housing. It also takes into account demographic and socio-economic changes. Gehlot said the number of beneficiaries for welfare schemes had increased under the NDA government and the budgetary allocations had been properly utilised.

The House later passed the demands through a voice vote.Gehlot rejected the Congress charge that the government had not provided money for schemes for weaker sections. He maintained that a few schemes had been amalgamated for better results. The ministry had become active in the last five years and had taken several historic decisions, he said.

Rudy urges govt for relief to Covid 19-hit tourism sector

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

AGAINST THE backdrop of the coronavirus outbreak, BJP MP Rajiv Pratap Rudy on Monday urged the government to provide tax relief to companies involved in the tourism sector during a debate on the industry in Parliament.

"There is need to provide some support to the tourism sector which is affected by the coronavirus pandemic. Globally, many countries have provided relief to the sector...For example, Germany has provided 40 billion euro relief to tourism sector," he said during the debate on Demand for Grants 2020-21 for the Ministry of Tourism.

Rajiv Pratap Rudy

In India, Rudy suggested that a GST holiday be provided to companies in the tourism sector. He also suggested that banks should provide moratorium with regard to the payment of interest on loan taken by firms in the sector.

The Opposition members cornered the government for not doing enough for the sector.

Initiating the debate, Vincent Pala of the Congress said, "There is no coordination between Tourism Ministry and other ministries, like External Affairs and Civil Aviation, which inhibits growth of tourism in the country." He added that tourism in the country in recent months had been affected by protests over the new citizenship law in various parts of the country.

TMC MP Satabdi Roy said foreigners coming to India for medical reasons should not be treated as tourists. Taking a dig at the government, she alluded to the violence in northeast Delhi and said, "How will people come to a country which witnesses riots?"

Shrirang Barne of Shiv Sena said the government should come up with a book that is a compilation of famous sites in various states.

ACROSS THE AISLE

BJP MP Meenakshi Lekhi and BSP MP Ritesh Pandey at Parliament in New Delhi on Monday. *Anil Sharma*

MP calls for adjournment of House session in view of coronavirus, Venkaiah says no

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

AIADMK MEMBER in Rajya Sabha S R Balasubramoniyan on Monday called for adjournment of the ongoing session of Parliament in the wake of the spread of coronavirus.

Raising the issue during Zero Hour, Balasubramoniyan wanted to know from the government whether they are adjourning the session from Tuesday or Wednesday owing to the fact that it is suggested that people should avoid large gatherings.

Rajya Sabha discussed the preventive steps to be taken to contain the outbreak.

TMC member Derek O' Brien said that all precautionary measures, like washing hands for 20 seconds and precautions while coughing and sneezing, must be followed by everyone. He further pointed out that the government has advised that large gatherings must be avoided. He also asked about the presence of a large numbers of members in the Houses, along with parliamentary support staffs. This large presence of people present at a given time in Parliament has a fair chance of getting infected, he said.

A visitor being screened at Parliament House on Monday. *Prem Nath Pandey*

SP leader Ram Gopal Yadav suggested thermal screening facilities at all gates of the Parliament as members come from all states in the country. BJD leader Sasmit Patra talked about the need to increase the number of testing facilities. He also urged the government to provide sanitisation measures at ATM booths that should be cleaned from time to time.

Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu clarified that adjournment of the session can't happen as of now. He said all members and supports staff should take precautionary steps. He also said that a lot of rumours are being spread, for which the government and the Indian Council of Medical Research should issue clarifications.

Oppn targets govt as RS talks working of Rly ministry

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

INITIATING A discussion on the working of the Ministry of Railways, TMC's Derek O'Brien asked the government to "clarify that there will be no privatisation of the railways". Taking a swipe at the government's plans for disinvestment of Air India and LIC, he said the government's "new campaign is Sell India".

"Let the Minister, after this discussion, clarify that there will be no privatisation of the Railways. Say this on the floor of the House. I think the new campaign is 'Sell India'. Sell everything — PSUs, Air India, LIC," he said.

He said the total working expenditure of the Railways "is up by 32 per cent, whereas actually it should be coming down".

"Revenue deficit is down with Rs 75,000 crore now. Since the Railway Budget and the General Budget got amalgamated, the people of India must know that the Railways used to pay a dividend of Rs 7,000 crore or Rs 8,000 crore every year to the Government of India," he said, and claimed that it now takes money from the government.

Naranbhai Rathwa of the Congress complained that it was tough to get information as there was no separate budget for Railways now. About the plan to have the Chairman of the Railway Board as its CEO, he said, "It seems like a plan to privatise."

BJP's GVL Narsimha Rao said there was "sparse investment" in the Ministry of Railways before 2014. "The technology was old. The decision-making processes were slow. It was lack of vision, lack of leadership and lack of ambition which actually restricted the growth of the railway sector." He said the capital expenditure of Railways has shot up after the Narendra Modi government came to power.

"Over 6,500 new infrastructure projects with an outlay of over Rs 107 lakh crore is what has been envisaged and Railways being a very important part of our infrastructure network, it has received all the priority it required and it would continue to receive," Rao said.

The discussion will continue on Tuesday and conclude with the minister's response.

RS nod to Bill to upgrade 3 Sanskrit institutes into central varsities

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE RAJYA Sabha on Monday passed a Bill to make Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, New Delhi, and Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, Tirupati, into Central Sanskrit Universities. The Central Sanskrit Universities Bill, passed by the House through a voice vote, was passed by Lok Sabha in December 12 last year.

While the Opposition accused the government of encouraging Sanskrit at the cost of other Indian languages, the government said it aims to revive the heritage of Sanskrit through these universities.

"Sanskrit has always been the monopoly of a few and that is a matter of great sadness and tragedy for India. We have to make this monopoly of the few into the treasure of the many. And, that is what this Bill should hope to accomplish," Jairam Ramesh of the Congress said.

However, he said, it must be remembered that Sanskrit has "been the instrument of caste oppression, caste discrimination and caste subjugation". He added that "hardly 15,000 people in India speak Sanskrit".

Ramesh mentioned that on February 3, The Minister of Culture told Lok Sabha that the government spent Rs 640 crore for the popularisation of Sanskrit, compared to Rs 24 crore on Tamil, Rs 3 crore on Telugu and Kannada each and zero on Malayalam and Odia. "We are in danger of giving greater importance to Sanskrit that it deserves at the cost of other regional languages," he said.

Jairam Ramesh

Ramesh Pokhriyal

He also asked the government to "to liberate the central universities from the stranglehold of the Ministry of Human Resource Development" and commented that its "track record of managing the central universities is pathetic in the last few years; JNU has been destroyed, Allahabad University is being destroyed".

KK Ragesh of the CPI wondered "why the government is giving so much of importance to Sanskrit and why the same importance, same prominence, is not given to the other national languages, especially, the South Indian languages". DMK's M Shanmugan, too, said the government was "obsessed with Sanskrit at the cost of other languages".

Opposing the government's idea of bringing unity through one language, Binoy Viswam of CPI asked: "How can a language spoken by a few thousands become the language of unity of Indian people?"

Apart from MDMK leader Vaiko, almost every other party expressed their support for the Bill. He said the Bill "could be called an abominable, destructive Bill, which will lead to balkanisation of India, a Sankritised India, in which other language areas will not find a place".

Defending the Bill, Union HRD Minster Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank said "it is not a question of languages". He said the government favours all languages. He added, "The government is in favour of strengthening all the 22 Indian languages mentioned in Eighth Schedule" of the Constitution, but "English is not an Indian language", the minister stressed.

He said that around 5 crore students are studying Sanskrit in various institutions today, and mentioned that several other countries too have institutes for Sanskrit.

DELHI CONFIDENTIAL

DISSECTING NAMES

ALMOST EVERY time BJP leader Subramanian Swamy speaks in Parliament, he manages to evoke a response from the Opposition. On Monday, speaking during the discussion on a Bill for three central Sanskrit universities, he revealed a little-known fact about MDMK leader Vaiko, who had opposed the Bill. As Swamy slammed Opposition leaders, who said the government is encouraging Sanskrit at the cost of other traditional languages, including Tamil, he said the two languages share a lot of words. He then mentioned that Vaiko's original name was Y Gopalaswamy, which is a Sanskrit word. On hearing this, Vaiko started laughing. Swamy added that former DMK supremo M Karunanidhi's name is also a Sanskrit word. At this point, CPI(M) member T K Rangarajan got up and said that the name Subramanian is a Tamil word. Several members spoke in Sanskrit during the discussion, including Jairam Ramesh of the Congress, Sukhendu Shekhar Roy of the TMC, and Union HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal.

NO BREAK, PLEASE

ALTHOUGH THERE have been demands from MPs and pleas from Parliament staff to cut short the Budget session in view of the coronavirus outbreak, the BJP is not keen on an early adjournment. This is because the party fears it could strengthen the Congress government's argument in Madhya Pradesh that the state Assembly should not meet in view of the Covid-19 outbreak. The BJP is keen to hold the floor test, which they claim will topple the Kamal Nath government.

WEDDING PUT OFF

AMID THE coronavirus outbreak, Samant Goel, chief of India's external intelligence agency Research and Analysis Wing, has postponed his son's wedding indefinitely. Goel is an officer of Punjab cadre and his son, a 2014 IPS officer of UT cadre, is getting married to the daughter of a 1987-batch Customs officer. Most of Goel's relatives were expected to come from abroad. He has now informed them of the change in plans. Goel has earlier served in London and is currently looking after Gulf affairs. He had hit the headlines in 2018 when his name cropped up in an FIR of alleged corruption registered by then CBI chief Alok Verma against his own deputy Rakesh Asthana.

Telangana passes resolution opposing CAA, NRC and NPR

SREENIVAS JANYALA
HYDERABAD, MARCH 16

THE TELANGANA government on Monday passed a unanimous resolution opposing the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), National Register of Citizens (NRC) and National Population Register (NPR). The state government also called for the Centre to either amend the CAA to include Muslims or to repeal it.

The resolution states, "There have been concerted attempts to tinker with the inclusive and non-religious nature of Indian citizenship through the CAA, NPR and NRC. Besides violating principles of equality, non-discrimination, secularism, this concerted attempt will also endanger the lives of vulnerable groups who do not possess adequate documentary proof of citizenship. Moreover, there are serious questions as to the legality and constitutionality of CAA, NPR and NRC. For the first time in India, the CAA introduced a religious test to acquire Indian citizenship while also providing for an accelerated path to citizenship for non-Muslims of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The enactment of CAA calls for a combined effort from all Indians, regardless of religious beliefs, to protect our founding values and preserve secularism in the Republic of India."

K Chandrashekar Rao

During a discussion on the CAA, NPR and NRC in the Assembly, Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao asked, "Once this country rejects my citizenship, where should I go?

"Do we need this divisive and narrow-minded exercise?... All over the world, the image of our country has been spoiled due to this... We are not against giving citizenship or citizenship cards but not through this format," he said.

Speaking in the Assembly, Rao said, "There are lots of questions and doubts in people's minds. I do not have a birth certificate. I was born at home in my village where my family was quite affluent. If I, coming from an affluent background, do not have a birth certificate, how can you expect the lakhs of poor people to produce birth certificates?"

Criticising Home Minister Amit Shah, Rao said, "In the 2018-19 annual report submitted in Parliament, it is clearly mentioned that NPR is the first step towards NRC. Outside Parliament, he is saying that NRC won't be implemented. This ambiguity has created a lot of doubt and fear..."

Exempt entire state from citizenship law: Meghalaya resolution

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SHILLONG, MARCH 16

THE MEGHALAYA Assembly on Monday passed a resolution urging the Centre to exempt the entire state, including the areas not covered under the Sixth Schedule, from the purview of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019. The resolution was moved by Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma during the second day of the Assembly's Budget Session.

The CM informed the House that 23 municipal wards out of 27 are under the Sixth Schedule areas, while the remaining four covering an area of 2 square kilometres (out of 23,000 sq km) are outside it.

The areas under the Sixth Schedule do not fall in the ambit of CAA.

"To ensure that the entire state is exempted, the state government has taken additional measures to protect the indigenous people of the state by passing a resolution to urge the Government of India to exempt the entire state, including the 2 sq km not covered under Sixth Schedule from the purview of the CAA," he said.

He further informed that since the Act has come into force, nobody has applied for citizenship from the state.

Dissatisfied with the content of the government resolution, the opposition Congress demanded that the Meghalaya Democratic Alliance (MDA) government ask the Centre to repeal the Act.

The MDA includes the BJP.

Rajasthan moves SC against amended citizenship law

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE CONGRESS-RULED Rajasthan government moved the Supreme Court Monday challenging the validity of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, saying it was violative of "basic structure principle of secularism" and fundamental rights of equality and life.

It became the second state after Kerala to move the top court invoking Article 131 of the Constitution under which a state is empowered to directly move the top court in case of a dispute with the Centre.

The newly amended law seeks to grant citizenship to non-Muslim migrants belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Christian, Jain and Parsi communities who came to the country from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan on or before December 31, 2014.

"Pass a judgement and decree that the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 is violative of Article 14 (right to equality) and Article 21 (right to life) of the Constitution of India as well as violative of basic structure principle of secularism. Thus Act 47 of 2019 (CAA) be declared as void under Article 13 of the Constitution," said the plea filed through lawyer D K Devesh.

Article 13 of the Constitution, under which the CAA is sought to be held as unconstitutional, says any law "inconsistent with or in derogation of the fundamental rights" can be held unconstitutional to the extent of its contravention of fundamental rights.

Besides, the plea has stated that the Passport (Entry to India) Amendment Rules, 2015 and Foreigners (Amendment) Order are ultra vires the Constitution and be declared void.

Earlier, the CPI(M)-led Kerala had become the first state to challenge the CAA in the Supreme Court. The Kerala Assembly was also the first in the country to pass a resolution against the Act.

RSS resolution: Bid to spread anarchy by jihadi-Left combine

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE RSS on Monday passed three resolutions congratulating the government on the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), abrogation of Article 370 in Kashmir and the construction of a Ram Temple in Ayodhya. The resolutions were passed at a meeting of the RSS's all-India executive council, the Akhil Bharatiya Karyakari Mandal (ABKM), in Bengaluru on Monday.

The resolution on CAA called the protests against the Act an attempt to spread anarchy across the country by "the jihadi-Left combine with the support of selfish political parties involved in communal politics and some foreign forces".

Later, addressing a press conference, RSS general secretary Suresh Bhaiyyaji Joshi said the "national issue" of NRC-CAA had unnecessarily become "political" and that Opposition parties were not being responsive to outreach from the government.

"Unfortunately, this national issue has become political. To take care of its citizens, every country prepares a list of its citizens, and no outsiders are allowed to stay after a certain period. There are limitations. But unfortunately... for political reasons, leaders of political parties are trying to create confusion in society," Joshi said.

On Jammu and Kashmir, the resolution welcomed the abrogation of Article 370 and 35A, saying the provision had sown seeds of separatism in the state.

On Ram Temple, the resolution said, "...it is a matter of joy that no section of the society has taken the verdict as a sign of its victory or defeat, instead, accepted it as the victory of the nation, justice and the Constitution."

The resolution, however, was silent on the long-standing claim of the Sangh Parivar on mosques in Mathura and Varanasi.

Gujarat RS polls: Five MLAs quit, Cong scrambling for numbers

VAIBHAV JHA, KAMAAL SAIYED & ADITI RAJA
AHMEDABAD, SURAT, VADODARA, MARCH 16

BARELY A year after it gave the BJP a run for its money in the Assembly elections, the Congress is facing a revolt in its ranks ahead of voting for the Rajya Sabha polls, with five MLAs submitting their resignations to the Speaker Monday.

Bringing the party's tally down to 68 in the House with a current strength of 182, the resignations of Somabhai Patel (Surendranagar), Pradhyumansinh Jadeja (Abdasa, Kutch), Mangal Gavit (Dang), J V Kakadiya (Dhari, Amreli) and Pravin Maru (Bhavnagar) were announced by Speaker Rajendra Trivedi.

Of the five, Patel, Jadeja and Kakadiya had been with the BJP earlier. All the five have been suspended from the Congress, state chief Amit Chavda said.

The latest developments have left the party, which was hoping to grab two of the four Rajya Sabha seats, needing votes from NCP's Kandhal Jadeja, Independent Jignesh Mevani and Bharatiya Tribal Party (BTP) MLAs Chhotu Vasava and son Mahesh Vasava to reach that count.

Mevani and the NCP have confirmed their support but the Vasavas are yet to make their position clear. Stung by the resignations, the Congress has moved all its MLAs to Rajasthan. Party spokesperson Manish Doshi said all 68 MLAs, including south Gujarat MLA Jitu Chaudhary, who was said to be missing, have been lodged at Shiv Vilas Hotel in Jaipur.

Party sources said given the current strength in the House — BJP 103, Congress 68, BTP 2, NCP 1, Ind 1 — the ruling party can easily win two seats, and the Opposition one. But the fight gets tough for the Congress's second candidate who will compete with Narhari Amin, BJP's third candidate and a former Congress leader.

In 2017, the Rajya Sabha polls had led to a similar cliffhanger, when the BJP fielded its then national president Amit Shah, Union minister Smriti Irani and Congress turncoat Balwantsinh Rajput who was locked in a fierce contest with Congress veteran Ahmed Patel.

Patel won by a whisker, with the help of non-Congress votes, after six Congress MLAs quit. This time, incidentally, the reduced strength of House is likely to bring down the number of votes needed to win from 37 to 36 per candidate.

Speaker Trivedi said: "I had ensured that there are video recordings of the five MLAs approaching me to submit their resignations on different occasions so that there is no allegation against me."

Paresh Dhanani, Leader of Opposition, said all is not lost for the Congress. "It can also happen that a few disgruntled BJP MLAs choose not to vote," he said.

That assertion gained weight when BJP MLA Ketan Inamdar was seen visiting Dhanani's office in the Assembly. Inamdar, who had recently quit over issues linked to his constituency before taking back his resignation, described his visit as a "social" and "friendly" meeting.

On the ground, meanwhile, the rumblings of dissent are growing louder with the Vadodara unit expressing its displeasure against the leaders of the state executive.

Sources said the party's MLA from Karjan, Akshay Patel, reached Jaipur via Delhi where he and Jambusar MLA Sanjay Solanki met Ahmed Patel to complain against the state leadership.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

Madhya Pradesh CM Kamal Nath with Governor Lalji Tandon at the Assembly, in Bhopal. *PTI*

It's letter vs letter amid MP political impasse

MILIND GHATWAI
BHOPAL, MARCH 16

CHIEF MINISTER Kamal Nath and Governor Lalji Tandon engaged in a verbal duel amid the political impasse in Congress-ruled Madhya Pradesh.

Trying to save his 15-month government amid endless meetings, the septuagenarian CM has visited the Raj Bhavan thrice to meet the octogenarian, who has hosted a slew of BJP delegations.

The exchange began on March 10 when the CM wrote to the Governor to remove six ministers — among the 22 legislators loyal to Jyotiraditya Scindia who were in Bengaluru — from his Cabinet. The letter was terse and the Governor acted on it three days later.

The CM wrote another letter on March 13, requesting the Governor to investigate the circumstances in which Congress legislators were taken to Bengaluru in flights booked by the BJP and how a BJP leader submitted resignation letters of Congress legislators to the Assembly Speaker.

A former CM, Tandon on March 14 shot a letter directing Nath to hold a floor test, arguing that in his opinion, prima facie, the Congress government was in minority and it should hold a floor test to prove its majority.

"I got your letter around midnight. When I met you, I had made it clear that holding a floor test when Congress legislators had been held hostage by the BJP would be inappropriate, undemocratic and unconstitutional," the CM wrote on Monday before quoting a Supreme Court judgment to argue that the Governor was working outside his domain and the Legislature does not function under the Governor.

"The activities within a political party, confirming turbulence, or unrest among its ranks, are beyond the concern of the Governor. The Governor must keep clear of any political horse-trading, and even unsavoury political manipulations, irrespective of the degree of their ethical repulsiveness... the provisions of the Constitution do not enjoin upon the Governor the authority to resolve disputes within a political party, or between rival political parties," the CM's letter said.

"It appears that your conclusion that my government is in minority is based on information you received from BJP... the fact is the legislators have been held hostage by the BJP. It's not appropriate for you to reach such a conclusion," Nath said, adding that "it's a matter of public concern that BJP has offered bribe or held Congress legislators hostage. I am writing with pain and agony that you did not make any attempt to resolve the criminal conduct (of BJP leaders) and did not even acknowledge my letter."

"I am surprised that you have expected action from me about certain assembly procedures that come within the authority of the Speaker. I hope mahamahim (Governor) will work according to law and Constitution in future."

Tandon hit back within a few hours, objecting to the tone and language "not appropriate to parliamentary boundaries". Tandon wrote that despite his directive to hold a floor test on Monday, the CM made no attempt to initiate the procedure.

The Governor said the SC ruling was not applicable in the current situation. "It's regrettable that you did not seek trust vote within the deadline and expressed disability/avoided... The reasons given by you not to hold the trust vote are baseless and meaningless."

Asking the CM to hold a floor test on Tuesday "by respecting constitutional and democratic traditions," the Governor said "it will be assumed that you actually don't have a majority in the House" otherwise.

Meanwhile, the CM met the Governor late on Monday. After the meeting, Nath said that he thanked the Governor for his address and that the BJP has moved a no-confidence motion on Monday. The BJP, however, accused the CM of lying as no motion has been moved by the opposition party.

Speaker vs Governor: In the past, SC ruled in favour of floor test

APURVA VISHWANATH
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

WITH THE Supreme Court set to hear on Tuesday the BJP's plea seeking a directive to the Kamal Nath government in Madhya Pradesh to take a floor test "within 12 hours", the spotlight is back on the legal debate on the powers of the Governor and the Speaker under the Constitution.

Since 2014, the legal-political tussle between the Governor and Speaker has prompted the Supreme Court's intervention in three major instances — in the Arunachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand cases in 2016, and in the Karnataka case in 2019. In all three cases, the court emphasised the primacy of the floor test.

In the Arunachal and Uttarakhand cases, the House was in suspended animation as President's Rule had been imposed. The Supreme Court ordered that the House be summoned and a floor test held to end the impasse.

"If the House is adjourned sine die or prorogued without holding a floor test, then all options are open before the Governor. However, since this is the Budget Session, such adjournment without passing the Budget means that the government has collapsed," said a senior advocate.

Earlier, the Sarkaria Commission had recommended that, if the CM neglects or refuses to summon the Assembly for a floor test, the Governor should summon the Assembly.

However, when the House is in session, the question of whether the court can direct the Speaker to hold a floor test is yet to be settled. This question was referred to a larger bench in 2016, which is yet to be constituted.

In the case of Karnataka in July last year, the Supreme Court had directed the Speaker to conduct the floor test forthwith when the House was in session. Senior Advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, who appeared for then Speaker K R Ramesh, had questioned the jurisdiction of the court.

Article 212 of the Constitution bars courts from inquiring into proceedings of the Legislature.

In 1998, in the Jagadambika Pal case, the SC had ordered a composite floor test when the House was in session. However, in that case, there were two claimants to the chief minister's post.

SC to hear MP BJP plea on floor test today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE SUPREME Court will on Tuesday hear Madhya Pradesh BJP's plea to direct the Kamal Nath government in the state to take a floor test "within 12 hours" to prove its majority.

The plea by BJP leader and former chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and nine other MLAs will come up before a bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud and Hemant Gupta.

The petition said 22 Congress MLAs who were supporting the government had resigned "on account of dissatisfaction with the Hon'ble Chief Minister for non-fulfilment of promises made prior to elections" on March 10. It mentioned that resignations of six of them have already been accepted by the Speaker, thereby reducing the Congress government to a minority.

"It has no moral, legal, democratic or constitutional right to remain in power even for a single day. All possible attempts are being made by the Hon'ble Chief Minister to convert his minority government into majority by giving all possible threats, allurements to the members of the Madhya Pradesh Vidhan Sabha," the opposition party said in its petition.

It said, "Horse-trading is at its peak. Therefore, it is essential that floor test is conducted on 16.3.2020 itself, as already directed by Hon'ble Governor, so that it becomes absolutely clear as to whether the Chief Minister continues to enjoy the confidence of the majority of Vidhan Sabha...any deferment of the floor test will further encourage horse-trading and would be in utter violation of the directions issued by the Governor..."

Sara disputes J&K's claim of threat to public order if Omar freed

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

FORMER JAMMU and Kashmir chief minister Omar Abdullah's sister Sara Abdullah Pilot on Monday questioned the Union Territory administration's contention that public order in the region should be examined "contextually" keeping in mind its geographical proximity to the "Islamic Republic of Pakistan".

She said that by that logic, the same should also apply to public order in the states of Gujarat, Punjab and Rajasthan, with whom too "Pakistan is in close geographical proximity to".

She stated in a rejoinder affidavit: "It is appalling to observe the statement of the Respondent No. 2 (Srinagar District Magistrate) that the geographical proximity of the UT of J&K with the Republic of Pakistan is deemed to be an overarching feature that can contextually modify the concept of 'public order'. Needless to add that Pakistan is in close geographical proximity to three other states of India (Gujarat, Punjab & Rajasthan) as well and by the extended logic of the Respondent No. 2, 'public order' in such states would also be contextually modified..."

The rejoinder pointed out that some of the material supplied along with the affidavit filed by J&K in response to her petition challenging Omar's detention under the Public Safety Act (PSA) had not been provided to him earlier.

The affidavit, she contended, referred to some Facebook posts "that after having been attributed to the detenu and being made part of the relied upon material, have been used against the detenu".

However, "on scrutiny of the verified Facebook account of the detenu, the deponent was shocked to discover that the said social media posts...that have been purportedly attributed to the detenu and have been maliciously used against him were not even made by the detenu through his verified Facebook account".

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

THE OUTBREAK TRACKING COVID-19

CORONA WATCH

Massive crowd at a Lucknow medical store. *Vishal Srivastav*

PM's trip cancelled

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate in the 100th Birth Anniversary celebrations of 'Jatir Pita' Bangabandhu, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in Bangladesh tomorrow via video message. Due to COVID-19, the events planned for March 17 in Bangladesh will be without any public gatherings. Modi was supposed to travel to Dhaka but the visit was cancelled. **ENS**

3 N-E states bar domestic tourists

New Delhi: The north-eastern states of Sikkim, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh on Monday prohibited the entry of domestic tourists. Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh have suspended the issue of Inner Line Permits to ensure that tourists don't gain entry. Meanwhile, Sikkim Chief Minister PS Golay, who chaired a cabinet meeting on Monday to review the measures taken to combat coronavirus, took precautions a step further by directing Sikkimese inter-state taxi drivers not to travel to other states. **ENS**

Notice for hoardings

Mumbai: The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has asked all licenced hoarding owners in Mumbai to display messages till March 25, starting from Monday, on fighting the novel coronavirus outbreak. The directive was issued by BMC Commissioner Praveen Pardeshi under the Disaster Management Act, 2005 and Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897. Those disobeying the directive will have their hoarding licences cancelled, the directive warned. Mumbai has around 1,200 licences. **PTI**

VHP: No large gatherings

Lucknow: Concerns over coronavirus are likely to affect the plans of Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) to mark 'Sri Ram Mahotsava' in over 2.75 lakh villages across the country for a fortnight, starting from March 25. After a high-level meeting, the organisation has instructed its units to cut down on big gatherings for 'shobha yatras' or 'Ram Rath yatras'. **ENS**

Study from home

New Delhi: Extramarks, a global education technology company, has launched the 'Go-To-School' initiative which will give all students full access to its app until April 30, 2020, and to the JEE and NEET crash courses, starting March 20 and 23 respectively. Students will be able to access live online classes on the platform. **ENS**

States with no cases take precautions: classes off, new rules, shutters down

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, GUWAHATI, AHMEDABAD, SURAT, RAIPUR, PATNA, RANCHI, MARCH 16

WHILE WEST Bengal has not reported any positive Covid-19 case until now, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday announced creation of a Rs 200-crore corpus and invoking of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, in the state to tackle the impending outbreak.

She also extended closure of all educational institutions from March 31 to April 15 and advised closure of cinema hall, multiplex and auditorium for two weeks.

Banerjee, who held a high-level meeting with state and the Union government officials to review the situation on Monday, said that the decision to invoke Epidemic Diseases Act was taken as people who have shown symptoms of coronavirus are refusing to be kept in isolation. She said, "So far, we have screened 3.24 lakh people in West Bengal, of which we are still monitoring conditions of 5,589 people. While 59 had shown symptoms, the results of 58 came negative. The result of one is still pending."

In the Northeast, while Nagaland, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh banned entry of domestic and international tourists, Assam announced screening of domestic tourists at airports.

A teacher in an empty classroom in Chennai after Tamil Nadu ordered the closure of all primary schools. *Reuters*

In Guwahati, Assam Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma told the media that 34 of 36 samples tested in the state have come negative and results for two are pending. The Assam government also ordered to restrict entry of daily visitors to the State Secretariat to 100 persons per day until March 31.

Meghalaya government ordered all cinema halls, gymnasiums, swimming pools and educational institutions to remain shut until March 31. Examinations will go on as per schedule, it said — a step announced by the Assam government a day before. The Budget Session of Meghalaya was also postponed.

Assam has also announced that national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and the zoo in Guwahati will remain closed until March 29.

In Nagaland, all educational institutions will remain shut until April 12, according to an order signed by Chief Secretary Temjen Toy. In Arunachal Pradesh, cinema halls, night clubs, weekly bazaar and all educational institutes will stay shut until April 5.

Meanwhile, Jharkhand government notified the Jharkhand State Epidemic Disease (COVID-19) Regulation, 2020 under Epidemic Act, 1897. Under this, suspects are necessitated to get themselves checked and all educational institutions, gymnasiums, swimming pools, cinema halls, multiplexes, among others, will remain closed until April 14.

A sum of Rs 200 crore is allocated to deal with the pandemic. Chief Minister Hemant Soren said 488 people have arrived in the state from various countries since the outbreak. "Of them, 175 people have shown no symptom of coronavirus; the others are under observation," said Soren.

In Gujarat, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Department of Gujarat issued a notification and asked hotels and restaurants to sterilise tables, seats and surroundings. The moves comes after the state ordered closure of educational institutions, multiplexes and other public places across the state.

Gujarat High Court issued a circular stating that it would take up only "urgent" matters starting Tuesday, until March 31.

All zoos, safari parks, wildlife sanctuaries and conservation reserves in Gujarat will be closed from Tuesday until March 29.

Until Monday evening, 96 samples of suspected patients were taken across the state, of which 87 samples tested negative; results of nine are pending. From late-January to March 16, 3,820 travellers were screened, it was announced.

Chhattisgarh Health Minister T S Singh Deo, meanwhile, wrote to Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan and urged him to expand testing criteria for coronavirus and sought adequate testing kits.

In his letter, posted on social media, Singh Deo wrote: "India, so far, has one of the lowest rates of testing globally, at around 3 tests per million. Countries like South Korea have carried out more than 4,000 tests per million. I urge the government of India to expand the criteria for testing..."

The Bhupesh Baghel-led government has already closed anganwadis, schools, colleges, libraries and parks. Help centres have been set up at the airport and at all district hospitals and some private hospitals across the state.

State Health Secretary Niharika Barik said, "Earlier, we sent samples to Pune and Nagpur. Now we have the centre at AIIMS (in Raipur). We have requested the Health Ministry to allow testing in Jagdalpur Medical College and Raigarh Medical College for...early detection."

In Patna, Bihar government officials said of 274 suspected patients kept under observation, 86 have been discharged after having completed 14 days of observation. Principal Secretary (Health) Sanjay Kumar said screening has been carried out at 49 points along India-Nepal border and 1,49,901 people had been screened at these point and there was just one symptomatic case, which tested negative. Six Buddhists spots across the state have been put under surveillance.

The National Museum in New Delhi. *Amit Mehra*

All ASI-protected monuments, museums shut till March 31: Govt

DIVYA A
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE CENTRE Monday decided to shut all Archaeological Survey of India-protected monuments and central museums across the country till March 31. Union Tourism and Culture Minister Prahlad Patel told *The Indian Express*, "All ASI-protected monuments and all central museums are being closed with immediate effect in the wake of Covid-19 situation. An order in this regard is being issued soon."

There are more than 3,000 ASI-protected monuments across the country, including Taj Mahal in Agra, Red Fort and Qutab Minar in Delhi, and other UNESCO world heritage sites like Hampi in Karnataka and the Ajanta Caves in Aurangabad. There are more than 200 central museums such as the National Museum in Delhi, National Gallery of Modern Art with campuses in Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru, and Salar Jung Museum in Hyderabad.

Since most of these sites are ticketed and see huge footfalls, this may cause a significant loss to the exchequer but the move was necessitated in the wake of the situation in the country, said an official from the Culture Ministry, under which the ASI functions. Presold tickets for 143 monuments under the ASI will be refunded.

Meanwhile, the government also announced the closure of all cultural institutions in the country till March 31 after a meeting on Monday evening.

"This is one of the rare occasions when Taj Mahal has been shut down for tourists," said an ASI archaeologist from the Agra Circle, adding that the monument was earlier shut for a few days in 1971 in the wake of Indo-Pak war.

Earlier in the day, the ASI had shut down several sites across Odisha, Kerala and Karnataka after formal requests from the respective district administrations. These include the Sun Temple (Konark), Rajarani Temple (Odisha), Udayagiri Caves (Odisha), Somnathpur Temple (Mysore), Hampi (Karnataka), Bekal Fort (Kasargod) and Matancherry Museum (Kerala).

Security personnel provide hand sanitiser to visitors at a shopping mall in Kolkata. *PTI*

Darjeeling students face racial slurs

RAVIK BHATTACHARYA
KOLKATA, MARCH 15

AS THE country grapples with the coronavirus outbreak, students from Darjeeling are facing growing incidents of racial slurs and abuses in Kolkata.

Recounting the incident on her social media post, a 21-year-old girl student of Presidency College said, "A group of men standing on the roadside said '*coronavirus esheche* (here comes coronavirus)' after they saw us. We confronted them, but they argued that they were discussing the disease and denied saying any such thing."

She also posted her experience on social media.

"This is not the first time. One of our friends while travelling on a local train to Sonarpur also faced such comments... We stay here, we study here, we are residents of this country and West Bengal, yet we have to face this. I told my parents and they are scared," said another girl who sent the video of them confronting a group of middle-aged men to a Darjeeling-based news portal.

A 22-year-old student of Jadavpur University, who also hails from Darjeeling, said that he faced a similar situation in the Lake Gardens area where he stays.

"The problem is the mentality of racist people. This is a problem that has been there. Coronavirus outbreak has just given them more alibis to abuse others. This is going to be just another incident where someone who does not look 'Indian' will be made to feel like they do not belong to here. They will be humiliated and made to feel disgusting," he said.

However, none of the students has lodged any complaint with the police or college authorities.

Second case in a week, Rlys helps in contact tracing

AVISHEK G DASTIDAR
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE RAILWAYS has handed over to Odisha health officials the contact details of all fellow passengers on the Rajdhani Express that reached Bhubaneswar on March 12, after a passenger travelling in the AC-III tier coach tested positive for COVID-19 a day after arrival.

Officials said the 31-year-old man, who is the first confirmed coronavirus case from Odisha, had recently returned from Italy.

Following instructions from the state health department, the national transporter has also rolled out a series of containment measures - detaching, fumigating and disinfecting the coach as per protocol.

Officials said calls are also being made, in assistance with state authorities, to inform passengers about possible contact with the patient and check for symptoms, if any.

Officials said this was the second instance of a rail passenger testing positive for the virus.

In the other case, the wife of a software professional from Bengaluru — both later tested positive — had travelled from Delhi to Agra on Gatimaan Express on March 9.

Officials said the coach has been isolated, and the transporter is helping authorities in contact-tracing. "We have informed the passengers on board about this as well," said a Railways official.

A worker disinfects a washroom of the Howrah-New Delhi Rajdhani Express on Monday. *PTI*

The contractor of services on the train was asked to report symptoms, if any, among staff deployed that day, and the supervisor directed to stay home for a few days. "No symptom has been reported so far," said the official.

In both cases, officials said, the crew had already been instructed to adopt precautionary measures, such as avoiding mass contact.

The Railways has stepped up its vigil in other states, too, especially where a high number of cases have been reported.

In Kerala, the Railways is checking body temperatures of passengers on running trains in the Thiruvananthapuram division. A similar move is being considered in other divisions although officials said screening 2.3 crore passengers every day "would not be logistically possible".

"This will be a nightmare, for example, in suburban sections like in Mumbai during rush hour, or in Delhi stations that see upwards of five lakh footfalls a day. Also, people tend to reach in the last moment to catch trains, so if we start screening them at gates, it will lead to huge pile-ups. But of course, we are taking all the other measures, such as disinfection and fumigation, etc," said a senior official.

The transporter is also posting awareness messages at stations and on trains, and disinfecting common areas such as toilets, seats, door handles multiple times a day.

'BREEDING GROUNDS FOR VIRUS'

SC takes cognizance of overcrowding of jails

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE SUPREME Court on Monday underlined the dangers of any likely spread of Covid-19 among the prison population, given that the country's jails were overcrowded, and said that it is "of the opinion that there is an imminent need to take steps on an urgent basis to prevent" the same.

A bench of Chief Justice of India S A Bobde and Justice L Nageswara Rao issued a notice to the Chief Secretaries or Administrators of all states and Union Territories, their Home Secretaries and Directors General of Prisons and Department of Social Welfare "to show cause why directions should not be issued for dealing with the present health crisis..." They have also been asked "to suggest immediate measures which should be adopted for the medical assistance to the prisoners in all jails and the juveniles lodged in the Remand Homes and for protection of their health and welfare".

The bench issued the direction after hearing Attorney General K K Venugopal, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta and senior advocate Dushyant Dave, whom it appointed as Amicus Curiae in the matter. It asked the states and UTs to file their reply before March 20 and fixed March 23 to hear the matter next.

The bench, which took suo motu cognizance of the issue, said one of the suggestions made by the government to prevent spread of the virus "is to maintain social distancing, which is considered to be the most effective way" to stop the spread. However, the "bitter truth", it said, "is that our prisons are overcrowded, making it difficult for the prisoners to maintain social distancing".

The court said, "There is a high risk of transmission of Covid-19 virus to the prison inmates", and that for these reasons, "our prisons can become fertile breeding grounds for incubation of COVID-19".

If prisoners test positive for Covid-19, immediate measures have to be taken for their quarantining and medical treatment, said the bench.

'Have 1.5 lakh test kits and have ordered 1 million more'

WITH QUESTIONS being raised on under-testing in India, **NIVEDITA GUPTA**, senior scientist in charge of viral diseases at the Indian Council for Medical Research, speaks to **KARISHMA MEHROTRA** about why the government has decided not to expand testing criteria beyond symptomatic travelers and contacts of those infected.

How many tests do we have, what is our testing capacity, and how will we track community transmission?

Our testing capacity is close to 6,000 tests per day. We have 1.5 lakh test kits and have ordered 1 million. Right now our inclusion criteria is only symptomatic travelers and symptomatic contacts of lab-confirmed infected. Today, we have revised it to include health workers too. In addition, for surveillance purposes, we are testing at each of our 51 testing sites, 10 samples per week of severe acute respiratory illness pneumonia patients as well as influenza-like illness patients who are not very sick. The inclusion criteria for testing remains the same but we want to be sure that we are not missing community transmission. If I detect any positives in any of these labs, I'll step up the testing capacity for those particular areas where I am seeing community transmission. Then, it will be a completely different testing strategy where asymptomatic people get tested.

We have the capacity to do roughly 6,000 tests per day, but we are not testing people at that level and we have some of the lowest number of completed tests in the world. Why not do the random sampling that you are describing, as well as increase testing for anybody showing symptoms?

Till date, we have not documented community transmission. Why should we go on telling people who have no history of travel or any contact with an actual case (to get themselves tested)? If today, I am exposed to a suspect patient and I feel that this patient has Covid-19, and tomorrow I want to get myself tested because I am very scared. What is the flip side of this? The incubation period ranges from 2 to 14 days. If someone has a long incubation period, but tests negative, doesn't that give a false sense of security to them when the test is meaningless? And then, if I tell people I cannot say if you are positive or negative, that person is going to want to get tested again and again. And, in this process, in a huge country like India, I'm not able to test people who genuinely may need testing because I'm wasting it on futile testing. Secondly, right now, we are stressing on home quarantine. But, if I test an individual who is asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic, and he is positive, then he would be requesting to be put in a hospital, saying to isolate me and you take care of me.

THE EXPRESS INTERVIEW
WITH
NIVEDITA GUPTA
SENIOR SCIENTIST IN CHARGE OF VIRAL DISEASES, INDIAN COUNCIL FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

Then what do I do? In a country like this, how many isolation beds, how many places does the government have for this? Though we are maintaining a stringent inventory, we need to make sure that we are not in a situation where I exhaust all my testing capacity in futile testing.

The better strategy that the government is following is that we have begun surveillance, as we did during the Zika virus outbreak in Jaipur. We did aggressive, house-to-house testing, even for asymptomatic individuals. That kind of aggressive containment strategy will be enforced wherever we see a community transmission. For the whole country, I cannot put in place those aggressive measures, because I have to be rational in a country like India.

Are there any other countries using this strategy?

China also did that as far as I am aware. If you look at the UK, they have been under-testing. US did not offer a free test, so obviously the accessibility of the test was poor and they have been under testing. Here, the government is offering testing free of cost. South Korea, on the other hand, has included all symptomatic individuals in their testing.

Why not allow testing at private labs?

We have started dialogue with private labs. We are exploring CSR, and asking for free tests. They are still in the process of ordering the regents. They might be ready in a week or so.

What is the likelihood of community transmission?

If we slip on containment measures in any aspect, we will still have community transmission. From our surveillance mechanisms, we will pick up some amount of community transmission.

It could be a small cluster of community transmission which, I think, can be alleviated through aggressive containment strategies.

At what point can India say that we are over the hump?

Right now we are prepared for a long-term battle. Though we know rising temperatures will reduce the risk of transmission, every region in India has different climatic conditions. We do expect a dip, if we at all establish community transmission. But if we have widespread community transmission, then I think we will keep seeing upsurges. We are hoping that we are probably only seeing imported cases. Maybe with containment, quarantine and restriction of travel, these may go down.

What do you think about this theory that Indians have a stronger immunity because they are exposed to more viruses?

That is possible, but there is no scientific data yet to support this hypothesis. We also have been thinking about this. But we can't claim unless we have substantial data-which we don't-to validate those things.

CORONA OUTBREAK

Pvt labs ready to help, Dr Dangs says govt caution correct

KAUNAIN SHERIFF M
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

PRIVATE LABS have reached out to the government saying they are ready to carry out tests for coronavirus, should it approve the same and decide the pricing and protocols. The government currently has 52 labs exclusively designated to test patients for Covid-19.

Dr Arjun Dang, the CEO of Dr Dangs Lab, one of the largest private lab chains in the country, said the whole process should not take more than a few days. "We have reached out to the ministry and government through various platforms such as NATHEALTH Diagnostics Forum and Voice of Healthcare and communicated that as and when the government feels appropriate, the private laboratories are ready. Since it is primarily an RT PCR (reverse transcriptase-polymerase chain reaction) test, which is done in swine flu, we already have the trained manpower and required infrastructure. The testing kits for corona are being provided by multiple vendors, which are yet to receive regulatory approvals from the government," Dr Dang said.

Advising a set protocol, he said this would guard against "panic because of injudicious testing" which, he believes, might be the government's concern too. "The corona pandemic is an evolving disease. It has four stages: the first stage is import of the virus from individual cases; the second stage is localised infection or clustered infection; stage three is the community stage; and fourth is a full-blown epidemic. India is currently at the second stage. For stage 2, the protocol is that only people who have the primary symptoms, along with travel history or contact history, are sent for testing. Following this protocol, in my view, the government believes it is well-equipped with the existing labs to tackle the patient load."

However, Dr Dang added, presuming that the country enters the community outbreak stage — when there will be patients without any travel history or contact history — all with primary symptoms would have to be tested. "At this stage, the government would have to multiply testing facilities and rope in private laboratories."

Supporting the government for the caution it is exercising, Dr Dang said, "First, it is important to understand that you need proper protocol to mandate any testing in private laboratories. It has be done based on credentials and existing infrastructure and manpower in terms of credibility and ability to conduct the tests. The most important is to avoid any compromise on the quality of the reports, which will ensure that there is no panic among the public. For instance, even in the case of H1N1, only a handful of labs were given the licence."

He also raised the issue of safety of health workers, and proper disposal of biomedical waste. "When you collect the sample, conduct the testing, and discard the samples, all three stages require stringent infection control. You need protective gear like masks and gowns... Therefore, there has to be very restricted and controlled testing."

The specialist also red-flagged limitations regarding the incubation period of the virus vis-a-vis testing at the labs. "For coronavirus, it ranges from two days to two weeks. If patients come for a test during the incubation period, the test is likely to come negative because the load of the virus is not enough to give a positive result. The report will give the patient a false sense of security. To prevent this, the government has to come out with the protocol on incubation period etc."

Fumigation in progress at the Navi Mumbai Panvel Corporation Gram Vikas Bhavan in Mumbai. *Narendra Vaskar*

Mumbai offices can't have more than 50% employees working in one shift

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, MARCH 16

THE STATE government on Monday imposed a mandatory work from home policy for employees of private offices in Mumbai, intensifying lock down measures to combat COVID-19 cases.

As the number of active cases rose to six in Mumbai, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray approved a proposal making it mandatory for offices to shift to a rotational work schedule, ensuring that there is not more than 50 per cent of the work force present in an office at any given time.

Invoking provisions of the Epidemic Disease Act, 1897, Municipal Commissioner Praveen Pardeshi, following Uddhav's nod, issued orders to private offices asking them to operate at less than 50 per cent staff capacity during office hours, permitting the remaining to operate from home, said senior officials.

While shutting down schools, colleges, malls, theatres, gymnasiums and auditoriums in Mumbai in the first batch of restrictions imposed on March 13 and March 14, the state had initially requested private offices to allow people to work from home.

The government has made an exception for establishments involved in the supply of essential and emergency services, including Internet service providers, banks, water supply, telephone services, rail and transportation, food and vegetables, groceries, hospitals, medical centres and medical stores, among others. "The restrictions won't apply to them," said a senior official.

The move is aimed at reducing the number of commuters using trains and buses and also reducing crowd presence in business districts.

Pardeshi said that the failure to comply with these orders would invite criminal action under Section 188 of the Indian Penal Code for disobedience of an order promulgated by a public servant. He also issued directives asking assistant municipal commissioners of administrative wards and the police to issue advisories asking people not to gather for masses, at sea beaches and at public places.

It further asked the police to restrict vehicular movement in areas of isolation and quarantine centres like Kasturba Hospital, King Edward Memorial hospital and Seven Hills hospital.

MAHARASHTRA

Stamp on hand to identify those in home isolation

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, MARCH 16

CM Thackeray said that the decision was taken to instill a sense of responsibility in those quarantined.

The Maharashtra government on Monday began marking all those who have been medically advised to self quarantine with a stamp in indelible ink and the words 'Home Quarantine' in a bid to ensure they isolate themselves for 14 days. The ink is the same that is used to mark voters at elections.

Meanwhile, the state on Monday reported six new cases, taking the total number of patients who have tested positive to 39. While five cases have been reported from the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, one person has tested positive in Yavatmal.

Following a review meeting on measures taken to tackle coronavirus in the state, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said on Monday that the decision to mark those who have been advised home quarantine in this manner had been taken to install a sense of responsibility in them.

"Those who require self home quarantine but don't want to stay in hospital or hotels and want to go home, they should have a sense of responsibility. They should not roam about freely. They should follow quarantine strictly," Thackeray said.

People who are advised home quarantine are those who have history of foreign travel, or contact with those with a history of foreign travel but have no symptoms of the virus.

Public Health Minister Rajesh Tope who was also present, said 621 have been advised home quarantine. He said, "People who have been advised to self quarantine will be stamped... (mentioning the date) until when they should be indoors... If such people go out, others can identify them..." as home quarantine patients. This is being done so that patients strictly observe home quarantine," said Tope.

When asked about whether the state would be completely locked down, Thackeray said, "There is no such plan for a complete shutdown..."

Kerala: Couple back from Saudi locked up

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MARCH 16

KERALA ON Monday reported three more positive cases of Covid-19, taking the total number in the state to 27. Of these, 24 cases, which emerged over the last one week, are undergoing treatment.

The fresh cases reported are two Umrah pilgrims from Malappuram and another person who returned from Dubai in Kasaragod.

A total of 12,740 people are currently under observation in the state with 270 of them isolated in various hospitals.

Speaking to reporters after a review meeting on Monday, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said trade and commerce have come to a virtual standstill. "This is a grave situation. The vigil against the infection should continue but it should not hit social life," he said.

Vijayan said all symptomatic passengers reaching Kerala airports should be directly shifted to isolation, while asymptomatic passengers should be taken to their houses for quarantine with police support. He added that all passengers should also inform the Health Department. At airports, all domestic as well as foreign passengers, including those flying abroad, would be subjected to screening, he added.

Even as people are quarantines, several stray incidents were reported from the state. In Thrissur, a doctor and his wife who recently returned from Saudi Arabia, were allegedly locked in their apartment by the apartment owners association. The police have registered a case against the association's members, based on the doctor's complaint.

In Kollam, a person placed under observation met with an accident after he went driving defying the direction to stay in isolation. However, he tested negative for Covid-19. I

At the Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology in Thiruvananthapuram, 76 people, including doctors, have been put under home quarantine after a doctor at the hospital was tested positive on Sunday.

Hyderabad: Man back from UK tests positive

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD, MARCH 16

A FOURTH person in Hyderabad tested positive for Covid-19 on Monday, authorities said. Health officials said a man, who arrived from Scotland recently, developed symptoms and was referred to Gandhi Hospital, where his swabs tested were confirmed positive on Monday.

The previous three people who had tested positive to the virus have recovered, they said.

Meanwhile, the Telangana government has decided that all passengers — both Indian and foreign nationals — arriving at the Hyderbad airport from China, Iran, Italy, South Korea, France, Germany and Spain, either through direct flights or via hubs like Dubai and Abu Dhabi, or having a travel history to these seven countries after February 15 will be quarantined for 14 days after their arrival in Hyderabad.

The government has put in place a mechanism to counsel the passengers on the need to be quarantined and the procedure being adopted.

J&K ups restrictions on entry

ARUN SHARMA
JAMMU, MARCH 16

Municipal workers spray disinfectants as a precautionary measure against Covid-19 at a park in Srinagar. *PTI*

THE JAMMU and Kashmir administration on Monday decided to impose stringent restrictions on people entering the Union Territory to guard against a possible coronavirus outbreak.

People flying to the Union Territory from Ladakh as well as all visiting foreigners will be quarantined. Inter-state buses entering Jammu and Kashmir, too, will be checked and sanitized at an entry point in Kathua.

The decisions were taken at a meeting chaired by Chief Secretary B V R Subrahmanyam. "In view of the detection of two confirmed, (possibly three) Coronavirus cases in Jammu and measures put in place by the Health Department," an official spokesperson said.

Public entry in civil secretariat and offices of all the heads of departments in Jammu division has also been banned till March 31. Expecting large gatherings during some forthcoming religious festivals, the Chief Secretary directed the Jammu Divisional Commissioner to call a meeting of all prominent religious leaders, advising them to convince people to reduce or avoid gatherings.

A quarantine facility will be set up at Baltal base camp in Sonmarg in Kashmir to quarantine those entering from Ladakh.

Meanwhile, Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Monday said it would hear only urgent matters at both its wings in Jammu and Srinagar till March 31. Premises of all courts will be sanitised and visitors to the High Court will have to pass through thermal screening. The administration also extended the restrictions imposed on gatherings in Jammu district to Udhampur district on Monday.

Udhampur District Magistrate Piyush Singla said the restrictions on social gatherings, meetings and conferences, among others, will continue till March 31. In a separate order, he ordered the closure of all hotels falling within the jurisdiction of Patnitop Development Authority till the end of the month.

In Samba district, the administration sealed a private higher secondary school in Vijaypur area for flouting the government order regarding closure of all educational institutions in the Union Territory till March 31.

After trainee forest officer tests positive, 51 isolated

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN, MARCH 16

A DAY after an Indian Forest Service trainee officer at the Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy (IGFA) in Dehradun tested positive with coronavirus infection, the state Health Department has placed in quarantine at least 51 people who came in direct contact with that officer in recent days.

Dehradun Chief Medical Officer Dr Meenakshi Joshi said 51 people placed under quarantine include 28 colleagues of the 26-year-old officer who tested positive, and the remaining are staff and attendants at the academy, such as mess employees and cleaner and others.

The driver of the bus that took the trainee officer from airport to IGNFA campus has also been placed in quarantine with other staff in a separate building on the same campus. While 28 colleagues have been placed under quarantine in their respective rooms in the hostel block, other staff members have been in medical supervision in another building. Dr Joshi said more people may be placed under quarantine in coming days because contact-tracing is still being done.

Officials maintained that the trainee officer tested positive with Covid-19 had no exposure to family after his arrival to Dehradun.

He has been put in isolation in a separate hospital.

SC rejects bail pleas of Navlakha, Teltumbde: Surrender in 3 weeks

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

NIA accuses Teltumbde, Navlakha of offence against nation

THE SUPREME Court on Monday rejected anticipatory bail plea of activists Anand Teltumbde and Gautam Navlakha, with the National Investigation Agency (NIA) contending that the offence they were accused of was one against the nation.

A bench of Justices Arun Mishra and M R Shah, however, turned down the agency's plea that they should not be given any further time to surrender, and allowed them three weeks for this. The court asked the duo to surrender their passports forthwith.

The two had moved the apex court after a single-judge bench of Bombay High Court rejected their pleas for anticipatory bail.

Several activists, including Navlakha and Teltumbde, were booked by Pune Police for their alleged Maoist links and other charges following the violence at Koregaon Bhima village near Pune on January 1, 2018. The accused deny the allegations.

Appearing for Teltumbde, senior advocate Kapil Sibal said investigators had not recovered anything from him but was accusing him on the basis of some letters said to have been recovered from others. He said Teltumbde was being charged on the basis of "hearsay" evidence and wondered how the material, unless recovered directly from Teltumbde, could become evidence against him.

Assuring to abide by any condition if protected from arrest, Sibal urged the court to take into account Teltumbde's credentials as an academic. But the bench said, "(The) allegations are material, not credentials."

Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, who appeared for Navlakha, said no charge under UAPA was part of initial FIRs, and UAPA was added in May 2018, after which Navlakha has not been called for interrogation.

Singhvi said the letters being attributed to him were also not recovered from him, but from some computer, and it had been attributed to another accused - Rona Wilson. "If I was indulging in all these letter exchanges, they should have called me for interrogation at least once. But they didn't," said Singhvi, adding that Navlakha was protected from arrest for the last nearly one-and-a-half years by court orders.

"I have spoken out against Left-wing extremism. I am against violence," Singhvi said on Navlakha. He said the activist is "not a violent revolutionary who is carrying arms", although he may have intellectual opposition to policies of the State.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who appeared for NIA, which took over the probe recently from Pune Police, said one of the accused in the case was Deepak Teltumbde, brother of Anand Teltumbde, who has been absconding since long, and on whose head Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra governments had announced rewards.

Objecting, Sibal said Deepak had been away from home since the last two decades and Anand had no contacts with him during this period.

Mehta said Rona Wilson was the head of the communication cell (Delhi) of CPI (Maoist). "All letters were routed though him. They (accused) are...internally connected, shows investigation conducted so far," he said.

Referring to a statement by a surrendered Maoist leader, S-G Mehta said it spoke about Maoists preparing an army of tribals in the forests to fight the government. Leaders were also trained and send to groom students for armed struggle, he told the court.

On Teltumbde, Mehta said "we have collected material which we have not placed on chargesheet" and there were call records "which show that he was in continuous touch with other accused".

Campaign against Bihar govt plan to raze Heritage Patna collectorate building

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, MARCH 16

The collectorate building was built by Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie, or the Dutch East India Company.

VIDYA BHUSHAN Mahto holds a bunch of 150-odd keys to different doors in the five majestic buildings at Patna Collectorate. A fourth grade staff at Patna Collectorate, Mahto, is among several staffers who now want to know if the buildings, built in Dutch and British architectural styles and dating back around 250 years, face a demolition threat.

Several offices have been shifted out of the buildings in the past one year. After the state government decided to raze Patna Collectorate in February 2016, the civil society and the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) opposed the move. Also, the then Dutch ambassador Alphonsus Stoelinga wrote to Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, urging him to preserve the "shared heritage".

The structure is associated with the Oscar-winning film *Gandhi*. In one scene, Mahatma Gandhi refuses to pay Rs 100 as fine to the court for allegedly disturbing peace and the judge still grants him bail. Gandhi walks out of the courtroom and waves to the crowd from the first-floor verandah. That scene was shot in what is now the DM office hall. The front building, a structure with big pillars, was shown as Motihari jail in the film.

Even though there was no move to raze the buildings following the uproar in 2016, the Patna administration kept shifting offices to other locations. When a signboard of "New Patna Collectorate" came up on the premises in 2018, apprehensions of an impending demolition loomed large. After meetings with government officials did not yield results, INTACH filed two PILs in August 2019. While the state government told the Patna High Court that the building was neither a protected ASI monument nor on the list of state's ancient buildings to be preserved, INTACH argued that it was only because the state government never pushed for its inclusion. The High Court will hear the matter on March 18.

The collectorate building was built by Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie, also known as Dutch East India Company. It used as an observation stations during the Great Trigonometrical Survey, a landmark project of the 19th century that aimed to measure the entire Indian subcontinent with scientific precision.

The British got the trading post of Patna after the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of March 17, 1824.

The old collectorate buildings previously housed Court of Appeal and from late 1850s, it has been serving as the Patna Collectorate. Out of the five buildings, two are in Dutch architectural style, one is in Anglo-Dutch and two English.

Kunal Dutt, an independent researcher who has been associated with the campaign against the planned demolition, said, "Patna Collectorate with its rich history can be preserved and augmented as a part of Gandhi Circuit with Gandhi Maidan, Gandhi Sangrahalay, Bapu Sabhagar and Khadi Mall in a 1 km range. An Oscar corner could be developed in front of the building where the *Gandhi* film scene was shot."

INTACH's Patna chapter convenor JK Lall said the Dutch history was "being presented in a non-serious way, labelling it just as a warehouse and a godown of opium to justify its razing".

FULL REPORT ON
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Mobile internet suspended in Manipur after tension grips Kamjong district

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
IMPHAL, MARCH 16

MOBILE INTERNET services were suspended in Manipur on Monday evening after a clash between two groups in Kamjong district spiralled into arson. Several houses and vehicles were burnt down in Chassad area of the district, according to official sources.

The district authority also imposed prohibitory orders under Section 144 in and around Chassad and Kamjong and along the main road of Sampui. The trigger for the confrontation is yet to be ascertained.

Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh said that a committee of officers has been constituted to look into the events leading to the violence besides identifying the people responsible for it. The three-member panel, headed by additional chief secretary Suhel Akhtar, will submit its report within 10 days.

The Chief Minister said the situation has been brought under control and additional police forces led by ADGP L. Kailun is currently stationed at Kamjong.

He said that a team of ministers and MLAs rushed to the areas after receiving the reports of the "unfortunate" incident.

"Our ministers, MLAs had assessed the situation at ground zero. The team had also met all the villagers of both sides," the Chief Minister added.

He also said that all victims of Chassad village, whose houses were destroyed in the arson, were safe and currently given refuge at an Assam Rifles post. A medical team from Imphal will also leave for Kamjong on Tuesday, he said.

Singh assured that all possible help will be extended, particularly to those who have been displaced by the violence. "We have asked the district authority to submit a detailed report on the damaged inflicted during the violence so that we can rehabilitate the displaced villagers who houses were destroyed", added Singh.

The Chief Minister said the suspension of mobile internet was a precautionary measure.

"We have no intention of harassing the public. But prevention is better than cure," he said, adding that the ban is likely to be revoked by Tuesday.

Singh also appealed the people to refrain from giving a communal tone to the incident.

"The attacks are carried out by miscreants and it was not a community-based incident. The culprits will be dealt with as per law", said Singh.

Karni Sena threatens to stop shooting of film

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAIPUR, MARCH 16

THE SHRI Rajput Karni Sena has threatened to stop the shooting of the upcoming movie Prithviraj in Rajasthan and has demanded that it be shown the script of the movie first.

Members of the outfit Saturday visited Jamwaramgarh in Jaipur district where filming was going on and told the makers that they wanted to be sure that the movie, starring Akshay Kumar as Rajput king Prithviraj Chauhan, doesn't "tamper" with facts.

"We heard that there will be romantic scenes in the film and instead of showing the bravery of Prithviraj Chauhan, it will be portrayed as a love story. This is not acceptable to us. We told the director that we won't let its shooting take place in Rajasthan unless we read its script," said Mahipal Singh Makrana, president of the fringe outfit.

He added that the Sena wanted the makers of the movie to show the script to a committee of historians from Rajasthan of the outfit's choice.

Jharkand DGP transferred, Fire chief takes over

ABHISHEK ANGAD
RANCHI, MARCH 16

JHARKHAND DGP Kamal Nayan Choubey was on Monday transferred to Delhi as Officer On Special Duty, (Police Modernisation). M V Rao, a 1987-batch IPS officer who was D-G (Fire Services and Home Guards), replaced him.

Choubey's tenure was pockmarked by incidents which called into question the state's law and order situation.

During elections, after Home Minister Amit Shah's speech on former CM Raghubar Das's work on "curbing Naxalism" in the state, four policemen were killed. In January, seven people were beheaded, which sources said was a "complete intelligence failure".

However, it was also during his tenure that convictions were secured in two gang rapes cases in very short time.

A source close to Choubey said: "Maybe the current government wanted an officer with whom they had a higher comfort level." Choubey refused to comment.

Sources say his replacement, Rao, is seen as an "upright" officer.

HOARDINGS IN LUCKNOW

UP Govt moves HC, seeks more time to file compliance report

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, MARCH 16

THE STATE government on Monday filed an affidavit in the Allahabad High Court seeking more time to file a compliance report in the case related to hoardings with details of anti-CAA protesters put up in Lucknow.

In the affidavit, the state government also referred to the Special Leave Petition (SLP) filed against the Allahabad High Court in the Supreme Court.

Last week, the Allahabad High Court had ordered the Lucknow district administration to remove banners and hoardings carrying photographs and details of over 50 people accused of violence during an anti-CAA protest in the city last year. The court also said a report of satisfactory compliance is required to be submitted by the District Magistrate to the Registrar General of the court on or before March 16.

"The state government filed an affidavit seeking more of time to file a compliance report. The state government also referred in the affidavit about SLP filed in Supreme Court against the Allahabad High Court order directing it to take down name-and-shame hoardings. We have stated in the affidavit that the SLP is pending in the Supreme Court," said Additional Advocate General Neeraj Tripathi.

On March 12 in the Supreme Court, a two-judge bench hearing UP's challenge to the High Court order on the hoardings, referred the matter to a larger bench.

EC appoints new CEO for J&K

New Delhi: The Election Commission on Monday appointed Hirdesh Kumar as the new Chief Electoral Officer of Jammu and Kashmir. The 1999-batch IAS officer of J&K cadre succeeds Shailendra Kumar.

The appointment comes after the Union government set up a Delimitation Commission for J&K less than two weeks ago. Kumar will be a member of the said commission that will be headed by retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai.

Home Minister Amit Shah, while announcing reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir, had said delimitation of Assembly constituencies of the erstwhile state would be carried out on the basis of the 2011 Census.

According to the J&K Reorganisation Act passed by Parliament last year: "...the number of seats in the Legislative Assembly of UT of Jammu and Kashmir shall be increased from 107 to 114, and delimitation of the constituencies may be determined by the EC on in the manner hereinafter provided". **ENS**

Fire In Mumbai Godown

A fire erupted in a godown in Mumbai's Sewri area on Monday. No one was injured in the incident, according to officials. *Ganesh Shirsekar*

Lethal cough syrup: Accused on run, origin of impurity yet to be traced

GAGANDEEP SINGH DHILLON
SHIMLA, MARCH 16

MORE THAN two months after at least nine children died in Jammu and Kashmir allegedly after being given a contaminated cough syrup manufactured in Himachal Pradesh, the origin of the poisonous impurity in the drug is yet to be traced, officials Monday said.

Earlier this month, owners of Digital Vision, the pharmaceutical manufacturing unit, were booked after lab reports confirmed the presence of diethylene glycol (DEG) in the solvent used to formulate the cough syrup, responsible for causing renal failure in the victims. Last week, the Sirmaur police arrested a supplier from Ambala who had allegedly sold a solvent used to formulate the "Coldbest PC" syrup.

Sirmaur SP Ajay Krishan Sharma said the company officials are absconding. "Until they are arrested and interrogated, it is difficult to pinpoint the source of DEG and ascertain at what stage it was added to the cough syrup. The supplier, who was operating without a licence, did not keep adequate records of his sale and purchase. It is likely that he bought the solvent from a Delhi-based trader whom we're trying to trace," the SP said, adding that the supplier has claimed that the the product sold by him was free from any impurity.

DSP Param Dev, the investigating official in the case, said, "We have learnt that the accused have filed a petition in the high court seeking a quashing of the FIR and a CBI inquiry".

Days after girl goes missing, Dalit teen beheaded in Maharashtra village

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
PUNE, MARCH 16

A DALIT teenager was beheaded in Maharashtra's Aurangabad district and and his parents were attacked with sharp weapons over suspicions that the boy's elder brother had "lured away" a girl from the Other Backward Class (OBC) community.

The incident took place at Lakh Khandala village in Vaijapur taluka on the night of March 14. Police have identified the deceased as Bhimraj Balasaheb Gaikwad (17). His father Balasaheb and mother Alka were shifted to a government hospital in Aurangabad city for treatment.

Bhimraj's last rites were conducted on the afternoon of March 15 in a tense situation, with several messages on the incident going viral on social media.

Based on an FIR lodged by Bhimraj's mother Alka, police on March 15 arrested two people identified as Devidas Devkar - the father of the missing girl - and his brother Rohidas Devkar under sections of the IPC and the SC/ST Act. The two were produced before a local court on Monday. "Court has remanded the accused to police custody till March 19 for further investigation," said police inspector Anant Kulkarni of Vaijapur police station.

However, Bhimraj's family has accused the police of "ignoring" a complaint regarding an alleged death threat made to the family.

According to the family, the trouble began when Bhimraj's elder brother Amol left home on March 12 for some work but did not return home. A girl from the Devkar family reportedly went missing same day, and her family lodged a missing person's complaint. That night, the girl's brother Sagar allegedly went Gaikwad's house and threatened to kill the family if they do not bring his sister and Amol by the next day.

Bhimraj and his father Balasaheb Gaikwad then approached the Aurangabad rural police on March 13. Activist Vishwas Bagul, who claimed to have accompanied them said, "We prepared a complaint application stating that Amol has gone missing and that Sagar Devkar has given threats to kill Gaikwad family. We first went to the office of deputy superintendent of police (DySP) Gopal Ranjankar with the complaint on March 13. He asked Gaikwad to visit the Vaijapur police station. He simply ignored that Gaikwad family got death threats from Devkar. We then went to Vaijapur police station, where a constable recorded missing report of Amol, but no preventive steps were taken in the view of death threats...," Bagul said.

SBI
Anytime Channels Department, Air India Building, Corporate Centre, Nariman Point, Mumbai – 400 021.
CORRIGENDUM-II
Please refer **Corrigendum-I** (RFP No.SBI/AC/2019-20/006 dated 07.02.2020) on 04.03.2020 for Installation of ATMs under Total Outsourced Model (TOM) PHASE XIV (YR. 2020). Amended RFP for installation of 10,000 ATMs is available for download from 17.03.2020. The details are available on the link "**Procurement News**" on Bank's website **https://bank.sbi** or **https://sbi.co.in.**
Place: Mumbai
Date: 17/03/2020
Sd/-
Deputy General Manager (ATM-I&S)

भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान भुवनेश्वर
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY BHUBANESWAR
Admission to M.Tech. and Ph.D. Programme (Academic Year 2020-2021)
Applications through ONLINE are invited from eligible candidates for admission into M.Tech. and Ph.D. Programme in the School of **Earth Ocean & Climate Sciences, Infrastructure, Electrical Sciences, Mechanical Sciences, Minerals Metallurgical and Materials Engineering, Basic Sciences (Ph.D. only), Humanities, Social Sciences and Management (Ph.D. only)**. For further details, visit Institute website **http://www.iitbbs.ac.in**
Sd/-
Registrar

OUTSOURCING OF SPECIALIST SERVICES AT AIR FORCE STATION, NEW DELHI FOR FY 2020-21
1. Air Officer Commanding, Air Force Station New Delhi, Race Course, New Delhi-110003, invites application for outsourcing of part time specialist servcies as per given below:-

Sl No	Service/ post	Qualification	Place of Work	Working Hours	Payment
01	Dietician	Degree in Dietics/ Health and Nutrition	Station Medicare Centre, Race Course, New Delhi-03	Thrice a week for 3 hours duration per visit	Rs. 1000/- per visit Rs. 12,000/- per month

2. Weightage will be given to Ex-servicemen and experience of working in Armed Forces Hospitals/Clinics. Candidates residing in Delhi will be given preference.
3. Interested candidates fulfilling the qualification may apply on plain paper along with photocopy of qualification & experience certificates, bio-data, contact number, two recent passport size photographs addressed to Senior Medical Officer, SMC, Air Force Station, Race Course, New Delhi-110003, by hand/post within **fifteen days** of publication of advertisement.
davp 10802/11/0073/1920

Jharkhand Education Project Council
JSCA, Stadium Road, Sector-3, Dhurwa, Ranchi – 834004
Phone : 0651-2444501, 2444502, Fax – 2444506
e-mail: jepcranchi1@gmail.com
Ref. No.: JEPC/ QU/40/128/2020/683 **Date:13/03/2020**
E-Tender Notice
JEPC, Ranchi invites E-Bids for **Publishing, Printing & Supply of Monthly Magazine.** Bidders can download bid documents from website ***https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in*** from 16.03.2020 (11.30 AM), onwards. Last date/Time for receipt of bids through e-tender is 07.04.2020 up to 05:00 PM. The pre-bid meeting will be held on 23.03.2020 at 12.30 PM.
Sd/-
(Uma Shankar Singh)
State Project Director
PR 227055 Human Resource Developement (19-20)_D

उत्तराखण्ड लोक सेवा आयोग
हरिद्वार
पिन कोड- 249404
पत्रांक : 305/03(05)/डी0आर0/डिग्री/सेवा-02/2017-18
दिनांक : 16 मार्च, 2020
विज्ञप्ति
एतद्द्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि उत्तराखण्ड शासन के उच्च शिक्षा विभाग के अन्तर्गत राजकीय महाविद्यालयों में असिस्टेंट प्रोफेसर के रिक्त पदों पर चयन हेतु प्रकाशित विज्ञापन संख्या: 01/03/डी0आर0/सेवा-2/2017-18 दिनांक 04 अगस्त, 2017 में विज्ञापित **असिस्टेंट प्रोफेसर- गृह विज्ञान (साक्षात्कार तिथि 20 मार्च, 2020), संस्कृत (साक्षात्कार तिथि 30 से 31 मार्च, 2020), एवं अर्थशास्त्र (साक्षात्कार तिथि 01 एवं 03 अप्रैल, 2020), तथा असिस्टेंट प्रोफेसर- राजनीति शास्त्र** पद हेतु अवशेष साक्षात्कार परीक्षा जो **दिनांक 17, 18, 19 मार्च, 2020** को निर्धारित थी, परन्तु **कोरोना वायरस COVID-19** के संबंध में जारी अधिसूचना संख्या: 370/XXVIII(1)/2020-01(06)/2020 दिनांक 15 मार्च, 2020 तथा शासनादेश संख्या: 234/आई0डी0एस0पी0/COVID 19/2020/543 दिनांक 15 मार्च, 2020 (एडवायजरी कोरोना वायरस **COVID-19** विषयक) के क्रम में स्थगित की जाती है।
2. उक्त के साथ ही विज्ञापन संख्या-A-1/ESO(DR)/E-1/2018 दिनांक 30 अगस्त, 2018 एवं विज्ञप्ति संख्या: 203/30/E-1/DR(ES)/2016-17 दिनांक 01 सितम्बर, 2019 के सापेक्ष **अर्थ एवं संख्याधिकारी** पद हेतु अर्ह अभ्यर्थियों के निर्धारित साक्षात्कार तिथि **27 मार्च, 2020 (शुक्रवार)** को भी अधिसूचना संख्या: 370/XXVIII(1)/2020-01(06)/2020 दिनांक 15 मार्च, 2020 तथा शासनादेश संख्या: 234/आई0डी0एस0पी0/COVID 19/2020/543 दिनांक 15 मार्च, 2020 के क्रम में अग्रिम आदेश तक स्थगित किया जाता है।
उक्त पदों पर साक्षात्कार के संबंध में आगामी तिथियों की सूचना पृथक से आयोग की वेबसाइट एवं दैनिक समाचार पत्रों के माध्यम से प्रकाशित की जायेगी।
(राजेन्द्र कुमार) सचिव।

ODISHA JOINT ENTRANCE EXAMINATION - 2020 [OJEE - 2020]
No: OJEE-100 **Date: 16.03.2020**
CORRIGENDUM NOTICE
It is hereby informed to all concerned that the notice No. OJEE-091 dated 12-03-2020 published in newspapers and websites may be read as
"admission in B.Pharm/ MBA / MCA / M.Tech/ M.Tech (Part Time)/ M.Arch/ M Plan/ M.Pharm/ Int. MBA and Lateral Entry to B.Tech/ B.Pharm Courses"
There is no "LATERAL ENTRY TO MCA" Course for the academic year 2020-21.
Sd/-
CHAIRMAN,
OJEE, Odisha

राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण विकास एवं पंचायती राज संस्थान
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT & PANCHAYATI RAJ
Rajendranagar, Hyderabad - 500030.
MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT, GOVT. OF INDIA
ADMISSION NOTIFICATION
INVITES APPLICATION FOR CAREER IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
1.AICTE Approved Post Graduate Diploma in Management - Rural Management (PGDM-RM) 2020-22 Batch-3
Two Years Residential Programme
Eligibility Bachelors Degree with at least 50% Marks (45% for SC/ST/PWD)
Selection based on valid scores in any of the qualifying exams: CAT/MAT/XAT/ATMA/CMAT/GMAT
for more detail visit: www.nirdpr.org.in
2.Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development Management (PGDRDM) 2020-21 Batch-18
One Year Residential Programme
Eligibility Bachelors Degree with at least 50% Marks (45% for SC/ST/PWD)
Selection based on valid scores in any of the qualifying exams: CAT/XAT/MAT/ATMA/CMAT/GMAT **(or)** Qualified in All India Entrance Test conducted by NIRDPR.
i)Last date :10.04.2020, ii) Commencement of Course: June 2020
for mote details visit: www.nirdpr.org.in, Phone - 040 - 24008460 / 442 / 540
Mobile : 98487 80141, email: cpgs.nird@gov.in
TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING | RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY | POLICY FORMULATION & ADVOCACY | TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER | ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES | INNOVATIVE SKILLING & LIVELIHOOD

Uttar Pradesh University of Medical Sciences
Saifai, Etawah-206130 (UP)
Advt. No. UPUMS/ACAD/11/2019-20 **Date: 16.03.2020**
ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE FACULTY POSITIONS
The Uttar Pradesh University of Medical Sciences (formerly UP Rural Institute of Medical Sciences & Research) Saifai, Etawah (established by Govt. of Uttar Pradesh under Act, 15 of 2016), as a centre of excellence in the field of medical care, education, research and functions as tertiary care referral hospital. The University has excellent road and railway connectivity, it is located about 5 km from Agra-Lucknow expressway, 15 km from NH-2, and about 20 km from the nearest railway station Etawah Jn. The applications are invited from the faculty position. (Professor, Associate Professor, and Assistant Professor) in various departments and Medical Officer/Casulaty Medical Officer in this University.
For detailed information regarding general conditions, fee, essential qualification, experience, publications, pay scale, age etc., kindly visit the University website-**www.upums.ac.in**.
Note :- Last date for receipt of online application is **14 April, 2020** and the hard copy of the same with the self attested copies of all the required documents enclosed in an envelope superscribed with advertisement number and name of the post, should reach the office of Vice Chancellor, U.P. University of Medical Sciences, Saifai, Etawah-206130 (U.P.) by speed post/registered post/courier till **21 April, 2020, 5:00 pm.**
Registrar

EXPRESS Careers
BOMBAY COLLEGE OF PHARMACY
Kalina, Santacruz (East), Mumbai - 400 098.
APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FOR THE FOLLOWING POST FROM THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2019-20
AIDED

Sr. No.	Cadre	Total No. of Posts	Posts Reserved for
1.	PRINCIPAL	01	01-OPEN

The above post is open to all, however candidates from any category can apply for the post.
Reservation for women will be as per **University Circular No. BCC/16/74/1998 dated 10th March, 1998. 4% reservation shall be for the persons with disability as per University Circular No. Special Cell/ICC/2019-20/05 dated 05th July, 2019.**
Candidates having knowledge of Marathi will be preferred.
The Educational Qualification, Experience & pay-scale for the post of Principal is as prescribed by the University of Mumbai, AICTE from time to time. Kindly refer Government of Maharashtra G.R.No. सावेआ-१११२/प्र.क्र.४४/१९/तां.शि.२, dated 11th September, 2019.
Applicants who are already employed must send their application through proper channel. Applicants are required to account for breaks, if any, in their academic career.
Applications with full details should reach the **CHAIRMAN, GOVERNING BODY, BOMBAY COLLEGE OF PHARMACY, KALINA SANTACRUZ (E), MUMBAI - 400 098,** within 15 days from the date of publication of this advertisement. **This is University approved advertisement.**
For further details and format of application visit the college website **www.bcp.edu.in**
Sd/-
CHAIRMAN

Man arrested for post on UP CM

Bulandshahr: A 36-year-old man, Muqaddar Pahalwan, was arrested on Monday for allegedly posting an "offensive picture" of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Facebook, police here said. "A complaint was made against the accused by a Bajrang Dal member here in which he alleged that an edited picture of the chief minister has been posted on Facebook," police said. The FIR has been registered under IT Act sections 67 (publishing obscene material) and 67A (publishing or transmitting of material containing sexually explicit act), police said. **PTI**

Sedition charge against UP lawyer for calling Adityanath terrorist in tweet

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, MARCH 16

A DISTRICT court lawyer in Kanpur was arrested on the charge of sedtion for retweeting a video of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and calling him a terrorist on Sunday.

The man, Abdul Hannan, commented on a tweet by State Information Department's Media Advisor Shalabh Mani Tripathi on Saturday. The tweet by Tripathi had a video of Adityanath's Vidhan Sabha speech supporting cane charge on people protesting against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and National Register of Citizens (NRC).

He captioned the video: "Tum kagaz nahi dikhaoge, aur danga bhi failaoge, to hum lathi bhi chalvayenge, gharbaar bhi bikvayenge... aur haan poster bhi lagwayenge (You will not show the papers and will also participate in riots, then we will cane charge, auction your houses and put up posters)."

Hannan retweeted Tripathi's post by calling Adityanath a terrorist.

In another tweet, Hannan announced that he would provide free legal help to protesters and requested all "constitution lovers" to follow him and share his tweet.

"We have registered an FIR against the person. He has been arrested and sent to jail after being produced before the court," said Ajay Seth, SHO of Kalyanpur police station.

'Cattle smuggler' killed in Mathura encounter: police

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, MARCH 16

A SUSPECTED cattle smuggler died in Mathura district on Monday after suffering a bullet wound while exchanging fire with the police in the Chhaata police station area, officials said. Two of his associates were injured.

Circle Officer Jagdish Kaliram said the incident occurred at the KD Medical police outpost - close to the Delhi-Agra highway - around 2.30 am. "A routine barrier had been put up at NH 2 and checking was taking place," said Dr Gaurav Grover, SSP Mathura. "A speeding Bolero [pickup truck] drove past the barrier. The police began pursuit. Once cornered, the accused opened fire and we retaliated. Three of the accused were injured."

Two constables were also wounded in the incident. A gunman identified as 24-year-old Afsar bled to death after taking a bullet to his leg, said the police. The police arrested two men, identified as Irfan, 24, and 26-year-old Saadiq, from the spot. Two others managed to escape.

DECEMBER 16 RAPE AND MURDER

Three death row convicts move ICJ

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THREE OF the four death row convicts in the December 2012 gangrape-murder case have moved the International Court of Justice (ICJ), appealing for an urgent hearing to prevent their execution.

Vinay Sharma, Pawan Kumar Gupta and Akshay Kumar Singh, moved the petition through their lawyer A P Singh, calling the execution of death warrants illegal.

Singh, in the petition, also mentioned the coronavirus outbreak in Delhi, saying: "It also important to (state) here that due to worst air quality in the world and Covid-19 also in Delhi NCR... and other states are facing medical emergency... Functioning of courts from Monday, 16.03.2020, shall be restricted to urgent matters with such member of benches as may be found appropriate. Everyone is aware of what is happening in (the) world and also Delhi-NCR with regard to water and air. Life is going short to short, then why death penalty?" the petition read.

The petition stated that Tihar Jail authorities were preparing for the execution of the four convicts in a "hurried manner (and) such a hasty and secretive execution will plainly (be) illegal as above mentioned three convicts... are yet to avail their legal remedy".

It also stated that a petition before the Delhi Lieutenant Governor on the issue of suspension of sentence; a criminal case in Karkardooma court in which the court has asked for an action-taken report from police; a writ petition challenging rejection of mercy petition during the election before the Delhi High Court; two other criminal appeals; and a special leave petition were pending.

The death row convicts requested the ICJ's help to "prevent this barbaric and inhuman punishment from being inflicted upon convicts, (as) the death penalty has no relevance in a progressive and modern international era".

A Delhi court has fixed the date of execution of the four convicts on March 20 at 5.30 am. The death warrants have been stayed three times in the past, pending legal remedies of the four convicts.

Killing of IAF men: Yasin Malik pleads not guilty

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 16

JAMMU KASHMIR Liberation Front (JKLF) supremo Yasin Malik and six others on Monday pleaded "not guilty" in the 30-year old killing of four IAF personnel in Srinagar during 1990.

"I do not plead guilty. It is a fabricated case," he said when Special judge NIA Subash Gupta read out the charges to him through video conferencing and asked him whether he pleaded guilty or wanted to face trial. Another accused Showkat Bakshi was also produced before court through video conferencing and he too pleaded not guilty.

The other five accused — Ali Mohammad Mir, Manzoor Ahmed Sofi alias Mustafa, Javed Ahmed Mir alias Nalka, Nanaji alias Saleem, Javed Ahmed Zargar — were present in the court along with their counsels. As all the accused pleaded not guilty, the judge fixed the matter for March 30 when it will look at the evidence in the case.

The NIA court on Saturday charged JKLF chief Malik and six others in the killing of four Air Force officers in Kashmir in 1990.

उ.प्र. पावर ट्रान्समिशन कारपोरेशन लि. ई–निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना अनुभवी फर्मों/ ठेकेदार/ कार्यदायी संस्थाओं से विद्युत पारेषण मंडल मेरठ के अंतर्गत निम्न कार्यों हेतु मोहर बन्द ई–निविदायें ई–पोर्टल (www.etender.up.nic.in) पर दो भागों में आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। भाग–1 में ई–निविदाओं के प्रपत्र निर्धारित शुल्क आर.टी.जी.एस./एन.ई.एफ.टी. एवं निर्धारित धरोहर राशि आर.टी.जी.एस./ एन.ई.एफ.टी./बैंक गारन्टी (अलग–अलग) के माध्यम से अधीक्षण अभियंता, विद्युत पारेषण मण्डल, मेरठ के पक्ष में **State Bank of India, Cantt Branch, Meerut Account No. 11047201099, IFSC Code SBIN0000680** में जमा करायी जायेंगी। बैंक जमा की साक्ष्य यथा योज्य यू.टी.आर. संख्या, पे–इन स्लिप मूल की प्रति निविदा के प्रथम भाग के साथ संलग्न किये जायें। ई–निविदा के प्रथम भाग (यू.टी.आर. संख्या, पे–इन स्लिप प्रति, निविदा प्रपत्र, पैन कार्ड, इन्कम टैक्स रिटर्न, जी.एस.टी. प्रपत्र की स्वयं प्रमाणित छायाप्रति एवं तकनीकी अनुभव आदि) ई–पोर्टल पर स्कैन्ड प्रतियॉ (PDF format) तथा ई–निविदा के द्वितीय भाग (प्राइजबिड) में दरें एवं वाणिज्यक नियम व शर्तें ई–पोर्टल (www.etender.up.nic.in) पर निम्नलिखित तालिका के अनुसार अपलोड की जायेगी। निविदा शुल्क, धरोहर राशि एवं अन्य व्यवसायिक प्रपत्र हार्ड कॉपी में अथवा व्यक्तिगत संवाहक के माध्यम से इस कार्यालय में प्राप्त नहीं किये जायेंगे। ई–निविदा भाग द्वितीय (प्राइजबिड) खुलने की तिथि हेतु तदोनुसार वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेगी। ई–निविदा का प्रथम भाग, तालिका में अंकित दिनांक एवं समय अनुसार सार्वजनिक रूप से खोला जायेगा। ई–निविदा खुलने की तिथि पर अवकाश होने की स्थिति में ई–निविदा अगले कार्य दिवस पर निर्धारित समय तक स्वीकार की जायेगी एवं निर्धारित समय पर खोली जायेगी। ई–निविदाओं को बिना कोई कारण बताये ई–निविदा/ई–निविदाओं को अस्वीकार/विभाजित करने का अधिकार अधोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता के पास सुरक्षित रहेगा। धरोहर/ई–निविदा राशि रहित व सशर्त ई–निविदायें स्वीकार नहीं की जायेंगी। कृपया विस्तृत जानकारी, डाउन लोड, अन्य संशोधनों एवं ई–निविदा प्रस्तुत करने के दिनांक तक विस्तार आदि के सम्बन्ध में कृपया **www.etender.up.nic.in** पर लॉग आन करें। **निविदाओं का विवरण निम्न प्रकार हैः– क्रम सं. 1 निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी–01/20–21:–** विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड– द्वितीय मेरठ के अन्तर्गत उपखण्ड–मवाना के अधीन विभिन्न 132 के.वी. लाइनों के वार्षिक अनुरक्षण से सम्बन्धित कार्य। **धरोहर राशि** 10000.00, **निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य** 1180.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय** 16.04.2020 सांय 05 बजे तक, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय** 17.04.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय** तद्नुसार वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेगी। **क्रम सं. 2 निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी–02/20–21:–** विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड– द्वितीय मेरठ के अन्तर्गत उपखण्ड–प्रथम के अधीन विभिन्न 132 के.वी. लाइनों के वार्षिक अनुरक्षण से सम्बन्धित कार्य। **धरोहर राशि** 7000.00, **निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य** 1180.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय** 16.04.2020 सांय 05 बजे तक, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय** 17.04.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय** तद्नुसार वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेगी। **क्रम सं. 3 निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी–03/20–21:–** विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड– द्वितीय मेरठ के अन्तर्गत उपखण्ड–तृतीय के अधीन विभिन्न 220 के.वी. लाइनों के वार्षिक अनुरक्षण से सम्बन्धित कार्य। **धरोहर राशि** 5000.00, **निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य** 590.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय** 16.04.2020 सांय 05 बजे तक, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय** 17.04.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय** तद्नुसार वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेगी। **क्रम सं. 4 निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी–04/20–21:–** विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड– द्वितीय मेरठ के अन्तर्गत 132 के.वी. उपकेन्द्र सरधना पर द्वितीय श्रोत हेतु 01 नग 132 के.वी. बे के निर्माण से सम्बन्धित कार्य। **धरोहर राशि** 8000.00, **निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य** 590.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय** 16.04.2020 सांय 05 बजे तक, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय** 17.04.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय** तद्नुसार वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेगी। **क्रम सं. 5 निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी–05/20–21:–** विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड बड़ौत के अन्तर्गत 132 के.वी. उपकेन्द्र छपरौली (बागपत) के वार्षिक आधार पर परिचालन एवं अनुरक्षण से सम्बन्धित कार्य। **धरोहर राशि** 23000.00, **निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य** 1770.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय** 18.04.2020 सांय 05 बजे तक, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय** 20.04.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय** तद्नुसार वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेगी। **क्रम सं. 6 निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी–06/20–21:–** विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड–द्वितीय मेरठ के अन्तर्गत 220 के.वी. उपकेन्द्र चरला पर क्षमतावृद्धि हेतु 01 नग 100 एम.वी.ए. परिवर्तक एवं 01 नग 40 एम.वी.ए. परिवर्तक स्थापित करने से सम्बन्धित कार्य। **धरोहर राशि** 97000, **निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य** 7080.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय** 18.04.2020 सांय 05 बजे तक, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय** 20.04.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय** तद्नुसार वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेगी। **क्रम सं. 7 निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी–07/20–21:–** विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड– द्वितीय मेरठ के अन्तर्गत 220 के.वी. उपकेन्द्र चरला पर स्थापित मल्सीफायर सिस्टम के अनुरक्षण से सम्बन्धित कार्य। **धरोहर राशि** 2000.00, **निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य** 590.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय** 18.04.2020 सांय 05 बजे तक, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय** 20.04.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक, **ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय** तद्नुसार वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेगी। **क्रम सं. 8. निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी–08/20–21** विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड द्वितीय मेरठ के अंतर्गत 132 के.वी. उपकेन्द्र मेरठ के अंतर्गत 132 के.वी. उपकेन्द्र हस्तिनापुर पर स्थापित एयर कंडीशनर के अनुरक्षण से संबंधित कार्य। धरोहर राशि 2000.00 निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य 590.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय 18.04.2020 सायं 05 बजे तक ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय 20.04.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय तदनुसार वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेंगी। **क्रम सं. 9. निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी–09/20–21** विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड द्वितीय मेरठ के अंतर्गत 132 के.वी. उपकेन्द्रों पर मेकेनिकल जॉइंट के सुदृढ़ीकरण से संबंधित कार्य। धरोहर राशि 2000.00 निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य 590.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय 22.04.2020 सायं 05 बजे तक ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय 23.04.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय तदनुसार वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेंगी। **क्रम सं. 10. निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी–10/20–21** विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड द्वितीय मेरठ के अंतर्गत 220/132 के.वी. उपकेन्द्रों पर फॉयर उपकरणों हेतु फायर हट बनाने से संबंधित कार्य। धरोहर राशि 2000.00 निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य 590.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय 22.04.2020 सायं 05 बजे तक ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय 23.04.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय तदनुसार वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेंगी। **क्रम सं. 11. निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी–11/20–21** विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड द्वितीय मेरठ के अंतर्गत 132 के.वी. उपकेन्द्रों पर सैन्डपिट के शैड के निर्माण से संबधित कार्य। धरोहर राशि 2000.00 निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य 590.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय 22.04.2020 सायं 05 बजे तक ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय 23.04.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय तदनुसार वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेंगी। **क्रम सं. 12. निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी–12/20–21** विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड बड़ौत खण्ड बड़ौत के अंतर्गत विभिन्न 132 के.वी. उपकेन्द्रों पर विभिन्न बोर्ड के निर्माण कराकर लगाने से संबंधित कार्य। धरोहर राशि 2000.00 निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य 590.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय 22.04.2020 सायं 05 बजे तक ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय 23.04.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक ई–पोर्टल पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय तदनुसार वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेंगी। **हस्ता/– अधीक्षण अभियंता, विद्युत पारेषण मण्डल, 130–डी, ''पारेषण भवन'' विक्टोरिया पार्क, मेरठ। ''राष्ट्र हित में ऊर्जा बचायें''** पत्रांक 821/वि पा. मे./मेरठ दिनांक 16.03.20

उ.प्र. पावर ट्रांसमिशन कारपोरेशन लि. ई–निविदा अल्पकालिक निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना निम्नलिखित मुहरबंद निविदा दो भागों में अनुभवी ठेकेदारों से निम्न कार्य के सम्पादन हेतु आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। प्रत्येक निविदा के प्रथम भाग में धरोहर राशि एफ.डी.आर./सी.डी.आर. (राष्ट्रीयकृत बैंक) के रूप में अधीक्षण अभियंता, विद्युत पारेषण मण्डल मेरठ के पक्ष में देय हो एवं इन्कम टैक्स एवं पैन नं. इन्कम टैक्स रिटर्न, जी.एस.टी. पंजीकरण प्रपत्र की छाया प्रति तथा अनुभव संबंधी प्रपत्र अवश्य होने चाहिए अन्यथा की स्थिति में निविदा का भाग–2 विचारणीय नहीं होगा। द्वितीय भाग में वाणिज्यिक नियम, दों एवं शर्तें होनी चाहिए। निविदा प्रपत्र कार्यालय समय में निविदा खुलने के एक दिवस पूर्व 16.00 बजे तक कार्यालय से ही आवापसीय निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य भुगतान कर प्राप्त किये जा सकते हैं। डाक द्वारा मंगाये जाने हेतु रु. 300/– अतिरिक्त देय होंगे, पोस्टल आर्डर जो कि अधीक्षण अभियंता, विद्युत पारेषण मण्डल मेरठ के पक्ष में देय हो, भेजकर प्राप्त किया जा सकता है। डाक द्वारा मंगाये गये निविदा प्रपत्र के प्राप्त न होने अथवा विलम्ब के लिये विभाग उत्तरदायी नहीं होगा। निविदाएं अधोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता के कार्यालय में निविदा खुलने की निर्धारित दिनांक को 14.00 बजे तक प्राप्त की जायेगीं और उसी दिन सार्वजनिक रूप से ठेकेदारों अथवा उनके प्रतिनिधियों की उपस्थिति में 15.00 बजे खोली जायेंगी उक्त तिथि को अवकाश होने पर निविदाएं अगले कार्य दिवस में निर्धारित समय पर खोली जायंगी। आमंत्रित निविदाएं विभाग की वेबसाईट www.upptcl.org से भी डाउनलोड की जा सकती है जिसके लिये उपरोक्तानुसार निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य का डिमाण्ड ड्राफ्ट अधीक्षण अभियंता, विद्युत पारेषण मण्डल मेरठ के पक्ष में देय हो, निविदा के साथ संलग्न कर भेजना आवश्यक होगा अन्यथा निविदाओं को स्वीकार नहीं किया जायेगा। किसी अथवा समस्त निविदाओं को, बिना कोई कारण बताये, निरस्त करने का अधिकार अधोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता को सुरक्षित होगा। टी–175/19–20 (निविदा खोले जाने की तिथि 30.03.2020) विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड द्वितीय मेरठ हेतु एक नग डीजल चलित कार, (चालक सहित) किराये पर उपलब्ध कराने का कार्य। धरोहर राशि रु. 3,000.00/– (रुपये तीन हजार मात्र), निविदा प्रपत्र का जी.एस.टी. सहित मूल्य रु. 590.00/– **हस्ता/–अधीक्षण अभियंता विद्युत पारेषण मण्डल, 130–डी, विक्टोरिया पार्क, मरेठ। ''राष्ट्रहित में ऊजा बचायें''।** पत्रांक 821 वि.पा.म./मेरठ दिनांक 16/03/2020

INDIAN RAILWAY CATERING & TOURISM CORPORATION LTD
(A Govt. of India Enterprise-Mini Ratna)
CIN NO – L74899DL1999GOI101707

NOTICE INVITING OPEN E-TENDER
IRCTC –WEST ZONE invites the following Open E–Tender (through Two Packet system):-

Units	Particulars	Availability of E-Tender Document	Pre-Bid Meeting Date & Time	Last Date of Submission
Train Side Vending (TSV)	Open E-Tender for Provision of on board Catering Services through Train Side Vending (TSV), in Identified Mail / Express / Super Fast Trains running without pantry car for a period of 05 years. (5 TSV Sections)	w.e.f. 16.03.2020	23.03.2020 at 15:00 hrs.	07.04.2020 up to 15:00 hrs

Tender document downloading & participation can be done on website:- www.tenderwizard.com/IRCTC
In case of any corrigendum/addendum issued on the above advertisement, it will be published only on website www.irctc.com and www.tenderwizard.com/IRCTC
Office Address:- IRCTC Ltd., Zonal office (West Zone), 2nd Floor, New Administrative Bldg, D.N. Road, Central Railway, CSMT Mumbai - 400001. Tel. 022-22618062/63/64.
"To book your meal online, please log on to www.ecatering.irctc.co.in or Call Toll free number 1323"

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
Building Organization - Form of Contract : Lumpsum
Short Time Tender Notice No. 31/VLR-CLE/2019-2020/Dated : 16.03.2020

For and on behalf of Governor of Tamil Nadu Sealed Tenders are invited by the Special Chief Engineer, PWD., Buildings (Construction and Maintenance) Circle, Vellore-1 for the following works from the eligible Contractors registered in Public works Department of Government of Tamil Nadu, upto **3.00 pm** as per office clock on **27.03.2020.** under Two cover system (Pre qualification and Price tender). The Prequalification cover (Cover I) alone will be opened on **27.03.2020** at **3.30** PM by the Special Chief Engineer in presence of the Tenderers or their authorized agents.

PACKAGE WORKS - Slice 1 : Construction of District Munsif-cum-Judicial Magistrate Court building at **Vanur,** and Slice 2 : Construction of Judicial Officer's Quarters at **Vanur** in **Villupuram District.**

The E.M.D. remittance and other details can also be available from the Govt designated website **(http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in)** and Office of the Superintending Engineer, PWD, Building (C&M) Circle, Vellore - 632 001. The tender schedule can be downloaded at free of cost from the above website upto **26.03.2020 - 5.45 pm.**

Special Chief Engineer, PWD., Buildings (C&M) Circle, Vellore - 1.
DIPR/ 1431 /TENDER/2020

E-Procurement Cell
OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
URBAN DEVELOPMENT & HOUSING DEPARTMENT
MIHIJAM NAGAR PARISHAD, JHARKHAND.

E-Tender Corrigendum Reference No. - MNP/SBD/02/2019-20/02 Date:-13/03/2020
Corrigendum-2

1.	Name of the work	Construction of Road at (a) N.H.-419 Railway Fatak, Kangoi to Hadul Kanali Middle School via Town Hall (L-2.250 Km.) & (b) N.H.-419 Railway Fatak, Kangoi to Bangal Border via Lakhu Sao Talab (L-0.650 Km.) Total 2.9 Km
2.	E-Tender Reference No. & Date	MNP/SBD/02/2019-20, Dated:-25/01/2020
3.	Tender PR No.	224478 Urban Development & Housing Deptartement 19-20
4.	Corrigendum PR No.	225318 Urban Development & Housing Deptartement 19-20*D

Change in Period of availability of tenders online/date & time of bidding on-line/ last date of seeking clarification/ date of opening of tender papers are as given below :-

Date of Publication of Tender on website	Closing date/Time for receipt of Tender on website	Date of Receiving of Hard Copy Tender Fee/EMD/Copy of all uploaded Documents	Date & Time of opening of technical bid
17/03/2020 (17:00 hrs)	24/03/2020 (17:00 hrs)	25/03/2020 (11:00 hrs to 16:00 hrs)	25/03/2020 (17:00 hrs)

All other Details will be same as published in tender.
Note: Authority reserves right to cancel or amend tender without assigning any reason thereof.
Further details can be seen on website http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in
Executive officer
Mihijam Nagar Parishad
PR227038 (Urban Development)19-20*D

पिंपरी चिंचवड महानगरपालिका, पिंपरी-१८
स्थापत्य विभाग
ई-निविदा सूचना क्र.-स्थापत्य/क-मुख्यालय/११/०१/२०१९-२०२०

पिंपरी-चिंचवड महानगरपालिकेकडून खालील नमूद केलेल्या कामांसाठी ई-टेंडरिंग पद्धतीने पर्सेंट रेट निविदा मागविण्यात येत आहेत.
१) निविदेचा दर भरताना एकूण निविदा रकमेतून रॉयल्टी रक्कम व मटेरियल टेस्टींग रक्कम वगळून आलेल्या रकमेवर निविदा दर भरावा.
२) प्रचलित दराने GST बिलात अदा केली जाईल, त्यामुळे GST वगळून दर द्यावेत. ३) रॉयल्टी रकमेबाबत म.न.पा. जे धोरण ठरवेल ते आपणावर बंधनकारक राहील.

अ. क्र.	कामाचे नाव	एकूण निविदा रक्कम	रॉयल्टी व मटेरियल टेस्टींग रक्कम वगळून निविदा रक्कम	रॉयल्टीची रक्कम	मटेरियल टेस्टींग चार्जेस	बयाणा रक्कम	अनामत रक्कम	कामाची मुदत (महिने)	निविदा फॉर्म फी 'जीएसटी'सह (परत न मिळणारी)
१)	प्रभाग क्र. २, बोऱ्हाडेवाडी विनायकनगर, मोशी येथे छ. संभाजी महाराज व सरसेनापती हंबीरराव मोहिते यांचा पुतळा उभारणे.	रु. ३२८,४७५,०००	रु. ००	रु. ००	रु. ००	रु. १,६४२,३७५	रु. १६,४२३,७५०	१८ महिने	रु. ३७,४३०/-

निविदेचे वेळापत्रक		
ई-निविदा उपलब्ध कालावधी	:	दिनांक १७/०३/२०२० ते ३१/०३/२०२०
निविदा स्वीकृती अंतिम दिनांक व वेळ	:	दिनांक ३१/०३/२०२०, दुपारी ३:०० वाजेपर्यंत.
निविदापूर्व सभा दिनांक व वेळ	:	दिनांक २४/०३/२०२०, दुपारी ३:०० वाजेपर्यंत.
निविदा उघडण्याचा दिनांक	:	दिनांक ०३/०४/२०२०, सकाळी ११:०० वा. (शक्य झाल्यास)

कोणतेही कारण न देता निविदा पूर्णतः किंवा अंशतः मंजूर अथवा नामंजूर करण्याचा अधिकार मा. आयुक्त यांनी स्वतःकडे राखून ठेवला आहे. निविदा संचाची विक्री https://mahatenders.gov.in या संकेतस्थळावर ई-निविदा सूचनेत नमूद केलेल्या तारखेनुसार सुरु राहील.
सविस्तर निविदा व निविदेबाबतची इतर माहिती खालील संकेतस्थळावर उपलब्ध आहे. (1) www.pcmcindia.gov.in (2) https://mahatenders.gov.in
सदरची ई-निविदा प्रणाली वापराबाबत काही तांत्रिक अडचण निर्माण झाल्यास NIC यांचेकडील ई-मेल support-eproc@nic.in अथवा Help Desk Number 0120-4200462, 0120-4001002, 0120-4001005, 0120-6277787 या दूरध्वनीवर संपर्क साधावा.

सही/-
- शहर अभियंता,
पिंपरी चिंचवड महानगरपालिका
पिंपरी, पुणे-४११०१८

जाहिरात क्र. ३२७
का. क्र. स्था/नि/क-मुख्य/कावि/२०७/२०२०
दिनांक १६/०३/२०२०

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HARYANA GOVERNMENT
CORRIGENDUM NOTICE

Sr. No.	NAME OF BOARD CORP./AUTH	OLD REFERENCE/ NIT NO.	NATURE OF CORRIGENDUM	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/ CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1.	HPGCL, PANIPAT	NIT NO.PTP/POM-331789) TENDER ID 2020_HBC_116403_1	Start date 27.01.2020 at 17.00 hrs. & Last date 08.04.2020 at 13.00 hrs.	www.hpgcl.org.in	0180-2566015 xenmtcplg1@gmail.com
2.	HPGCL, PANIPAT	546A/MP-7026/FANS DUCTING /2019 (TENDER ID NO. 2019_HBC_101950_1)	Closing date 27.03.2020 at 13.00 Hrs.	www.hpgcl.org.in	9355869303 xenmtcplg1@gmail.com
3.	HPGCL, PANIPAT	551/MP-7031/AIR FLOW TEST /2019 (TENDER ID NO. 2019_HBC_101204_1)	Closing date 27.03.2020 at 13.00 Hrs.	www.hpgcl.org.in	9355869303 xenmtcplg1@gmail.com
4.	HPGCL, PANIPAT	(NIT NO.PTP/POM-100048) (TENDER ID 2020_HBC_ 116734 _1)	Start date 31.01.2020 at 18.00 Hrs. & Last date 25.03.2020 at 13.00 Hrs.	www.hpgcl.org.in	0180-2566015 xenmtcplg1@gmail.com
5.	HPGCL, PANIPAT	(NIT NO.405/BMD-27/VOL-XVII) (TENDER ID 2020_HBC_ 117179_1)	Start date 05.02.2020 at 11.00 Hrs. & Last date 21.03.2020 at 17.00 Hrs.	www.hpgcl.org.in	0180-2566015 xenmtcplg1@gmail.com
6.	HVPNL, GURUGRAM	E-TENDER ENQUIRY NO. 13/CWG/2019-20 DATED.03.02.2020 (ONLINE TENDER ID-2020_HBC_116912_1)	Corrigendum No.02 date of bid Submission. 30.03.2020. at 01.00 P.M. Opening 03.04.2020 at 01.00 PM	https://www.hvpn.org.in.	0172-2583789 pro@hvpn.org.in
7.	HVPNL, ROHTAK	MEMO NO. CH. 08/NIT NO. 24/2019-20XEN/TS/RTK DATED.03.03.2020.	Making of trench cover for yard trench of 132KV S/Stn. Sec.-03, Rohtak.The last date of online bid submission is extended upto 19.03.2020 (13.00 hrs)	https://www.hvpn.org.in.	0172-2583789 pro@hvpn.org.in
8.	HVPNL, ROHTAK	E-TENDER ENQUIRY NO. 15/CWR/2019-20 DATED.18.02.2020 (ONLINE TENDER ID-2020_HBC_119112_1)	Corrigendum No.01, The last date of online bid submission is extended upto 19.03.2020 (13.00 hrs)	https://www.hvpn.org.in.	0172-2583789 pro@hvpn.org.in
9.	HVPNL, PANCHKULA	NIT NO. 1095 (QDP-1215) DATED: 17.01.2020	THE LAST DATE OF ONLINE BID SUBMISSION IS EXTENDED UPTO 30.03.2020 up to 17.00 hrs.	https://www.hvpn.org.in.	0172-2583789 pro@hvpn.org.in
10.	HVPNL, PANCHKULA	NIT NO. 1096 (QDP-1216) DATED: 17.01.2020	THE LAST DATE OF ONLINE BID SUBMISSION IS EXTENDED UPTO 30.03.2020 up to 17.00 hrs.	https://www.hvpn.org.in.	0172-2583789 pro@hvpn.org.in
11.	HVPNL, GURUGRAM	E-TENDER ENQUIRY NO. 04/CWG/2019-20 DATED.06.11.2019 (ONLINE TENDER ID-2019_HBC_107835_1)	Corrigendum No.07 date of bid Submission 30.03.2020. at 01:00 PM. Opening 03.04.2020 at 01.00 P.M.	https://www.hvpn.org.in.	0172-2583789 pro@hvpn.org.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT: www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in
80397/HRY.

परिवहन विभाग
कार्यालय परिवहन आयुक्त, हरियाणा
30 बेज बिल्डिंग, द्वितीय तल, सैक्टर 17–बी,
चंडीगढ़–160017

सार्वजनिक सूचना
स्टेज कैरिज परमिट

सभी संबंधित को सूचित किया जाता है कि भारत के माननीय सर्वोच्च न्यायालय द्वारा एस.एल.पी. 22800/2017 (नागरिक) में उत्पन्न सिविल अपील संख्या 556/2020 में पारित आदेशों का प्रासंगिक उद्धरण निम्न प्रकार से है :–

The appellant(s)/ applicant(s) or any other eligible person will be free to make application(s) to the concerned authority, if already not made, for registration and for grant of permit within one week from today, and if so made, the competent authority may consider the same as per law expeditiously and in any case befroe 20th March, 2020.

उपर्युक्त के मध्यनजर सरकार द्वारा उक्त सिविल याचिका में आवेदकों तथा अन्य पात्र व्यक्तियों को निजी सुनवाई देने हेतु निर्णय लिया गया है। इस बारे में निजी सुनवाई प्रधान सचिव, (परिवहन विभाग) हरियाणा सरकार के सम्मुख कॉन्फ्रेन्स कक्ष, छठी मंजिल, नव सिविल सचिवालय, सैक्टर–17, चंडीगढ़ में प्रातः 10.00 बजे से आरम्भ होकर निम्नानुसार होगीः–

क्र. संख्या	अपीलकर्ता/ आवेदक तथा अन्य पात्र व्यक्तियों की श्रेणी	निजी सुनवाई की समय एवं तारीख
1.	सभी निम्नलिखित श्रेणियों के पंजीकरण 18.03.2020 प्रातः 10.00 बजे से प्रारम्भ होगा।	
2.	वह व्यक्ति/आवेदक जिन्होंने माननीय सर्वोच्च न्यायालय के आदेशानुसार 21.01.2020 से 28.01.2020 तक की अवधि में पूर्ण आवेदन किया है।	18.03.2020, 2.30 बजे से 3.30 बजे तक
3.	(i) वह व्यक्ति/आवेदक जिन्होंने अपनी बसे स्टेज कैरिज स्कीम 2016 या 2017 के तहत परमिट लेने हेतू खरीदी थी परन्तु उन्हें परमिट नहीं मिल पाया। (ii) वह व्यक्ति जिन्हें स्टेज कैरिज स्कीम 2017 के तहत अस्थायी परमिट दिया गया।	18.03.2020, 3.30 बजे से 4.30 बजे तक
4.	वह व्यक्ति/ आवेदक जिन्हें स्टेज कैरिज स्कीम 2016 व प्रारूप स्टेज कैरिज स्कीम 2017 के तहत परमिट देने हेतू माननीय पंजाब तथा हरियाणा उच्च न्यायालय या किसी अन्य न्यायालय द्वारा कोई निर्देश उपर्युक्त के अतिरिक्त दिए गए हैं।	18.03.2020, 4.30 बजे से 5.30 बजे तक

सभी संबंधित को सूचित किया जाता है कि वे उपर्युक्त समय अनुसार आने का कष्ट करें।
हस्ता./–
परिवहन आयुक्त, हरियाणा।
80405/HRY.

epaper.indianexpress.com

THE WORLD

QUOTE UNQUOTE

"It looks as though we are now approaching the fast growth part of the upward curve and without drastic action cases could double every 5 or 6 days"

— BORIS JOHNSON,
on the need to avoid non-essential social contact and unnecessary travel

TOP OF THE WORLD

Donald Trump

USA

Stop hoarding food, supplies, says Trump

THE WHITE House on Sunday urged Americans against "hoarding" as many flocked to supermarkets to stock up on essentials. President Donald Trump held a phone call with more than two dozen grocery store and supply chain executives, White House spokesman Judd Deere said in a statement. "The President reminded participants that this is an all-of-America approach and each of their stores and the stores they support can help Americans feel calm and safe..." Deere said. "Supply chains in the US are strong and it is unnecessary for the American public to hoard daily essentials," he said.

ISRAEL

Indian-origin Jew beaten up in virus linked hate crime

Jerusalem: An Indian-origin Jew was badly beaten by two persons who called him a "Chinese" and yelled 'Corona! Corona" in Israel's Tiberias city, in an apparent racist assault linked to the outbreak. Am-Shalem Singson, 28, hailing from Manipur and Mizoram, was admitted to Poriya hospital with severe chest injuries, Channel 13 reported. The police continues to search for the two suspects. Singson told police he tried very hard to explain to the attackers that he was not Chinese and was not infected by the coronavirus, but it did not help.

BANGLADESH

Travel bans in place, education institutions shut

Dhaka: Bangladesh on Monday closed all education institutions from March 18 to March 31, and imposed a ban on the entry of Europeans and travellers from several countries, including India, as part of measures to combat the coronavirus "All educational institutions across the country will remain closed from March 18 to March 31," said Deputy Minister for Education Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury. The cabinet asked parents to keep their children indoors, said a spokesperson.

SWITZERLAND

Geneva limits gatherings to five people

Geneva: The Swiss region of Geneva declared a "state of necessity" on Monday due to the coronavirus global pandemic, shutting bars and restaurants and limiting gatherings to just five people. Geneva city, home to many international institutions including the United Nations' headquarters in Europe and the World Health Organisation, banned non-work gatherings of more than five people both indoors or outdoors. "The council took strong restrictive measures this morning to make haste. Geneva will be in semi-containment," canton council president Antonio Hodgers said, as per a report.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Test, test, test: WHO on fighting outbreak

AP

Reuters

Reuters

FROM LEFT: A traffic officer checks temperatures of motorcycle riders at a checkpoint in Manila, Philippines, on Monday; an employee disinfects a subway train in Moscow, Russia; an empty Catalonia Square in Barcelona.

349 more deaths in Italy, taking total toll to 2,158; France says situation deteriorating rapidly

AGENCIES
MARCH 16

THERE HAVE now been more COVID-19 cases and deaths in the rest of the world than in China, the World Health Organisation said Monday.

"More cases and deaths have now been reported in the rest of the world than in China," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told reporters in Geneva, without providing the latest numbers. According to an AFP tally based on official sources, more than 169,710 cases have been recorded in 142 countries and territories.

"You cannot fight a fire blindfolded," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told reporters in Geneva, saying the WHO recommended that countries "Test, test, test. Test every suspected case."

Italy on Monday reported 349 new deaths from the novel coronavirus, taking its total since last month to 2,158, the most after China. The number of official COVID-19 fatalities has more than doubled since Thursday, when Italy's toll topped 1,000 for the first time. Italy now has 27,980 infections, compared to 15,113 four days ago.

Madrid's streets were eerily quiet on Monday as Spaniards spent their first working day under a state of emergency which a minister said will need to be extended beyond the two weeks initially envisaged.

"Obviously we will have to extend this situation...in 15 days I do not think that we will be in a position to win this battle," Transport Minister Jose Luis Abalos told RNE radio.

Meanwhile, many streets in French cities were desolate on Monday as schools, cafes and a range of businesses were shuttered on government orders, as President Emmanuel Macron weighed additional measures to contain the outbreak. In France, the virus had infected more than 5,000 by Sunday and killed 127 — a jump of 900 cases and 36 deaths in 24 hours.

Germany on Monday introduced border controls with Austria, Denmark, France, Luxembourg and Switzerland in a bid to stem the coronavirus outbreak. Only those with a valid reason for travel, like cross-border commuters and delivery drivers, are allowed through, officials said.

The number of cases in the United Kingdom has risen to 1,543 the health ministry said.

Russia on Monday stepped up efforts to curb the spread of coronavirus by banning major sporting events across the country and by shutting state schools and limiting gatherings of people.

EXPLAINED

Coordination a growing need

BE IT within individual countries like the US or among global bodies such as the European Union, a recurring plea has been for coordination in tackling the outbreak. In the US, states have been calling on the Trump administration to coordinate a national response, as opposed to patchwork initiatives, to better allocate supplies, equipment and personnel. The same situation is seen in the EU, where the body has repeatedly called on members not to stockpile necessities or impose unilateral travel bans.

US BEGINS HUMAN TESTING OF VACCINE

THE FIRST human trial to evaluate a candidate vaccine against COVID-19 has begun in Seattle, US health officials said Monday. "The open-label trial will enroll 45 healthy adult volunteers ages 18 to 55 years over approximately 6 weeks," the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) said in a statement.

COVID-19 OUTBREAK: FIVE KEY FIGURES

€28 bn
The funds allocated by Sweden, via a series of measures, to protect companies and workers from the fallout of the virus

$4 bn
The amount approved by the Russian govt to help its economy and encourage businesses to follow precautions

10,000
The visas South Africa will revoke, which were issued to people from China and Iran. Visitors from at-risk countries like the US will now need to procure visas

350
The number of coronavirus cases in Australia, which has declared an emergency and set up penalties for breaking its guidelines

129 new deaths in Iran; China urges US to lift sanctions

AP & REUTERS
TEHRAN, MARCH 16

IRAN REPORTED another 129 fatalities from the new coronavirus on Monday, the largest one-day rise in deaths since it began battling the Middle East's worst outbreak, which has claimed more than 850 lives and infected a number of senior officials in the country.

China on Monday urged the United States to lift sanctions on Iran immediately.

"Continued sanction on Iran was against humanitarianism and hampers Iran's epidemic response & delivery of humanitarian aid by the UN and other organisations," China's ministry of foreign affairs said in a tweet.

Businesses in Iran's capital remained open, however, even as other countries in the region moved toward full lockdowns, with Lebanon largely shutting down and Iraqis racing to prepare for a curfew set to begin later this week. The divergent approaches adopted by local authorities reflect continued uncertainty over how to slow the spread of a virus that has infected around 170,000 people worldwide and caused more than 6,500 deaths.

Some have opted for an even more aggressive response.

Israel, where the number of confirmed cases has more than doubled to around 250 in recent days, has authorised the use of phone-snooping technology long used against Palestinian militants to track coronavirus patients. Such practices will spark renewed debate over privacy issues as countries around the world confront the pandemic.

Most people experience only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough, and recover within weeks. But the virus is highly contagious and can be spread by people with no visible symptoms.

Iraq announced a weeklong curfew late Sunday. People raced to supermarkets while others stocked up on cooking fuel. The curfew, set to begin late Tuesday, includes suspension of all flights from Baghdad's international airport. Iraq's Health Ministry has reported 124 cases of coronavirus and nine deaths.

Workers assemble boxes of disinfectant to be donated to Iran, in Beijing. China has been donating supplies to Italy, Iran, South Korea and other affected places. *AP*

'Virus almost ending': China to call back medical staff from Wuhan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BEIJING, MARCH 16

CHINA ON Monday announced plans for an orderly withdrawal of thousands of medical staff deployed in the worst-hit Wuhan city as a top medical expert said the coronavirus outbreak has "almost seen its end" in the country but a final judgement would be made after a month.

A leading Chinese official group, headed by Premier Li Keqiang, suggested orderly withdrawal of the medical staff supporting virus-hit Hubei province for which Wuhan is the capital, where the virus first emerged in December last year.

China deployed over 30,000 medical personnel, including staff from the military, and built 14 makeshift hospitals at the height of the coronavirus outbreak in January. The makeshift hospitals have been dismantled.

Meanwhile, Cao Wei, Deputy Director and Associate Chief Physician of the Department of infectious diseases of Peking Union Medical College Hospital, said the deadly coronavirus which brought China to a grinding halt for about three months has "almost seen its end".

"Currently, after three months of fight, the (virus) outbreak in China, which started in last December has almost seen its end," said Cao.

"We will still wait for another month to see and make the final judgement," Cao added.

With pandemic backdrop, Biden, Sanders go head-to-head over policy, track records

PRIMARIES: THE DEMOCRATS

ALEXANDER BURNS & JONATHAN MARTIN
NEW YORK, MARCH 16

JOSEPH R Biden Jr and Senator Bernie Sanders called for vastly more aggressive government action to battle the coronavirus but split over some of the details along familiar ideological lines on Sunday night, as the two Democrats tangled over the right to lead their party into a campaign overshadowed by the pandemic.

In their first one-on-one debate of the primary race, Sanders demanded sweeping economic reform and the creation of a single-payer health care system to address crises like the virus. Biden said he would call up the military to help and enact a "multi-multi-billion dollar program" of disease containment and economic rescue, and said that there were more issues at hand that could not wait on reinventing the health care system.

Biden, the former vice president, said managing the coronavirus was "like a war," while Sanders said it had exposed "the dysfunctionality" of the country's patchwork health care system.

Biden repeatedly sought to play down criticism from Sanders and to play a unifying role. He offered lengthy praise for a proposal by Senator Elizabeth Warren to reform the bankruptcy code, and in a striking commitment he made an iron-clad pledge to name a woman as his running mate. **NYT**

Joe Biden (left) and Bernie Sanders do an elbow bump in place of a handshake before the start of the debate. *Reuters*

Facing outrage for stockpiling sanitisers, man donates them

JACK NICAS
NEW YORK, MARCH 16

A Tennessee man who became a subject of national scorn after stockpiling 17,700 bottles of hand sanitiser donated all of the supplies on Sunday just as the Tennessee attorney general's office began investigating him for price gouging.

The donations capped a tumultuous 24 hours for Colvin. On Saturday morning, *The New York Times* published an article about how he and his brother cleaned out stores of sanitiser and wipes in an attempt to profit off the public's panic over the coronavirus pandemic. Colvin sold 300 bottles of hand sanitiser at a markup on Amazon before the company removed his listings and warned sellers they would be suspended for price gouging.

The article immediately sparked widespread outrage, with thousands of people posting angry comments across the internet about his actions. Colvin expressed remorse for his actions and said that when he decided to hoard the sanitiser and wipes, he didn't realize the gravity of the coronavirus outbreak. **NYT**

'THERE MIGHT COME A DAY WHERE WE CAN'T EVEN COLLECT THE DEAD'

In Afghanistan, coronavirus complicates war and peace

NEW YORK TIMES
KABUL, MARCH 16

WHEN THE coronavirus began spreading, many Afghans were in denial even after it became an obvious and deadly crisis in neighbouring Iran.

Some touted their piety as a shield — they already washed and prayed five times a day. Others, even some officials, joked that the health system had been so bad, the country already so infested with germs and bacteria, that a new invading virus simply could not make it far.

Activists give information about the virus to drivers in Kabul on Monday. *AP*

That denial is crumbling now, as the 21st positive case has been announced in the country. Testing remains extremely limited — only roughly 250 tests have been conducted thus far — so Afghan officials and lawmakers fear that the number of infected is much higher in the absence of capacity to detect and slow the spread of the virus.

Most worrying is that Iran has disregarded the Afghan government's plea to restrict border crossings, with as many as 15,000 people still crossing into Afghanistan daily. The virus is spreading at a time of raging war and a political crisis that has stalled governance in Afghanistan. Impoverished, with its health and nutrient systems gutted by the conflict, the country has always been extremely vulnerable.

Much of the fear stems from the fact that Afghanistan hasn't even been able to get the situation in the worst-hit province under control, with medical staff lacking some of the most basic equipment.

"We are in a situation where the politicians and even some parts of the government don't feel how grave the danger is," Abdul Qayoum Rahimi, Herat's governor, said on Saturday. "If we don't start acting, I am afraid there might come a day where we can't even collect the dead."

PAKISTAN SHUTS BORDERS, LIMITS FLIGHTS

Islamabad: Pakistan shut all its schools and land borders on Friday and decided to limit international flights and discourage large gatherings to try to halt the spread of the coronavirus.

The measures were announced by ministers after a meeting of the national security council chaired by Prime Minister Imran Khan.

"It has been decided that all borders will remain closed for 15 days," Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi told the local ARY and Dunya TV networks. "International flights will operate only out of Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad airports."

Pakistan had already shot down flight services to and from neighbouring Iran, which has suffered one of the world's deadliest coronavirus outbreaks. **REUTERS**

WORDLY WISE

ONE HAND WASHES THE OTHER.

— LUCIUS ANNAEUS SENECA

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

DRAWING TOGETHER

SAARC conference highlighted urgency of regional approach to coronavirus as well as familiar difficulties of getting there

PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA Modi's engagement with the leaders of South Asian nations on collectively combating the coronavirus on Sunday marks a long overdue course correction in Delhi's regional diplomacy. After the deadly terror attack on the Indian security forces at Uri in 2016, India refused to engage with the SAARC — the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation that brings the region's eight nations together. While smaller countries in the region acknowledged Delhi's deepening concerns on cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan, they were also despondent that the main forum for regional cooperation in South Asia had moved from a state of dysfunction to deep coma. Many of them were willing to work with India in alternative forums like the BIMSTEC, centred around the Bay of Bengal, but were not prepared to abandon the SAARC.

No wonder, then, that leaders of smaller countries responded with alacrity to PM Modi's invitation to confer at short notice on the mounting challenge of coping with the coronavirus. They were one with Delhi in recognising that the problems posed by the coronavirus can't be addressed only at the national level and that a joint regional effort was needed. At the same time, the conversation among the leaders also highlighted the unique national problems that the countries confronted. For example, the Maldives and Sri Lanka highlighted the massive economic impact of the dramatic decline of tourism that is a major source of revenue and employment. As an archipelagic nation, the Maldives has the challenge of delivering assistance to patients in remote islands. Land-locked Afghanistan is struggling to cope with the open border with virus-infected Iran and Pakistan's decision to close the border through which much of the nation's trade flows occur. PM Modi's proposals for an emergency relief fund to deal with the crisis, sharing India's capabilities with the neighbours and developing a new regional research platform, were received well. Many leaders had their own proposals. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina offered to establish a new regional institution to deal with public health challenges in Dhaka. The leaders agreed to take this conversation forward at the official level in the coming days.

If the video conference highlighted the urgent need for a regional approach to the coronavirus crisis as well as the possibilities for it, it also highlighted the familiar difficulties of getting there. Prime Minister Imran Khan chose to duck the meeting and sent his adviser on health, Zafar Mirza, who appeared to be under instructions to inject the Kashmir question into the discussion. Delhi, however, would be wise not to be deterred by Pakistan's predictable approach. Having ended its recent neglect of South Asian regionalism, Delhi should stay focused on advancing cooperation with neighbours on denting the impact of the coronavirus crisis. As it builds on the positive responses from most of the neighbours, Delhi must hope that Islamabad will not block progress on the collective effort through the SAARC, for Pakistan needs as much support as it can get to deal with the gathering crisis at home.

A QUESTIONABLE DELAY

MP floor test being deferred is a violation of SC principle and a reminder: Office of speaker continues to be controversial

THE MADHYA PRADESH assembly is balanced on the razor's edge — reportedly, the ruling Congress has 108 MLAs against the BJP's 107, both short of the effective majority mark of 112, following the disqualification of six defectors whose resignations have been accepted by Speaker N P Prajapati. However, despite MLAs of both sides showing up for the floor test on Monday, he adjourned the House until March 26 without conducting it, citing concern over the coronavirus pandemic. As a result, the validity of the government will remain in question for 10 days, a very long time in politics. And the allegiance of the speaker to constitutional democracy, rather than to his party, will remain in question. The MP tableau offers a striking contrast to the conduct of former Lok Sabha speaker, the late Somnath Chatterjee, one of the finest parliamentarians, who was expelled by the CPI-M for maintaining his allegiance to the Constitution during a crucial vote in the Lok Sabha.

Across states that vary in size and perceived importance, from Maharashtra to Manipur, assembly speakers have, through their conduct, invited accusations of partisan behaviour. Hearing the case concerning Manipur Congress MLA T Shyam Kumar, who switched to the BJP after it formed a government in 2017 and received a portfolio, the Supreme Court ruled in January that rigorous application of the anti-defection law under the 10th Schedule of the Constitution is crucial to the maintenance of a healthy democracy. The speaker is the guardian of the 10th Schedule, but to address accusations of partisan behaviour seen in that office, the court had recommended the establishment of a permanent tribunal under the Constitution, headed by a retired Supreme Court judge or a former chief justice of a high court, to decide defection cases expeditiously.

It may be argued that Speaker Prajapati has not crossed the line on this count, for the court had set an outer limit of three months to decide cases. However, he can be seen to fall foul of another landmark judgement of the Supreme Court: *SR Bommai vs Union of India*. That matter had concerned the misuse of Article 356 of the Constitution to impose President's Rule, but the court's first observation is of relevance here: A majority is to be established by a floor test. It was intended to circumscribe the discretionary powers of the speaker, which can be seen at play, all over again, in Madhya Pradesh. The primacy of the floor test highlights its urgency, and delay must inevitably invite controversy and questions.

JUST WASH YOUR HANDS

Among other things, COVID-19 may have pared down ambitions of ISIS

THE ISLAMIC STATE — though with reverses across Syria and the Levant, "state" may be too grand a descriptor — is not divinely immune. Like nearly every other authority in the world, it is instructing its members to "cover their mouths when yawning and sneezing" and to wash their hands regularly. In fact, in the travel advisory, described as "sharia directives" in its newsletter Al Naba, ISIS seems so mundane in its concerns that it begs the question: Is COVID-19 the answer to nihilism?

To paraphrase Douglas Adams and Karl Marx, the ISIS advisory holds within itself the seeds of its own destruction, and its appeal ought to vanish "in a puff of logic". It claims, like religious anti-rationalists everywhere, that the novel coronavirus is "a torment sent down by God on whosoever he wishes". It goes on to advise its members not to travel to and from Europe, "the land of the epidemic". The terrorist organisation's pitch to members has been that those who are chosen are divinely ordained to murder in God's name. If the ISIS's destruction has divine sanction, why the squeamishness against God's scourge?

Unfortunately, prospective recruits are unlikely to be dissuaded by iron-clad syllogisms. But just following the advisory might help matters. Some of the worst-affected countries in Europe will have one less thing to worry about at borders and airports. And perhaps, while staying indoors and contemplating the narrative of destruction they have been fed, ISIS stalwarts may realise the futility of their ways, and the pain it causes to others. Most of all, the call shows how the coronavirus may have altered, at least for now, the ambitions of the ISIS. Time was, it called for "death" to nearly every way of life, across religions. Now, mercifully, it just wants people to wash their hands.

Corona diplomacy

This crisis could have a lasting impact on the global political economy, trigger new equations among nations

C RAJA MOHAN

IT WOULD HAVE been surprising if China had not come up at all in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's discussion with the neighbouring South Asian leaders over the weekend on a possible joint effort to deal with the coronavirus crisis. After all, China has been the epicentre of the crisis that unfolded since last December. It also looms larger than ever before on the international relations of the Subcontinent.

It was no surprise at all that the Pakistani representative, Dr Zafar Mirza, chose to connect the discussion on South Asian regional cooperation on the coronavirus crisis to China. Mirza was sitting in for Prime Minister Imran Khan, who was the only leader from the region who could not join the conversation. While the comments of Mirza, the special adviser on health to the Pakistan PM, on the lockdown in Jammu and Kashmir, drew widespread attention, his brief reference to China did not.

Mirza rightly pointed to the importance of South Asia learning from China's experience in containing the spread of the virus. He went a step further to remind his colleagues that China is an observer to the SAARC grouping.There are many observers in the SAARC, including the US, European Union, Japan, South Korea and Iran, all of whom are struggling in their own ways to deal with the global diffusion of the coronavirus crisis. But it is China alone that figured in Mirza's remarks.

There is no question that Pakistan's deepening strategic partnership has defined Islamabad's response to the coronavirus crisis. While most countries of the Subcontinent scrambled to evacuate their student population trapped in Wuhan, Pakistan seemed unwilling. Islamabad was more than deferential to Beijing's sensitivities against countries evacuating their citizens and students from China.

As Beijing criticised other countries for trying to "isolate China", Islamabad stood like a rock in solidarity with Beijing. One other country that demonstrated a similar level of solidarity was Cambodia, whose president flew into Beijing at the height of the crisis to stand with the Chinese leadership. Most observers of China would designate Pakistan and Cambodia as Beijing's only "allies" in the developing world.

While Beijing values the public demonstration of solidarity, it has far bigger challenges at hand. After being on the political defensive through much of January and February as the crisis exploded in Wuhan and Hubei province, it has now gone on the offensive. Once it got control over the epidemic at home, Beijing has turned to changing the narrative on the crisis.

> Major disasters cutting across national borders often compel the victims to rethink the contested relationships with their adversaries, next door or in distant lands. Earthquakes, floods, tsunamis, for example, have often created diplomatic openings for nations to come together. The coronavirus crisis, however, has done little so far to lower the unfolding tensions between the world's two leading powers — the US and China.

Three themes dominate Beijing's effort. The first relates to domestic politics and is about presenting the "Leader" Xi Jinping as the "hero" in the now "successful people's war" against the virus. As the death toll from coronavirus rose rapidly during the last two months (it now stands above 3,200) there was widespread international speculation about the political consequences of the crisis for Xi's leadership of the Communist Party of China. But Xi appears to have weathered the storm (at least for now) by silencing the critics and cracking down harder on the dissidents.

The second theme in China's effort is to counter the perception that the virus originated in that country. Beijing is objecting strongly to calling it "China Virus" or "Wuhan Virus". It has dismissed the criticisms of the CCP's initial failures in responding to the crisis and has now revelled in attacking the Western inability to learn from the Chinese experience. Chinese spokesmen have also fanned conspiracy theories about the US army bringing the virus to Wuhan.

The third element of Chinese strategy has been to claim global leadership in containing the spread of coronavirus. By sending medical aid to Iran and Italy — two countries most affected by the crisis — and others, Beijing is arguing that it is part of the solution to the global crisis rather than its cause. China's permanent representative to the United Nations in New York has written to all member states assuring them of its commitment to counter the global healthcare crisis and address the massive problems of economic dislocation triggered by it.

China's global diplomatic offensive has inevitably fed into US domestic politics and the contestation between the Republicans and Democrats in an election year. While the Republicans are blaming Beijing for triggering the crisis, the Democrats are attacking President Donald Trump for failing to develop an effective response.

Major disasters cutting across national borders often compel the victims to rethink the contested relationships with their adversaries, next door or in distant lands. Earthquakes, floods, tsunamis, for example, have often created diplomatic openings for nations to come together. The coronavirus crisis, however, has done little so far to lower the unfolding tensions between the world's two leading powers— the US and China.

Experts studying the so-called "disaster diplomacy" suggest that diplomatic openings triggered by calamities tend to be short-lived. Amidst the demonstration of mankind's smallness in the face of nature's fury, leaders tend to think big about resolving differences with each other. But the promise, studies say, to privilege the collective good above the narrow framing of national interest, dissipates quickly.

As the impact of the calamity wears off, so does the positive thinking. Old suspicions take hold of security establishments again. Sooner than later, the default negative positions reassert themselves. We have seen this happen repeatedly in political responses to the multiple disasters that have fallen upon the subcontinent in recent decades.

Might India's current diplomatic efforts at cooperation with Pakistan and rejuvenating regionalism lead to the same old dead-end? Pessimists would argue that the quest for cooperation with Pakistan is a fool's errand. Optimists would suggest change is inevitable and that Delhi must continue to find a way to rewrite the political script between India and Pakistan.

Realists would want to enter a caveat. Unlike many natural disasters, which are mostly one-shot events, the coronavirus crisis could have deep and lasting impact on the global political economy and inevitably trigger new equations among nations. Is India ready to seize the new possibilities for reconstituting the South Asian region? Delhi has certainly taken an important first step forward in renewing the multilateral conversation with the neighbours. It must now follow through with actions to facilitate productive outcomes for the Subcontinent as a whole.

The writer is director, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore and contributing editor on international affairs for The Indian Express

VIRUS AND THE MIGRANT

India-Gulf region is second largest migration corridor in world, must not be blocked

S IRUDAYA RAJAN AND H AROKKIARAJ

MORE THAN 100 countries across the world have reported coronavirus cases. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has cancelled his visit to European countries because of the pandemic. The outbreak has affected people's mobility, both within nations as well as travel across borders. Almost all countries in the Persian Gulf have stopped accepting migrants from India. Nearly 600 fishermen from India are stuck on the coronavirus-hit Kish island in Iran, which has requested the government of India to repatriate them. After the successful repatriation of Indians from the COVID-19 hit areas of China, the extradition of these fishermen could prove to be a major challenge for the Indian government.

The predicament of Indian migrants appears grave in view of the travel restrictions imposed by several West Asian countries. For instance, the Kuwait General Administration of Civil Aviation has suspended all flights to and from India for two weeks. Qatar and Saudi Arabia have imposed temporary travel bans on passengers from India. Indians who want to return to the countries where they work, after the end of the ban period, will require medical certificates from authorised hospitals. This could create more hurdles for the migrants. For instance, Indians passengers planning to return to Kuwait will require medical certificates from hospitals that are recognised by the West Asian country's government. Most government hospitals in the country have their hands full with coronavirus-infected patients and it's not clear if the healthcare institutes recognised by the Kuwait government have facilities to diagnose a COVID-19 infection and if they are equipped with quarantine facilities. The government must take up this issue with the relevant authorities in Kuwait to facilitate the smooth return of Indians after the travel ban is lifted. The list of Indian hospitals recognised by the Kuwait government must be put up on public fora.

> The government must take up this issue with relevant authorities in Kuwait to facilitate the smooth return of Indians after the travel ban is lifted. The list of Indian hospitals recognised by the Kuwait government must be put up on public fora.

Several airlines in the country have cancelled their services to Doha after the Qatar government's travel ban. Due to the high demand for flight services in the India-Gulf corridor, flight fares are likely to increase after the travel ban is lifted. This will add to the financial burden of Indian workers. Airlines should announce free re-booking as part of their corporate social responsibility during this difficult time.

The travel ban has created panic among Indians abroad as well. Social media is rife with discussions about the travel bans imposed by the Indian government. In some cases, the travel restrictions imposed on citizens of European countries such as Germany, France and Italy have been misinterpreted as applying to Indian citizens travelling from such countries to India. It is very important, therefore, to disseminate country-specific advisory notes in regional languages, apart from English, as an effective way to reach Indians abroad and their families in India.

Passengers travelling to India are facing difficulties after their arrival as there is little information about the self-reporting form that must be filled by international passengers. They sometimes have to wait long hours in the airport to acquire this form, fill it and clear immigration. Moreover, there is very little information about the counters in international airports in India that offer this service before passengers proceed to immigration clearance. This must be addressed to avoid overcrowding and chaos in airports.

The India-Gulf region is the second largest migration corridor in the world. It is imperative that governments in the region take measures to ensure that travel restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak do not affect livelihoods of people and hinder mobility in the long-run.

Rajan is professor at Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala and Arokkiaraj is a post-doc Fellow at Leibniz Science Campus, Eastern Europe-Global Area in Leipzig, Germany

MARCH 17, 1980, FORTY YEARS AGO

INDIAN EXPRESS

National alternative to Congress-I soon, says Raj Narain

NEW PARTY

LOK DAL VICE-PRESIDENT Raj Narain, said that a "secular and democratic national alternative" to the Congress-I would be formed "within a week to 10 days". He said he had been in touch with suitable parties to form this national alternative, but refused to divulge any other details. Narain, however, said that he had meetings with Janata leaders on this matter and had asked them to implement clause 5 and clause 6 of the party constitution, which sought to prevent elected representatives and office-bearers from being members of any other body — in essence the abolition of dual membership.

JANATA AND SANGH

KRISHAN LAL SHARMA, Janata Party leader and former organising secretary of the Jana Sangh said in Chandigarh the the rumours that the Jana Sangh would leave the Janata party were false. These rumours were being spread by the "outdoor" agents of Indira Gandhi, Sharma told a press conference. According to him, the purpose was to disintegrate the Janata Party to benefit the Congress-I. Sharma also said that given the Jana Sangh was an original constituent of the Janata Party, there was no question of any other group asking its erstwhile members to leave. He said the Jana Sangh has never asked any other group to leave the Janata.

ZIA FOR TALKS

PAKISTAN PRESIDENT ZIAUL Haq is anxious to discuss with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi all issues relating to the Subcontinent, particularly Afghanistan, according to Lok Dal leader George Fernandes. Fernandes, who recently visited Pakistan, told the press that the Zia and other Pakistani leaders had made it clear to him that their country was not interested in strengthening the relationship with the US or appeasing the USSR in the wake of developments in Afghanistan . He said Zia and his foreign minister, Aga Shahi, believed that all issues in the area could be settled if India and Pakistan took a united stand.

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"The achievement of our Chinese fight against the epidemic came at the great expense of Chinese people's sacrifice and must be defended. As China continues to carry out global exchanges, it is also important to maintain relations with our compatriots."

— GLOBAL TIMES, CHINA

Count work, not workers

Decline in women work participation rates can be traced to poor quality of data collection processes

SONALDE DESAI

C R Sasikumar

INDIA IS ONE of the few countries in the world where women's work participation rates have fallen sharply — from 29 per cent in 2004-5 to 22 per cent in 2011-12 and to 17 per cent in 2017-18. Both the NDA and UPA governments have found themselves in a hot seat trying to defend economic policies that may have pushed women out of the workforce. Trying to explain whether women are choosing to focus on domestic responsibilities or whether they are pushed out of the workforce has become a minor industry among economists.

Strangely, the one explanation we have not looked at is whether the declining quality of economic statistics may account for this trend. Our pride in the statistical system built by PC Mahalanobis is so great that we find it unimaginable that it could fail to provide us with reliable employment data. However, as challenges to economic statistics have begun to emerge in such diverse areas as GDP data and consumption expenditure, perhaps it is time to consider the unimaginable. Is the decline in women's labour force participation real or is it a function of the way in which employment data are collected?

The anatomy of the decline in women's work participation rates shows that it is driven by rural women. In the prime working age group (25-59), urban women's worker to population ratios (WPR) fell from 28 per cent to 25 per cent between 2004-5 and 2011-12, stagnating at 24 per cent in 2017-18. However, compared to these modest changes, rural women's WPR declined sharply from 58 per cent to 48 per cent and to 32 per cent over the same period. Among rural women, the largest decline seems to have taken place in women categorised as unpaid family helpers — from 28 per cent in 2004-5 to 12 per cent in 2017-18. This alone accounts for more than half of the decline in women's WPR. The remaining is largely due to a drop of about 9 percentage points in casual labour. In contrast, women counted as focusing solely on domestic duties increased from 21 per cent to 45 per cent.

How do we explain this massive change? Rather than assuming a sudden transformation that has turned Indian women into housewives or an economic catastrophe that has pushed women out of the labour force, let us consider the unthinkable — it is the change in our statistical systems that drives these results. The questionnaires through which the National Statistical Office (NSO) collects employment data have not changed, but the statistical workforce has, and the surveys that performed reasonably well in the hands of seasoned interviewers are too complex for poorly trained contract data collectors.

The National Sample Surveys (NSS) do not have a script that the interviewer reads out. They have schedules that must be completed. The interviewer is trained in concepts to be investigated and then left to fill the schedules to the best of his or her ability. Picture questioning a rural woman, busy juggling chapatis and a baby, "what was your primary activity over the last year? Is there another activity that you did for at least 30 days?" She thinks for a moment and says, "well, I looked after this baby and I cooked and had to take care of my mother-in-law when she was sick for a month". Had the interviewer bothered to probe, she might have said and I also took care of a cow and sent my son to sell the milk and worked in my neighbour's field. An experienced, well-trained investigator may know how to probe for this. However, with shortage of funds and trained personnel, the NSS increasingly relies on contract investigators hired for short periods, who lack these skills.

Do we need to return to the days of permanent employees or can we design our surveys to overcome errors committed by relatively inexperienced interviewers? A survey design experiment led by Neerad Deshmukh at the NCAER-National Data Innovation Centre provides an intriguing solution. In this experimental survey, interviewers first asked about the primary and secondary activity status of each household member, mimicking the NSS structure. They then asked a series of simple questions that included ones like, "do you cultivate any land?" If yes, "who in your household works on the farm?" Similar questions were asked about livestock ownership and about people caring for the livestock, ownership of petty business and individuals working in these enterprises. The results show that the standard NSS-type questions resulted in a WPR of 28 per cent for rural women in the age group 21-59, whereas the detailed activity listing found a WPR of 42 per cent — for the same women. This is an easily implementable module that does not require specialised knowledge on the part of the interviewer.

In our concern with ostensibly declining women's work participation, we have missed out on identifying sectors from which women are excluded and more importantly, in which women are included. For rural men, ages 25-59, between 2004-5 and 2017-18, casual labour declined by about 6 percentage points. However, this decline is counter balanced by regular salaried work which increased by 4 percentage points. Thus, it seems likely that men are exchanging precarious employment with higher quality jobs. In contrast, women's casual work has declined by 9 percentage points while their regular salaried work increased by a mere 1 percentage point. Moreover, the usual route to success, gaining formal education, has little impact on women's ability to obtain paid work. Rural men with a secondary level of education have options like working as a postman, driver or mechanic — few such opportunities are open to women. It is not surprising that women with secondary education have only half the work participation rate compared to their uneducated sisters. Thus, the focus on employment for women needs to be on creating high quality employment rather than getting preoccupied with declining employment rates.

> The National Sample Surveys (NSS) do not have a script that the interviewer reads out. They have schedules that must be completed. The interviewer is trained in concepts to be investigated and then left to fill the schedules to the best of his or her ability. Picture questioning a rural woman, busy juggling chapatis and a baby, 'what was your primary activity over the last year? Is there another activity that you did for at least 30 days?'

It may be time for us to return to the recommendations of 'Shramshakti: Report of National Commission on Self Employed Women and Women in the Informal Sector' and develop our data collection processes from the lived experiences of women and count women's work rather than women workers. Without this, we run the risks of developing misguided policy responses.

The writer is professor of sociology at University of Maryland and professor and centre director, NCAER-National Data Innovation Centre. Views are personal

Spin in the House

Home minister's assurances in Parliament are belied by the letter and intent of the citizenship law

KAPIL SIBAL

UNION HOME Minister Amit Shah tried to bowl a chinaman in Parliament last week. He assured the nation that there will be no categorisation of "doubtful citizenship" in the process of verification while preparing the "Local Register of Indian Citizens". When half-baked facts are made public through speeches, the truth is always compromised.

The whole purpose of preparing a National Register of Indian Citizens (NRIC) — as contemplated by the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2003 — was to ensure compulsory registration of every citizen of India and issue a National Identity Card (NIC) to every such person. For that purpose, a National Registration Authority (NRA) was set up. The Registrar General of India — appointed under the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969 — was to be the NRA, who was to function as the Registrar General of Citizens Register (RGCR). The Act also authorised the Centre to appoint officers to assist the RGCR in discharging his functions and responsibilities; the procedure for doing so was to be prescribed by the rules framed under the Amendment Act of 2003.

The notification issued on December 10, 2003, which contemplated the establishment and maintenance of NRIC, was to contain the particulars of every citizen. The preparation of this register requires house to house enumeration for collection of data from each family and individual. This is required to be provided by the head of the family. The period of enumeration, which was to be specified under the present dispensation, starts from April 1 and continues till September 30, 2020.

Rule 4(3) of the above-referred notification stipulates the preparation of a Local Register of Indian Citizens (India to be divided into several local areas). This would include particulars collected from several families and individuals. This information will be verified and scrutinised by the local registrar (LR). Rule 4(4) stipulates that "particulars of individuals whose citizenship is doubtful shall be entered into the local register with appropriate remarks in the population register for further enquiry and in case of 'doubtful' citizenship, the individual or family concerned will be informed when the verification process is over".

The above, therefore, demonstrates that the statement of the home minister — that in the verification process, no individual will be identified in the "doubtful" category — is contrary to the statutory requirement. The home minister's assurance, therefore, is meaningless till such time the rule is amended to exclude such requirement.

Once the entire exercise under the rules is finalised, the RGCR will notify the date on which the NRIC shall be initialised throughout the country. This suggests that the purpose of the rules notified on December 10, 2003, was to have an NRIC excluding those whom the government, through a verification process, considers to be of "doubtful" category and are thus excluded from the NRIC. Obviously, therefore, the whole purpose of the NRIC was to exclude individuals and that exclusion was to be given effect at the level of the local registrar who, during the verification process, would weed out such categories of people who are not entitled to citizenship. If the exercise of "doubting" the citizenship of an individual is excluded, one wonders if it is necessary to have an NRIC. The assurance of the home minister, therefore, is not consistent with the intent of the law.

Let us assume that the verification process is not undertaken and the local registrar does not mark "D" against any individual's name. Even then, under Rule 8, the district registrar, sub registrar or the taluk registrar or the LR of citizen registration may, by order, require any person to furnish information to determine the citizenship status of such person. It is obvious, therefore, that even without a verification exercise, a person can be denied the status of a citizen. No assurance has been given by the home minister in that context. In fact, no such assurance can be given — for that would be contrary to the intent of the legislation.

Rule 10 is another provision under which the citizenship status of a person can be questioned and his/her name removed from the NRIC. That power is with the RGCR or an officer authorised by him. Under Rule 11, it is necessary to maintain and update the NRIC, which would also entail removing names of individuals who may not be regarded as citizens of India. It is only after this exercise is conducted and the individuals of doubtful status excluded, that the NRIC will be a document on the basis of which NICs will be issued to all those who the central government believes are citizens of India.

The law and the rules, therefore, contemplate the exclusion of individuals as citizens at various levels: At the level of verification, by exercise of power by the district registrar, the sub registrar or the taluk registrar, or the local registrar by deletion of name, and on the directions of the RGCR — or any officer authorised by him/her and in the process of maintenance and updation of the NRIC.

Dear home minister, you need to tell the country what your real intention is — your assurance is not enough. It is time for you to be upfront about the government's intentions. As said in the House, this is not about a community, it is about the poor, the marginalised, the unempowered who will have no documents to prove that they are citizens of this country. Their exclusion from the NRIC will be in the hands of junior-level officials whose discretion will jeopardise the lives of millions. The chinaman you bowled is not likely to fool the people.

The writer, a senior Congress leader, is a former Union minister

My dear Bernie

You have made history, challenged the holy cows of capitalism

SAEED AKHTAR MIRZA

I HOPE you don't mind me calling you Bernie. The reason I do so is that we are almost the same age and, surprisingly, your vision of the world has an uncanny resemblance to my own. So, I felt the need to write to you.

Before I get down to the meat of the letter, I would like to tell you a little story.

It was early 2015 and I was being wheelchaired to the immigration counter at JFK Airport. The reason for the wheelchair was because I was seriously ill and my son wanted me to be checked by doctors in New York. So, as I reached the immigration counter, the officer, a burly white man, looked at me suspiciously and asked: "What brings you to the USA Mr Murza?" I didn't correct his pronunciation of my name, because I knew he had the power to reject my visa and turn me back, but I solemnly answered: "Three things: The first is to meet my son and his wife and my wonderful grand-daughter and the second is to meet some doctors that my son has arranged for me to see." The officer thoughtfully nodded and said: "Those seem to be two good reasons... what is the third one?" I smiled and said: "To tell you to vote for Bernie Sanders". The officer was surprised, paused, then laughed out loud: "Okay, three good reasons... my greetings to your family... and good luck with those doctors."

It's a good story, isn't it Bernie? But I write to you for another reason.

It has to do with the here and now. It is about the recent televised election debates between candidates. I had been following these debates carefully and let me tell you that most of the candidates followed the same predictable and jaded course. Except for three. The first was you, of course. You remained steadfast with your position on various issues: On universal healthcare, on college education for all, homes for the homeless, minimum wages for working people and the removal of big money from politics. In fact, most of the other candidates, realising that these positions had generated an unbelievable and positive response from ordinary citizens, were forced to accept some of them too. It was quite funny seeing covert conservatives, backed by lobbyists and big bucks, overtly playing the liberal card and expressing their concern for the toiling masses.

The other end of the spectrum of your onslaught was also a shocker for me: You took on an establishment that for generations had never been questioned. You started with the holy cows of capitalism and attacked the power-brokers on Wall Street and the billionaires who prospered as most Americans suffered after the 2008 economic meltdown. Then you took on the fossil fuel, arms, pharmaceutical and big corporation lobbies that dictated American internal and foreign affairs policy. Your principled stand on climate change, your defence of some of the policies of the Cuban revolution, your opposition to the Iraq war, your attack against Mohammed bin Salman of Saudi Arabia, your criticism of Benjamin Netanyahu and his divisive policies were eye-openers to me. Was this really being debated in America? It was, and the people of America were listening. Even applauding.

The second candidate who was different and also a revelation to me, was a feisty and compassionate soldier called Tulsi Gabbard. I was amazed by her opposition to war and the concept of regime change that the US insists on doing to remove the leaders it does not like. The third candidate who was different was Elizabeth Warren. She seems to have her heart in the right place. And, in our scoundrel times, that is enough to make me appreciate her.

Now I come to the heart of the matter. Let me tell you what I think you have achieved and how I think you have created history.

Ever since the end of the First World War, the words "communist" and "socialist" took on an ominous meaning in the US and by the end of the Second World War they were seen as a threat. An entire propaganda machine, backed by high finance, bankers, power-brokers and a pliant media juggernaut swung into action to deal with these venomous ideas. Communist and socialist became interchangeable words.

You, Bernie Sanders, in the land of "free enterprise and the pursuit of happiness" have made the word "communist" acceptable again. As far as the word "socialist" goes, it has become not just acceptable but respectable too. Now that is creating history.

Now a word of caution.

I believe the power-brokers who create policy within the Democratic Party and the big financiers who back them are very unhappy with where you have reached in this final and crucial phase of the nomination process. That is why most of the remaining candidates withdrew from the race and backed Joe Biden. It is amazing. I have nothing against Biden but it is so apparent that the man has memory lapses, is often incoherent, has taken political positions in the past that were inherently and embarrassingly anti-people and he is now being presented by the Democratic establishment as the man to beat Trump.

It just goes to show how much of a threat this establishment thinks you are.

Mirza is a filmmaker and writer

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

RIGHTS AND WRONGS

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Smart-locking India' (IE, March 16). In an otherwise informative piece, the author's suggestion to penalise people who spit in public is problematic. India isn't Singapore. The state doesn't provide basic amenities to citizens. In such a situation, penalising people could become an instrument of police harassment. Medical emergencies shouldn't be confronted by curtailing the basic rights of people.

Kuldip Suri, *Amritsar*

SMALL WINDOW

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Incomplete step' (IE, March 16). The order to release Kashmir's most prominent politician, Farooq Abdullah, is a positive move. The government had argued that the step was necessary for closer integration of the Valley with the rest of the country. But its communication blackout seemed to serve a completely different purpose. A window has been opened by the revocation of Abdullah's detention. But there are many others, including his son Omar and ex Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti, who are under house arrest.

Sanjay Chopra, *Mohali*

PRESSURE TACTICS

THIS REFERS TO the news report, 'SBI heartless, inefficient, FM tells its Chairman' (IE, March 14). The finance minister's public admonition of the SBI chairman was uncalled for. Only recently the SBI has been acclaimed as the saviour of the bankrupt YES Bank. How come the same bank has become heartless and inefficient? .

Harishankar Upadhyay, *Thane*

DO NOT CENSOR

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Reading of Faiz poem 'unsuitable to time, place' : IIT K panel' (IE, March 16)'. The suggestion by the IIT Kanpur panel smacks of bigotry. By the panel's logic, school, college and university curricula may have to be redrafted to avoid hurting people's sentiments. For instance, even B R Ambedkar's work was critical of Hinduism. Should it be then censored as well?

L R Murmu, *Delhi*

LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

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

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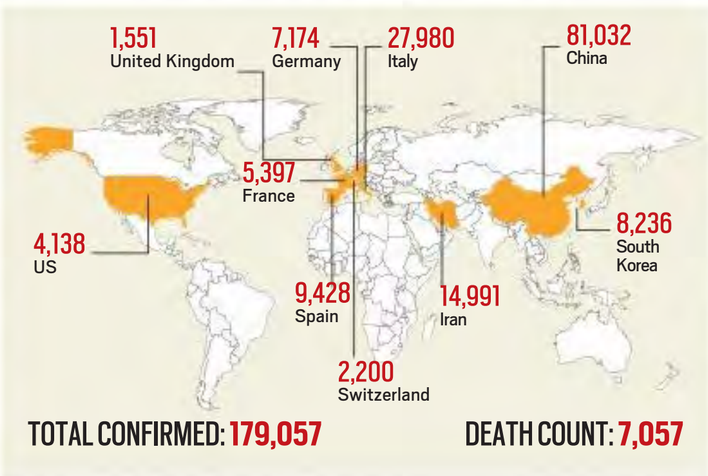
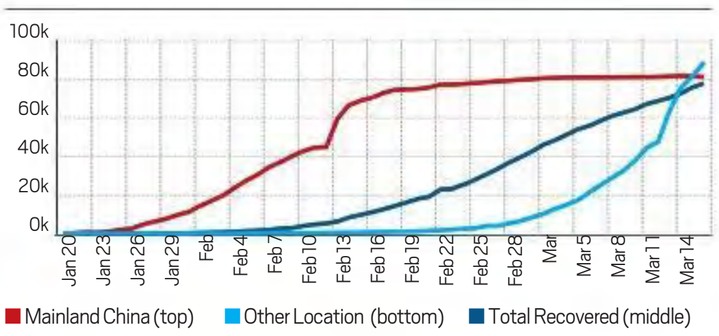
If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to **explained@indianexpress.com**

CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK
YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED DAILY



Source: Johns Hopkins University; map updated at midnight

NON-CHINA CASES SPIKE; RECOVERIES INCREASING TOO



Is it safe to eat chicken?

ABANTIKA GHOSH

YES, IT is absolutely safe. No link has been found between the consumption of the cooked meat of any animal or bird, and catching the infection.

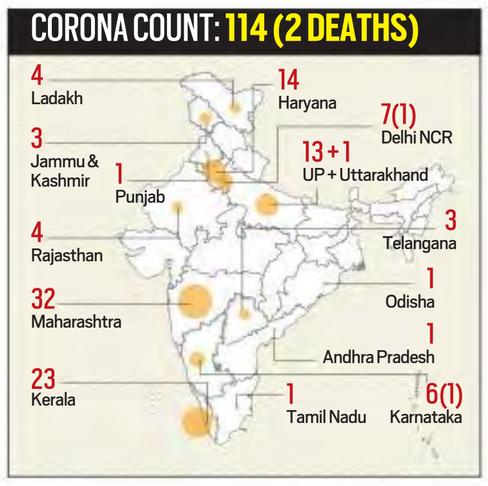
The only way the SARS-CoV-2 virus is currently spreading is through droplets released by an infected individual in coughs or sneezes, or if you touch your face, mouth, or nose after touching an infected surface.

This is why governments and experts around the world are telling people to avoid crowded places, to practise social distancing, to wash your hands thoroughly and frequently with soap and water, and to try, to the extent possible, to not touch your face.

Many Indians have stopped eating chicken, believing rumours and misinformation on social media. This has led to a crash in prices, and massive losses for the poultry industry. Minister for Fisheries and Animal Husbandry Giriraj Singh has underlined that meat and dairy are safe. "The false rumour has hit thousands of farmers engaged in this business. The livelihood of farmers and the people engaged in the entire value chain have been affected. I humbly request people not to fall prey to such rumours," he has said.

The WHO does, however, caution against eating "raw or undercooked animal products". It says: "...National food safety authorities are seeking more information on the potential for persistence of SARS-CoV-2... on foods traded internationally as well as the potential role of food in the transmission of the virus... As a general rule, the consumption of raw or undercooked animal products should be avoided. Raw meat, raw milk or raw animal organs should be handled with care to avoid cross-contamination with uncooked foods."

CORONA COUNT: 114 (2 DEATHS)



Map based on Union Health Ministry update at midnight, March 16. Some state governments may have reported higher numbers.

13 DISCHARGED
Delhi (2), Kerala (3), UP (4), Rajasthan (3), Telangana (1)

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

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SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

When to test and whom

Scientists at work at the National Institute of Virology, Pune, last week. *Pawan Khengre*

A country's decision on whom and how many to test is guided by clinical guidelines, trajectory of the disease's spread, and the availability of resources

ABANTIKA GHOSH
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

Why is testing considered important in an outbreak of this kind?

To have an idea of the number of infected people and therefore, a clear picture of the magnitude of the crisis. Testing is necessary to isolate infected individuals so that they can be treated quickly and effectively — and be kept from infecting others. Patterns in test results help in understanding how the disease is evolving, and in taking evidence-based measures to check the rate of infection.

All of this is especially relevant because SARS-CoV-2 is extremely infectious. The contagion has now touched nearly 1.8 lakh people in 144 countries, and killed over 7,000. Every infected individual is expected to infect between two and three others on average.

The virus has an incubation period of 14 days, which means that a person who has caught it may carry and transmit it for up to two weeks without showing any symptoms. A seemingly healthy person sitting beside you in the Metro could theoretically be carrying the virus, and might transmit it to you.

On Monday, the World Health Organisation (WHO) tweeted a plea from its Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus: "Once again, our key message is: test, test, test."

So, why are some countries testing fewer people than others?

India and the United States are testing far fewer people than China and South Korea did. South Korea's strategy of mass testing is currently seen as being highly successful — however, testing at such scale in a country India's size is a whole new ball game.

Every country's decision on whom to test, when and how many, is guided not only by clinical guidelines and technical competence, but also by the trajectory of the disease's spread, the mode of transmission — whether imported, local, or community transmission — and, very importantly, by the availability of resources.

In its interim guidance on "Laboratory testing for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in suspected human cases" on March 2, the WHO said: "The decision to test should be based on clinical and epidemiological factors and linked to an assessment of the likelihood of infection. PCR [polymerase chain reaction] testing of asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic contacts can be considered in the assessment of individuals who have had contact with a COVID-19 case. Screening protocols should be adapted to the local situation."

India is currently testing only symptomatic people with contact or travel history, but the Indian Council of Medical Research is set to widen the net. To check for evidence of community transmission, it will test 1,000 people with symptoms but no corresponding history of travel or contact with an infected person.

But what is the reason that India is testing slowly, selectively?

Central and state governments have already taken steps to ensure social distancing by shutting down schools, colleges, and cinema halls. Visas have been cancelled to keep foreigners out. Though acutely aware of the threat, the thinking within the government is that 114 cases (until Monday) in a country of 1.3 billion is not an alarming number.

So long as the chain of infection is clearly established, the virus is not considered to have entered the phase of community transmission. Until the health system detects someone whose source of infection cannot be traced, mass testing is not necessary. The test is free for individuals, but it is not inexpensive — there are two tests in all, and each sample costs the government a total Rs 5,000.

"We are testing people with symptoms or contact or travel history. We do not want to spread panic. We will test those that need to be tested," Lav Agarwal, joint secretary in the Ministry of Health, said on Monday. A total 63 laboratories are now carrying out tests, and another nine labs will open soon. Two lakh testing kits are being procured to supplement the original stock of 1 lakh.

Dr K S Reddy, president of the Public Health Foundation of India, said: "Testing needs to to be stepped up in stages, initially prioritising persons with a high probability of being infected... Mass screening is not feasible and indiscriminate testing is counterproductive, giving a false sense of security to those reported negative, as they can still be infected if they are exposed later. A network of qualified public and private labs can follow well defined protocols for testing suspected cases. These criteria can be revised based on the course of the epidemic and the availability of certified kits."

And what exactly is the test, and how is it carried out?

A virus is neither living nor non-living. Once inside the host cell, it replicates. The genetic material — RNA in the case of the novel coronavirus — is the key to its identification.

According to the WHO, routine confirmation of cases of COVID-19 is based on detection of unique sequences of virus RNA by Nucleic Acid Amplification Tests (NAAT) such as real-time reverse-transcription polymerase chain reaction (rRT-PCR), with confirmation by nucleic acid sequencing when necessary.

Dr Partha Rakshit, head of the microbiology laboratory at the National Centre for Disease Control, explained: "We cannot see the virus, so we try to detect its genes in a sample. The first test narrows down the identity of the virus to the coronavirus family. This is a screening test. In the next test, we try and detect genes that are specific to the novel coronavirus. The second test is done only when the first is positive." The second test is a genome sequencing test.

The run time of each test is about 2 hours. However, the extreme precautions that need to be taken in sample transportation, preparation, etc. mean that the total time taken for both tests is about 8-9 hours. The government has decided to not notify a person as coronavirus positive until both tests are positive.

Test cases: South Korea and Italy have produced vastly differing results

TABASSUM BARNAGARWALA
MUMBAI, MARCH 16

A MONTH ago, on February 15, Italy had three cases of coronavirus infection; South Korea had 28. Today, Italy is the world's worst hit after China, with nearly 28,000 infections, over 2,150 deaths, and millions under a countrywide lockdown. On Monday, South Korea had 8,200 infections, some 29,000 quarantined, and no lockdowns. Only 75 have died so far.

US Surgeon General Dr Jerome Adams said on Monday: "We are at a critical inflection point in this country. We are where Italy was two weeks ago in terms of our numbers and we have a choice to make as a nation: Do we want to go the direction of South Korea and really be aggressive and lower our mortality rates, or do we want to go the direction of Italy?"

Case of South Korea...

South Korea had started to prepare even before January 12, when China shared the genetic code of the novel coronavirus with the World Health Organisation (WHO). At the time, China had reported only 41 cases. But South Korea knew it was vulnerable — and it was clear on the path ahead.

By the end of January, even though there were only seven confirmed cases in the country of 52 million, testing kits had been distributed across government laboratories, based on China's information on the virus. Testing was not to be restricted to those with a travel history — everyone with a cold, cough, and pneumonia was tested. Over 2.2 lakh have been screened so far.

South Korea has been swabbing motorists in their cars, on the road. *AP*

The Ministry of the Interior and Safety developed a mobile phone app, "Self quarantine safety precaution", to keep tabs on "super spreaders" of the infection. The app monitors the GPS coordinates of those under home quarantine, and alerts the government if they step out. Once a hospital bed becomes available, an ambulance is sent to the patient's location. The government is also scanning credit card transactions, immigration entry forms, phone and car GPS, and CCTV footage to track suspected cases.

Deputy Health Minister Kim Kang Lip has been quoted as saying that "traditional responses such as locking down affected areas and isolating patients can be only modestly effective, and may cause problems in open societies". The government has in some cases made details of infected people public, so that every close contact of the patient can come forward for testing.

...Compared with Italy

Italy's 60 million population is about 15% more than South Korea's, but it has tested only 73,000 samples — about a third the numbers tested by South Korea. On March 1, Italy had 1,701 cases — less than half South Korea's 3,736. It now has three times South Korea's numbers, and almost 29 times the number of deaths.

Italy delayed large-scale screening, which allowed the virus to circulate unnoticed within northern Italy and beyond. The first lockdowns came on February 23, by which time it was too late.

The situation in India

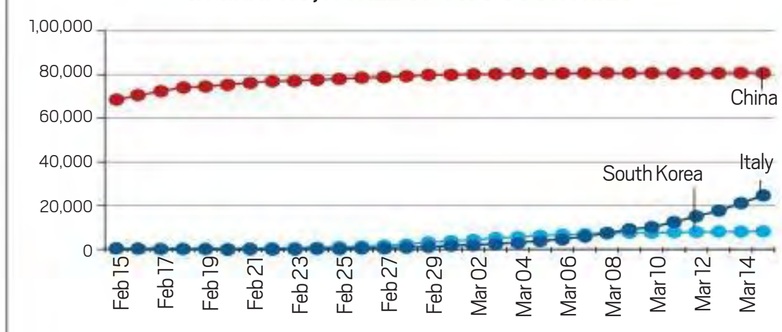
Given the powerful concerns over privacy, measures such as GPS tracking and making the names of infected persons public would appear very difficult, if not impossible, in India. As of now, India is largely following the protocol of screening symptomatic cases with a history of travel abroad. There is no lockdown, but several states have shut schools, malls, theatres, and gyms, and prohibited public gatherings and advised companies to encourage employees to work from home.

The concern is India's density of population — 464 per sq km on average and over 32,000 in a city like Mumbai, compared with just 206 in Italy — and the vulnerabilities of its healthcare infrastructure. India's median age though, is 28.4 years compared to Italy's 47.3, and its weather is overall very different.

India has started testing pneumonia cases randomly, with no travel history, for coronavirus. The number of testing laboratories was on Monday increased to 63, with another nine set to become functional shortly. An expansion of testing capacity is important because many of the samples that have tested positive — where the tested individuals either had travel history or were close contacts — were asymptomatic.

Epidemiologist Dr Pradeep Awate said India was basing its screening policy on the country's "population" and "available resources". Dr Tanu Singhal, an infectious disease expert, said: "We have to try a cocktail of methods. We need to widen screening for severe pneumonia cases with no history to ensure diagnosis of possible cases, but we also need to prioritise based on our diagnostic capacity."

IN GRAPHS, A TALE OF TWO COUNTRIES



Data from Johns Hopkins University show how infection numbers in Italy spiked from the end of last month and moved sharply away from South Korea's trajectory (bottom two graphs)

AN EXPERT EXPLAINS

'No data to suggest that transmission will slow as summer approaches'

DR BALRAM BHARGAVA

How helpful was it that India escaped the first round of the virus's spread in January and February?

Yes, we were fortunate not to have many infections in January and February. But we were very well prepared even at that time. The news of people falling sick in Wuhan had started to come in December itself, and we had begun sensitising our laboratories. We have dealt with similar outbreaks in the past, like the Nipah virus and Zika virus, and were able to contain their spread. We knew the drill, and we prepared ourselves. By January 17, we were ready to deal with the outbreak. The fact that there was no serious outbreak in January and February gave us the time to strengthen our system and to sensitise the public.

What could be the possible reasons for India to escape the initial round of the virus's spread?

It could be a combination of several things. The timely evacuation from Wuhan, the epicentre of the outbreak, rapid and compulsory testing of passengers at airports, stepping up of social distancing measures, all could have helped. It is not that we did not get any case during this time. We did have a few in Kerala among people who had returned from Wuhan. But timely quarantine helped in preventing community transmission. We have been fortunate thus far in not having cases of community transmission.

Data suggest that spread is very rapid once about 100 people are infected in a country. Is that path inevitable?

It is possible to avoid that curve. It is not at all necessary that we follow the same curve of exponential spread. And we are trying our best to prevent community transmission. Travel advisories and restrictions, guidelines and FAQs for public issued by the Health Ministry, and the training imparted to medical personnel and health staff are all playing very important roles. If we are able to ensure that an infected person who has returned from another country does not pass on the virus in 14 days, we should be able to halt community spread. Steps to prevent community transmission have to be carried on alongside containment strategies.

Is it true that the transmission could slow down as temperatures rise?

There is no evidence or data to suggest that with any degree of certainty. Changes in weather may or may not have an impact on the spread of the disease.

What is an optimistic timeline for a possible vaccine?

The National Institute of Virology (NIV) in Pune has already isolated the COVID-19 virus strain. Some other countries — Japan, Thailand, China and the United States — too, have isolated the strain.

What this means is that the clinical sample of the COVID-19 patient was put in tissue culture, and the virus has been grown in laboratory conditions. The isolation by the NIV will now help in future development of drugs, vaccines, and rapid diagnostic kits. A vaccine, however, will take time.

Are the ICMR labs sufficient to conduct testing of samples?

ICMR, which is also the testing agency for the virus, has expanded its network of labs equipped to test COVID-19 from 51 to 63. The secondary test for reconfirmation of the virus, which was earlier conducted only in NIV, too has been expanded to 31 labs. These steps will enable India to expedite detection of the virus, and will help in effective management.

People should not panic, but take precautionary measures. Strong systems and processes are in place to deal with the outbreak, and the Ministry is constantly monitoring the situation. We will be issuing advisories and revising guidelines for testing as and when necessary.

Prof (Dr) Balram Bhargava is Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research, and one of the officials leading India's battle against the novel coronavirus. He spoke to ***Anuradha Mascarenhas***

GOLD	RUPEE	OIL	SILVER
₹41,610	₹74.25	$33.49	₹40,304

*Indian basket as on March 13, 2020

SENSEX: 31,390.07 ▼ 2713.41 **NIFTY:** 9,197.40 ▼ 757.80 **NIKKEI:** 17,002.04 ▼ 429.01 **HANG SENG:** 23,063.57 ▼ 969.34 **FTSE:** 4,990.96 ▼ 375.15 **DAX:** 8,454.11 ▼ 777.97

*International market data till 1900 IST

TRACKING COVID-19
COMPANY AFFAIRS

MCA to allow board meetings to be held via video conference for three months

KARUNJIT SINGH
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

An official said the move was a response to representations by industry bodies and corporates that board members may be unable to travel due to restrictions

THE CORPORATE Affairs Ministry is set to allow companies to hold board meetings dealing with matters of high importance — including decisions on mergers, amalgamation and takeovers — through video conferencing for a period of three months, in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak. A senior government official said that the move was a response to representations by industry bodies and major corporates that board members may not be able to travel due to travel restrictions.

Post the announcement. which is expected in the next few days, companies will be able to hold meetings via video conferencing for matters dealing with approval of financial statements as well as books of accounts, approval of the board's report and approval of matters relating to mergers and restructuring.

Currently, companies are allowed to hold board meetings via video and audio conferencing, but meetings dealing with the above mentioned issues need to be held with directors physically present.

"Mergers, demergers and any restructuring are major issues for which a physical meeting is a must, but given the situation where a lot of people are reluctant to travel and the end of the financial year fast approaching, we feel it is necessary to give a relaxation in this regard," said the government official, adding that the three month relaxation would help businesses remain compliant with rules on board meetings under the Companies Act.

The official added there are already sufficient safeguards under the companies law to ensure proper documentation of such board meetings, noting that these companies will be required to store recordings of the meetings.

Experts welcomed the move saying it would in particular benefit companies with foreign directors in being able to continue functioning efficiently. "This move was much needed. It will allow companies with foreign directors or directors who do not want to travel given the circumstances to continue making key decisions including approval of financial statements which is set to come up next month," said Ankit Singhi, partner at law firm Corporate Professionals.

A representative of an industry body said the industry had approached the Corporate Affairs Ministry on this issue and that this was a very timely move. "In the first week or 10 days of April, there will be a lot of board meetings and foreign directors cannot travel which would mean that the quorum of board member required may not be complete and the board would not be able to conduct business," said the representative, adding that the availability of video conferencing as an option would allow the boards of these companies to continue functioning.

US CENTRAL BANK SLASHES SHORT-TERM RATES TO TARGET RANGE OF 0% TO 0.25%

Fed cuts rates, other central banks coordinate

REUTERS
WASHINGTON/SYDNEY, MAR 16

THE US Federal Reserve and its global counterparts moved aggressively with sweeping emergency rate cuts and offers of cheap dollars to help combat the coronavirus pandemic that has jolted markets and paralysed large parts of the world economy. The coordinated response from the Fed to the European Central Bank (ECB) and the Bank of Japan (BOJ) came amid a meltdown in financial markets as investor anxiety deepened over the difficulty of tackling a pathogen that has left thousands dead and put many countries on virtual lockdowns.

The Fed moved first on Sunday, cutting its key rate to near zero in a move reminiscent of the steps taken just over a decade ago in the wake of the financial crisis.

The US decision triggered emergency policy easings by central banks in New Zealand, Japan and South Korea, with Australia also joining with a liquidity injection in a coordinated move aimed at stabilising confidence as the pandemic threatened a global recession.

"The virus is having a profound effect on people across the US and around the world ... We really are going to use our tools to do what we need to do here"

JEROME POWELL,
CHAIR, US FEDERAL RESERVE

"The virus is having a profound effect on people across the United States and around the world," Fed Chair Jerome Powell said in a news conference after cutting short-term rates to a target range of 0 per cent to 0.25 per cent, and announcing at least $700 billion in Treasuries and mortgage-backed securities purchases in coming weeks.

"We really are going to use our tools to do what we need to do here," Powell said, adding that the Fed has gone in "strong" and could increase bond-buying and use other tools to support market functioning and the flow of credit, what he called the Fed's "most important" function.

As governments restrict gatherings, businesses and schools close, and families begin to hunker down in an effort to reduce the spread of the virus, Fed officials will "do what we can to ease hardship" as economic activity slows this quarter and next, he said.

Powell said he could not say how long or how big the downturn will be, but promised to keep rates where they are until Fed officials are "confident that the economy has weathered recent events and is on track to achieve its maximum employment and price stability goals." The Fed will delay official economic forecasts until June, he said.

The Reserve Bank of New Zealand (RBNZ) slashed rates to a record low as markets in Asia opened for trading this week, while Australia's central bank pumped extra liquidity into a strained financial system and said it would announce more policy steps on Thursday.

Later, the Bank of Japan too eased monetary policy on Monday by pledging to buy risky assets such as exchange-traded funds (ETF) at double the current pace. At the meeting, the BOJ decided to buy ETFs at an annual pace of around 12 trillion yen ($112.55 billion), double the previous amount, until markets stabilise from the recent rout. The BOJ left unchanged its -0.1 per cent short-term interest rate target and a pledge to guide long-term rates around 0 per cent. Neighbouring South Korea stepped in as well with a 50 basis point rate cut in a rare inter-meeting review on Monday.

"I don't think we have reached a limit on how deep we can cut interest rates," BOJ Governor Haruhiko Kuroda said.

"If necessary, we can deepen negative rates further," he added. "We can continue to pump ample liquidity into the market."

RBI hints at rate cut; Sensex plunges 8%, ends 2,713 pts lower

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das in Mumbai. *Nirmal Harindran*

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, MARCH 16

ON MONDAY, as the BSE Sensex plunged 2,713 points or almost 8 per cent, its second biggest fall in absolute terms to close at 31,390, the Reserve Bank of India indicated the possibility of a policy rate cut even before the scheduled review of monetary policy.

Addressing the media, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said, "The RBI is ready to take all necessary measures to ensure that the effects of coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic on the Indian economy are mitigated and financial markets and institutions continue to function normally."

Das also announced two measures — a rupee-dollar swap auction and long-term rupee repo operations (LTRO) — to meet dollar demands of the industry and inject more liquidity in the domestic market, respectively.

"We propose to conduct another six months US dollar-rupee swap on March 23 to provide liquidity to the foreign exchange market. The LTRO will be conducted in multiple tranches for a total of Rs 1 lakh crore at policy rates to counter-balance the domestic liquidity effects of the swap and further improve monetary transmission," he said.

Responding to a question on reducing repo rate in the backdrop of cuts by central bankers in developed economies, the RBI Governor said, "I don't rule out anything. I'm not ruling out any possibility. depending on the evolving situation, we will decide on the timing of our action."

"It is important that policy space is used appropriately and is suitably timed to optimise its impact. The RBI has several instruments at its command and stands ready to act," he said.

The rate cut signal from the RBI came on a day when the Sensex, which swung over 5,300 points intra-day on Friday, logged its second-biggest drop in absolute terms Monday, in a global sell-off with the broader NSE Nifty plummeting 757.80 points, or 7.61 per cent, to end at 9,197.40.

"We will use the various policy instruments from time to time, depending on requirement, and our response will be calibrated. Our effort is to see that our responses are neither premature nor delayed. We will make every effort to see that whatever instrument or whatever announcements we make, they do have the desired effect. They do have optimum impact," he said, even as the market speculated about a 50-basis point repo rate cut Monday.

The RBI Governor's comments follow the US Federal Reserve's unusual decision Sunday to cut its key interest rate to near zero, a dramatic move not seen since the depths of the 2008 financial crisis.

The one percentage-point decrease was the US central bank's second emergency rate cut this month in an attempt to cushion the rapidly growing economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic. Despite the Fed rate cut, European shares dropped more than 8 per cent Monday, led by losses in Italy and France, the two countries hardest-hit by the coronavirus pandemic. Hong Kong fell over 4 per cent, Japan's Nikkei 225 lost nearly 2.5 per cent, and the Shanghai Composite Index lost nearly 3.5 per cent.

Though the RBI had slashed Repo rate by 135 basis points to 5.15 per cent in 2019, it kept the policy rate unchanged in the last two policy reviews due to a spike in inflation. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the RBI is meeting April 3 to review the monetary policy.

According to Das, it's important to ensure that policy actions are carefully considered and calibrated so as to assess sentiment and instil confidence. "In this context, the Reserve Bank has been taking several calibrated measures over the past few days to ensure that financial markets and institutions remains sound and resilient and also to build confidence more generally in the financial system. In fact, the lack of response to our seven-day repo auction of Rs 25,000 crore, which was conducted on March 13, has reassured us that domestic liquidity conditions remain comfortable," he said, taking stock of the financial sector's condition.

"The level of forex reserves, as you'd be aware, remains comfortable to meet any exigency based on the current evaluation of domestic financial conditions," he said. The rupee also plummeted 50 paise to 74.25 against the US dollar Monday on capital outflows and foreign investor selling.

Das said the Indian economy is likely to take a hit due to the coronavirus impact.

"The growth momentum in India also would be impacted somewhat... (while) going into the monetary policy meeting as and when it is held, we will take a clearer view of the impact of the global slowdown on the Indian economy. So, I would like to say that the second round effects of pandemic could operate through the slowdown in global growth. Already sectors such as tourism, airlines, the hospitality industry and domestic trade and transport are suffering a loss of activity," the Reserve Bank Governor said.

'Domestic air passenger traffic may fall by up to 50%'

The domestic air passenger traffic may de-grow as much as 50 per cent up to at least June amid the coronavirus outbreak, Acuite Ratings and Research said in a report

86.16%: SHARE OF LOAD FACTOR ACCOUNTED FOR BY FIVE MAJOR LOCAL CARRIERS IN JANUARY

50-60%: EXPECTED DECLINE IN SEAT FACTOR OF AIRLINES OVER NEXT THREE MONTHS, WITH FALL IN PASSENGER VOLUME

16-23%: Range in which domestic traffic during the March-May period has historically grown, except last year when Jet Airways ceased operations around the same period

2.2%: Growth in domestic passenger traffic in January, as per the latest data from Directorate General of Civil Aviation

114: number of coronavirus cases in India so far, with one new case each in Ladakh, Odisha, Jammu and Kashmir, and Kerala, Health Ministry officials said on Monday

BLANKET BAN OF ENTRY OF FOREIGN NATIONALS: India has put a blanket ban on the entry of foreign nationals to its territory and, on March 12, suspended visas of all foreign nationals till April 15. Earlier, such a measure was limited only to the nations most affected by coronavirus

Load factor: *Load or seat factor is a measure of how much of an airline's passenger carrying capacity is used or average percentage of seats filled in an aircraft*

World airlines staring at losses: *With global travel bans due to the pandemic, many airlines across the world are staring at massive losses and fear going bust*

Source: Acuite Ratings & Research/PTI

ON WAR FOOTING

SAT to hear urgent matters only till Mar 27

New Delhi: The Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) on Monday said it will hear only urgent matters and restricted courtroom access till March 27 in wake of the coronavirus pandemic. The tribunal said it will sit from 11.30 am to 4.30 pm. "In order to ensure that the court room is not overcrowded, no person except advocates, CA and authorised representative and one representative of the litigant shall ordinarily be permitted in the courtroom," an SAT order said. All stakeholders have been asked not to crowd the passage, courtrooms and other areas of the tribunal, it added. **PTI**

'You will see prompt action when we need'

Andrew Bailey, BoE Governor. *Reuters*

New Delhi: New Bank of England (BoE) Governor Andrew Bailey promised that the central bank would deliver further "prompt action" when needed to help Britain's economy weather the coronavirus outbreak, adding that BoE was "very keen" to ensure short-term damage to the economy did not damage Britain's longer-term prospects. **REUTERS**

IMF chief: Twenty nations seek aid, need coordinated spending

REUTERS
WASHINGTON, MARCH 16

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY Fund (IMF) Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva on Monday said 20 additional countries have asked about receiving aid from the global lender as the coronavirus pandemic halts economic activity, and she called for strong, coordinated fiscal stimulus to limit the damage. In a blog post on the IMF website, Georgieva said the Fund was ready to mobilise its full $1 trillion lending capacity to help member countries deal with the crisis.

She did not identify the countries that have expressed interest in new financing programmes. Iran last week said it was seeking an emergency loan from the IMF.

"As the virus spreads, the case for a coordinated and synchronized global fiscal stimulus is becoming stronger by the hour," Georgieva said.

Kristalina Georgieva, IMF MD. *Reuters File Photo*

The IMF chief issued her message shortly before she was due to participate in a call with leaders of the G7 democracies, several of which are battling severe coronavirus outbreaks.

Georgieva, in her blog, suggested that coordinated fiscal action on the scale of the 2008-2009 financial crisis may be necessary.

Macroeconomic outlook vulnerable to disruption of trade with China: Thakur

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE GOVERNMENT ON Monday said India's near-term macroeconomic outlook is vulnerable to disruption of trade with China due to the coronavirus outbreak. The virus has already caused massive disruption across the world, forcing airlines to reduce flights and adversely affecting a range of businesses globally and in India.

"As is true for the world at large, India's near-term macroeconomic outlook is also vulnerable to disruption of trade with China and second-round effects arising from expected slowdown in global growth," Minister of State for Finance Anurag Thakur said in a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha. However, the latest available data on trade and domestic output indicators do not suggest any immediate adverse impact on the economy, he added.

"Additionally, a positive impact on India's economy may arise from decline in global oil prices triggered by the outbreak of COVID-19," Thakur added.

Slump in oil prices has enabled the government to raise duties on petrol and diesel, allowing it to raise resources that would help in containing the fiscal deficit.

However, falling oil prices also result in lower remittances from overseas and global wealth funds, pruning their investments into India. The coronavirus outbreak, first in China and now having being confirmed in more than 100 countries, has emerged as a key risk to human health as well as global growth outlook through numerous channels like trade, production and supply chain disruptions as well as decline in demand. The virus has affected over 100 people in India, leading to shutdown of schools, colleges, malls and cinemas in many parts of the country.

Thakur said that the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has been coordinating the efforts of the central government in terms of preparedness, control and containment measures and working with state governments in order to mitigate the impact of the virus outbreak in India. In order to address the possibility of trade-induced adverse impact on the economy, the government is constantly engaging with export promotion councils and trade bodies, particularly in pharmaceutical, electronics and automobile sectors where the supply chains are sourcing imports from China.

These agencies, Thakur said, have been put in touch with Indian Missions abroad to secure and transport inventories available with the existing suppliers.

Indian Missions abroad have also been asked to explore alternative sources of supply of raw materials in their respective countries for supporting India's domestic production. The Reserve Bank of India on Monday announced measures to inject dollar and rupee liquidity in the Indian markets to ensure that financial system functions smoothly.

Oil slumps 11% to below $30/bbl; Global markets tumble

REUTERS
NEW YORK/LONDON, MARCH 16

OIL PRICES fell below $30 a barrel on Monday as the worldwide coronavirus outbreak worsened over the weekend, leading governments and businesses to shut down as the global economy appeared to be headed toward certain recession.

At the same time, Saudi Arabia reiterated its plans to boost production in response to a developing price war with its rival Russia after efforts to restrict supply failed earlier this month. The coming flood of supply could result in the largest surplus of crude in history, analysts said.

Brent crude was down $3.75, or 11.1 per cent, to $30.10 a barrel by 1:26 p.m. EDT (1726 GMT). The international benchmark earlier fell to $29.52 a barrel, its lowest since January 2016.

US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude fell $2.45, or 7.7 per cent, to $29.28 a barrel. With Saudi Arabia and Russia pledging to boost production, IHS Markit estimates that the oversupply could come to 800 million to 1.3 billion barrels of oil - two to three times what existed in late 2015 to early 2016, when the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries opened the taps to hamstring the US shale industry.

Earlier this month OPEC and Russia failed to extend production cuts that began in January 2017, aimed at supporting prices and lowering stockpiles. An OPEC and non-OPEC technical meeting planned for Wednesday in Vienna has been called off as attempts to mediate between Saudi Arabia and Russia after the collapse of their supply cut pact made no progress, sources said.

A board showing the index at Hong Kong Stock Exchange. *AP*

Meanwhile, markets reeled on Monday, with stocks on Wall Street tumbling more than 10 per cent, as the Federal Reserve's second emergency rate cut in as many weeks to blunt the economic impact of the coronavirus failed to calm fears of a prolonged recession. The S&P 500 plunged 8 per cent shortly after the open to trigger another automatic 15-minute halt in trading on the three main US stock indexes. The halt was the fourth emergency pause on Wall Street in six days. Volatility gauges known as fear indexes jumped, with the Euro STOXX 50 in Europe surging almost 28 per cent to an all-time high and the CBOE Market Volatility index soaring more than 30 per cent as equity markets plunged further into bear territory. MSCI's gauge of stocks across the globe shed 5.66 per cent and the pan-European STOXX 600 index lost 4.82 per cent as stock markets pared initial deeper losses.

On Wall Street, the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 1,643.96 points, or 7.09 per cent, to 21,541.66. The S&P 500 lost 177.67 points, or 6.55 per cent, to 2,533.35 and the Nasdaq Composite dropped 519.56 points, or 6.6 per cent, to 7,355.32. There were moves in Europe to curb short-selling of stocks as bond markets tried to juggle both the risk to vulnerable countries but also a fiscal spending splurge might impact safe-haven debt. Benchmark 10-year Treasury notes last rose 42/32 in price to yield 0.8193 per cent.

MSCI's index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan tumbled 5.2 per cent to lows not seen since early 2017, while the Nikkei fell 2.5 per cent as the BoJ's easing steps failed to reassure markets. In Asia, Shanghai blue chips fell 4.3 per cent overnight even as China's central bank surprised with a fresh round of liquidity injections. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index tumbled 4 per cent.

G7 pledge to 'do whatever it takes' to safeguard economy

Washington: Leaders of the G7 advanced economies on Monday pledged to use all their tools to safeguard the economy and help workers hurt by the coronavirus pandemic. "We resolve to coordinate measures and do whatever it takes, using all policy tools, to achieve strong growth in the G7 economies and to safeguard against downside risks," the leaders said in a statement following an emergency videoconference. **AFP**

HDIL used Yes Bank loan to repay older Yes Bank loan: ED probe

KHUSHBOO NARAYAN
MUMBAI, MARCH 16

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate (ED) has found that Yes Bank Ltd gave a Rs 200-crore loan to beleaguered Housing Development & Infrastructure (HDIL) in 2016 for a project, but the amount was allegedly diverted to repay an older loan of the lender to ensure that the HDIL account is not classified as a non-performing asset (NPA).

HDIL, and its promoters Rakesh Wadhawan and Sarang Wadhawan were arrested by the ED in connection with the Rs 4,355.46-crore fraud at Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank. The promoters are also related to the family of Dewan Housing Finance Corporation (DHFL) promoters Kapil Wadhawan and Dhiraj Wadhawan. The ED is probing Yes Bank promoter Rana Kapoor for allegedly receiving kickbacks of over Rs 600 crore for loans given by the bank to DHFL.

According to sources, HDIL constructed a building in suburban Mumbai in 2015 and applied for a loan with Yes Bank in 2016 to renovate it. However, the money loaned by the bank was diverted to other group firms to repay earlier loans, the ED has alleged.

The agency has also recorded the statement of Sanjay Chhabria, managing director of real estate firm Radius Developers, in connection with the alleged Rs 750-crore loan from Yes Bank to Belief Realtors Private Ltd, a company owned by the promoters of DHFL.

The Directorate found that in 2018, Yes Bank gave Rs 750 crore to Belief Realtors for redevelopment of slums at Bandra reclamation in Mumbai along with Radius Developers. Of the total loan, Yes Bank charged Rs 118 crore as processing fees and the remaining Rs 632 crore was transferred to Belief Realtors. The ED has claimed this money was immediately diverted to Kyta Advisers, another entity connected to DHFL promoters.

Chhabria has now told the ED that Radius Developers had not signed any agreement with Belief Realtors for redevelopment of slums at Bandra reclamation.

The ED has also expanded its probe to several other companies that got loans from Yes Bank. It has alleged that Yes Bank gave out loans worth thousands of crore of rupees to various companies, a large number of them non-banking financial institutions, many of which later became stressed assets. As companies began defaulting on repayments, instead of declaring the assets as NPAs well in time and initiating recovery proceedings, Rana Kapoor allegedly conspired with the companies and got them to invest in firms run by his wife and daughters.

PMC Bank is under regulatory restrictions after the RBI found financial irregularities in its functioning, hiding and classification of loans given to HDIL. The bank loaned over 70 per cent of its Rs 9,000 crore in advances to HDIL.

Police said the actions of the accused allegedly led to bank losses totaling Rs 4,355.46 crore. The ongoing investigation has found that there were nearly 44 accounts at the bank that were password-protected. A lot of the money has been diverted to these accounts linked to the Wadhawans and HDIL-linked entities, police added.

Probe into 'kickbacks' given to Rana Kapoor, his links with HDIL

Mumbai: The ED, while seeking Yes Bank founder, Rana Kapoor's custody for the third time since his arrest last Sunday, claimed further links between him and HDIL promoters Sarang and Rakesh Wadhawan. The agency said it is probing into kickbacks Kapoor got for sanctioning of loans without following due procedure or prior approvals.

The agency claimed that a loan of Rs 202.1 crore was sanctioned by Yes Bank in parts to one Mack Star Marketing Pvt Ltd — a joint venture (JV), where the Wadhawans had a minor share.

Additional Solicitor General Anil Singh submitted to a court that it was found a part of this money was never disbursed to the JV's account and was directly set off by Yes Bank against earlier unrelated loans of HDIL Group Companies. **ENS**

YES BANK CRISIS

No need for panic withdrawals, depositor money safe: RBI Guv

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, MARCH 16

"The depositors money is absolutely safe... and there is no reason for any undue worry or there is no need for rushing into withdrawing their deposits. In India, never in the history of banking, depositors have lost money. Their interests have always been protected"

SHAKTIKANTA DAS
GOVERNOR, RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

WITH THE Reserve Bank of India (RBI) set to lift the moratorium on Yes Bank on March 18, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das on Monday assured depositors that their money in the bank is "absolutely safe" and there is "no need to go for panic withdrawals" from the bank.

"The depositors money is absolutely safe... and there is no reason for any undue worry or there is no need for rushing into withdrawing their deposits. In India, never in the history of banking, depositors have lost money. Their interests have always been protected," Das said at a media conference here.

"The present scheme protects the interest of the depositors. So, I once again reiterate that the depositors need not worry... their money is safe after 6 pm on Wednesday. There is absolutely no reason for them or no need for them to go for panic withdrawal or for getting unduly worried. The underlying theme, the main point on which the (reconstruction) scheme is based, is to protect the interest of the depositors," he added.

"Yes Bank has enough liquidity to meet any requirement. If there is a requirement, the Reserve Bank will provide necessary liquidity support to Yes Bank to meet its requirements. So that is a comforting factor for the depositors that the Reserve Bank will support Yes Bank with liquidity if it is required," Das said.

"As you would have seen, swift action has been taken by the RBI and by the government. There has been very active coordination between the government of India, the finance ministry and the RBI," he said

The moratorium will be lifted at 6 pm on March 18, he said. "As you can see, this has been a very swift and fast action, perhaps a record of sort. With regard to the restructuring scheme which has been notified by the government, I would like to say that it is a very credible and sustainable restructuring plan. We do believe it is credible and it will sustain in the years to come," Das said.

"It is also an instance perhaps the first of its type. It is also an instance of public private partnership for revival of a private sector bank. Both the public sector led by the State Bank and major private sector players have joined hands to revive Yes Bank to take the restructuring scheme forward. It is perhaps the first of its type, and in India on earlier occasions, whenever there was failure of a commercial bank, the usual method has been amalgamation of the failed bank with a larger entity. This time we have not done so. This time the identity of Yes Bank is retained," the Reserve Bank Governor said.

According to Das, the participation of private sector banks in particular demonstrates the confidence of major players in the banking sector in the revival plan. Yes Bank's deposit base has fallen Rs 71,991 crore since September 2019 till date, according to the quarterly results announced by the bank on Saturday.

As of December 2019, the bank incurred a quarterly loss of Rs 18,564.25 crore and a period to date loss of Rs 19,097.78 crore.

Subsequent to this period, the private bank's deposit base has seen a further reduction to Rs 137,506 crore.

On some state governments withdrawing money from private banks, Das said the RBI has written to all state governments, impressing upon them that the Indian banking sector is sound and safe and banking sector includes the private sector banks.

"We have specifically indicated that the health of the banking sector including the private banking sector is sound and safe and therefore, there is no reason for state government authorities to withdraw deposits or to take deposits or to keep away from the private sector banks," he further said.

"Private sector banks are an important component of our banking sector. And therefore, it would be necessary that in the interest of financial stability, in the interest of banking stability, various authorities both at the Central and at the state level, continue their confidence in the private sector banks," he said.

"I'm also happy to note that during all these months, when there were stories about Yes Bank having increasing difficulties, a large number of depositors have remained loyal and they are still with Yes Bank," he said. "I do expect and appeal to them to continue their confidence and loyalty to Yes Bank. You have the big names of Indian banking sector, which are participating in the revival of Yes Bank."

Yes Bank bonds write-down: Indiabulls Housing Fin files plea in HC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, MARCH 16

AFTER DEBENTURE trustee Axis Trustee Services Ltd, Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd — an additional tier 1 (AT-1) bondholder of Yes Bank — has moved the Bombay High Court against the RBI's proposal to write-down the lender's AT-1 bonds. A division Bench of justices SJ Kathawalla and RI Chagla Monday said in an interim order that any action pertaining to Yes Bank AT-1 bonds to be subject to its further orders.

Indiabulls, in its statement issued on March 8, had claimed that Yes Bank owes it nearly Rs 662 crore, which it had invested in AT-1 bonds in 2017 as a part of its treasury management. Senior counsels Dinyar Madan and Gaurav Joshi mentioned the plea by Indiabulls on Monday.

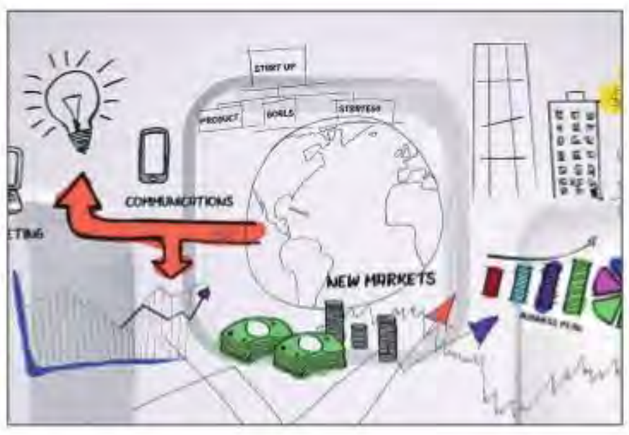
Earlier, Axis Trustee Services had sought from the high court a relief against the proposal by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) as part of its plan to rescue Yes Bank, which has been under a moratorium since March 5.

A debenture trustee is an entity that serves as a liaison between the company that issued debentures and the debenture holders that are collecting interest payments.

Tier 1 bonds are rated higher than equity but do not have a priority like secured creditors.

Govt receives 121 applications for compounding CSR offences

The Corporate Affairs Ministry on Monday said 121 applications for compounding CSR-related offences have been received and compounding has been done in 37 cases



Features such as autopilot surveillance, pre-emptive fraud-detection, compliance management, data analytical capabilities would also be included in the new version

Among other features, the new version would have modules such as e-consultation, e-adjudication, compliance management system and e-learning

Source: PTI

● MoS FOR CORPORATE AFFAIRS ANURAG THAKUR WAS COMMENTING ON PLANS TO INTRODUCE AI SYSTEM IN MCA 21 PORTAL

● THE MCA21 SYSTEM WAS STARTED IN 2006, AND CURRENTLY THE SECOND VERSION IS OPERATIONAL

UNDER THE COMPANIES LAW, certain classes of companies have to shell out at least two per cent of the average net profits, made during the three immediately preceding financial years, towards Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities

MINISTER OF STATE FOR Corporate Affairs Anurag Singh Thakur also told the Lok Sabha on Monday that the entire CSR architecture is disclosure-based and companies concerned are required to file details of CSR expenditure annually through MCA21 portal

GENERALLY, COMPOUNDABLE offences are those which can be settled by paying certain amount of money

UNDER SECTION 135 OF the Companies Act, 2013, every company having net worth of at least Rs 500 crore, turnover of Rs 1,000 crore or more, or a minimum net profit of Rs 5 crore during the immediately preceding financial year has to make CSR expenditure

Direct tax mop-up shrinks 3.5%, indirect tax collections post meagre rise in Apr-Feb

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

NET DIRECT tax collections contracted by 3.5 per cent to 8.13 lakh crore during April-February period of the current fiscal, while indirect tax collections grew by just 3.8 per cent to 8.75 lakh crore, data presented by the Finance Ministry in Parliament on Monday showed.

With the requirement now to collect Rs 4.67 lakh crore (Rs 3.56 lakh crore of direct taxes and Rs 1.11 lakh crore of indirect taxes) in the one remaining month of this financial year and given the economic slowdown and the economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic, meeting the revised estimates for tax revenues for 2019-20 would be an uphill task for the Centre.

The government had collected Rs 8,43,582 crore as direct taxes and Rs 8,43,400 crore as indirect taxes in the 11-month period of April-February last fiscal. In percentage terms, the Centre now needs to collect 30.4 per cent of direct taxes in March, having collected 69.6 per cent of the year's direct tax revenues during April-February.

Indirect tax collections are faring slightly better with 11.3 per cent of the full year's revised estimate needed to be collected during March, the data showed.

The government had cut its tax targets for 2019-20 while presenting the Budget for 2020-21. Direct tax target was revised down by Rs 1.65 lakh crore for FY20, while the estimate for indirect taxes was reduced by Rs 51,016 crore.

The direct tax dispute resolution scheme, Vivad se Vishwas, which was announced in the Budget last month, is expected to help the government bridge its revenue gap to some extent.

The government said that it's taking several steps including monitoring advance tax payments by top taxpayers to boost its direct tax collections.

"In order to maximise direct tax collection, the Income Tax Department is taking several steps including monitoring of advance tax payments by top taxpayers, recovery of outstanding demand, monitoring payment of tax deducted at source (TDS) by top deductors, organising awareness programmes regarding TDS/Tax Collection of Source (TCS) provisions for proper compliance, utilising information available through Statement of Financial Transactions and other agencies for detection of cases of tax evasion and new tax-payers, enforcement action by way of searches and surveys, efforts towards widening of tax base, early disposal of high demand assessments and appeals for early recovery of demand, multimedia campaign to encourage voluntary compliance of tax laws, monitoring of payment of dividend distribution tax and regular assessment tax, etc," Minister of State for Finance Anurag Thakur said in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha.

For indirect taxes, the Centre has taken measures to improve GST revenue such as GST rate rationalisation to improve tax compliance, mandatory e-filing and e-payment of taxes, penalty for delayed payment, extensive use of third party sources such as state VAT (value added tax) department, income tax etc. for compliance verification, regular enforcement and compliance verification of tax returns, Thakur added.

The revenue shortfall is likely to have implications on the government's fiscal deficit target as well, which had touched 128.5 per cent of the whole-year Budget target during April-January. The deficit in the year-ago period was 121.5 per cent of the corresponding target.

The Centre has targeted to restrict the fiscal deficit (RE) at Rs 7,66,846 crore for the year ending March 31, 2020.

In Budget 2020-21, the government had raised the fiscal deficit target to 3.8 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP), from earlier estimate of 3.3 per cent for 2019-20 due to revenue shortage.

EXPLAINED

Widening revenue gap to hit govt's fiscal math

THE REVISED estimate for direct taxes for this fiscal had assumed an annual growth of 2.9 per cent, while indirect taxes were projected to grow 5.1 per cent. In the 11-month period of April-February, direct taxes have recorded a contraction of 3.5 per cent, while indirect taxes have recorded a growth of just 3.8 per cent.

With only one month left in FY20, and the economic growth expected to take a further hit due to COVID-19 pandemic, the widening revenue gap is expected to upset the government's fiscal math for this financial year.

BRIEFLY

WPI inflation eases to 2.26% in February

New Delhi: Wholesale price index (WPI) based inflation softened to 2.26 per cent in February on the back of cheaper food items and vegetables, the government data showed on Monday. In January, the WPI inflation stood at 3.1 per cent and in the year-ago same period it was at 2.93 per cent, as per data from the Commerce and Industry Ministry.

I-T Dept issues notice on linking PAN-Aadhaar

New Delhi: The Income Tax Department on Monday issued a public message saying it was "mandatory" to link Permanent Account Number (PAN) with Aadhaar and advised people not to "miss" the stipulated deadline of March 31.

Gold prices rally ₹455 on rupee depreciation

New Delhi: Gold prices on Monday jumped by Rs 455 to Rs 41,610 per 10 gram in the national capital amid rupee depreciation and recovery in global prices, according to HDFC Securities. Silver prices, however, dropped by Rs 1,283 to Rs 40,304 per kg from Rs 41,587 per kg in the previous trade.

Hyundai rolls in all-new version of SUV Creta

New Delhi: Hyundai on Monday launched the all-new version of its popular SUV Creta with price between Rs 9.9-17.2 lakh. The South Korean auto major said is preparing to have a crack again at the premium SUV segment in India to strengthen overall leadership in the segment. **PTI**

Lockheed Martin names new CEO

Bengaluru: Lockheed Martin Corp said on Monday company veteran Marillyn Hewson will step down as CEO, and tapped board member and American Tower Corp boss James Taiclet as her replacement. Hewson has been with the Pentagon's largest defense contractor since 1983 and became CEO in January 2013. **REUTERS**

CCI imposes ₹302 cr penalty on Grasim Industries

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

THE COMPETITION Commission has slapped a penalty of Rs 302 crore on Grasim Industries for abusing its dominant position with respect to supply of a certain staple fibre to spinners.

Besides, the company has been directed by the fair trade regulator to "cease and desist" from indulging in anti-competitive practices as well as put in place a transparent "discount policy" for all the market participants. In a 60-page order, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) said the company has abused its dominant position in the market for supply of VSF to spinners in India by charging discriminatory prices to its customers, besides imposing supplementary obligations upon them. These are in violation of competition norms, it added.

VSF is Viscose Staple Fibre (VSF) and is produced as well as sold by Grasim Industries.

"While the company is yet to receive the order of the CCI, it believes that on merits it has sufficient grounds for an appeal," the company said in a filing to the stock exchanges on Monday.

The CCI has directed the company to "refrain from adopting unfair/discriminatory pricing practices and also refrain from seeking the consumption details of VSF from the buyers".

Further, the watchdog has asked Grasim Industries to put in place a discount policy which is transparent and non-discriminatory to all the market participants, and to make it easily and publicly accessible/available.

PAYMENT OF AGR DUES BY TELCOS

DoT lists MNP capacity limitation, economic impact, public interest as reasons to seek extended timeline

AASHISH ARYAN
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

IN A climbdown of sorts, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) approached the Supreme Court pm Monday with a plea to extend the timeline for payment of adjusted gross revenues (AGR) by telecom operators.

The latest plea moved by the DoT is seen as a shift of stance by many experts as it was on a application moved by the ministry that the apex court had upheld government's definition of AGR.

Monday's plea seeking extension of time to a maximum of 20 years, and freezing on interest, penalties, and interest on penalties on past AGR dues, saw the Telecom Department make passionate pleadings as to how immediate payout by the companies would be detrimental for customers as well as overall market conditions.

"It is found that telecom service providers who are required to make the payments are catering to the services of the crores of consumers throughout the country. The applicant is conscious of the fact that any immediate adverse impact on the functioning of the telecom service providers would not only have an adverse impact on the overall economy of the nation, but would also seriously harm the interest of the consumers throughout the country," the Department said in its plea to the SC. *The Indian Express* has seen a copy of the plea.

The DoT, further in its plea, played out some of the scenarios for the court if no relief is given to the telcos.

One of the first reasons, the Telecom Department said, is "capacity limitation" of mobile number portability process, which may lead to delay in shifting of operations from non-operational to operational telecom service provider.

"TSPs (telecom service providers) porting in customers from telecom service providers not able to provide services will also need additional access (and backhaul) spectrum to maintain Quality of Service. Access spectrum is acquired through auction," the DoT said, without naming which service provider could be forced to shut shop in the absence of relief by the SC.

Apart from that, the Department also mentioned the possibility of adverse consequences for consumers if one of the competitors goes out of the market, and the loss of tax and non-tax revenues accrued to the government on account of license fee, spectrum usage charge, as well as Goods and Services Tax (GST).

In the eventuality of one service provider undergoing corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP), the DoT further explained, the spectrum which is considered a property of the TSP, will not be free for re-auction until the CIRP is complete.

Apart from that, the closure of one TSP, the DoT said, would lead to major loss of direct and indirect employment, impact foreign direct investment, and hamper digital connectivity in the country.

"The applicant states and submits that keeping in mind the aforesaid most possible and perhaps inevitable scenario in mind and in larger interest economic consequences on the nation and with a view to ensure that the order of this court is complied with in letter and spirit, the central government has taken a decision to seek approval of this court to a formula arrived at for recovery of the past dues from the telecom service providers," the petition by DoT further read.

IMMEDIATE PAYOUT BAD FOR CUSTOMERS

■ **Monday's plea seeking extension of time to a maximum of 20 years, and freezing on interest, penalties, and interest on penalties on past AGR dues, saw the DoT make passionate pleadings as to how immediate payout by telcos would be detrimental for customers as well as overall market conditions**

■ **Moreover, the Department mentioned the possibility of adverse consequences for consumers if one of the competitors goes out of the market, and the loss of tax and non-tax revenues accrued to the government on account of license fee, spectrum usage charge, as well as GST**

WATCHDOG HOLDS APPLE GUILTY OF 'ANTI-COMPETITIVE BEHAVIOUR'

France slaps Apple with $1.2 bn fine

REUTERS
PARIS, MARCH 16

FRANCE'S COMPETITION watchdog Monday fined iPhone maker Apple 1.1 billion euros ($ 1.23 billion), saying it was guilty of anti-competitive behaviour towards its distribution and retail network.

The fine, the biggest ever levied by the French antitrust body, comes at a time of heightened scrutiny on US tech giants by European regulators, who have been delving into the firms' powerful market position, the tax they pay, and how they protect consumers' privacy.

Apple said it would appeal the watchdog's ruling, which it said was at odds with legal precedent in France.

In its decision, the French regulator said Apple imposed prices on retail premium resellers so that the prices were aligned with those charged by the California firm in its own shops, or on the Internet.

The watchdog said Apple's two wholesalers in France fully followed the US company's instructions on how to allocate its products to customers, instead of freely determining their commercial policy. "Apple and its two wholesalers agreed not to compete with each other and to prevent distributors from competing with each other, thereby sterilising the wholesale market for Apple products," the watchdog said in a statement.

The two wholesalers, Tech Data and Ingram Micro, were fined 76 million and 63 million euros respectively, the authority said. Tech Data had no immediate comment to make and Ingram Micro could not immediately be reached. "The French competition authority's decision is disheartening," Apple said in a statement announcing it planned to appeal.

"It relates to practices from over a decade ago and discards 30 years of legal precedent that all companies in France rely on with an order that will cause chaos for companies across all industries."

COVID-19

All'italiana

Should other countries copy Italy's nationwide lockdown?

Empty streets after Sicily requested that transport to the island be blocked from mainland Italy as part of measures to contain coronavirus contagion on the island, in Messina. *Reuters/Antonio Parrinello*

GIOVAMBATTISTA PRESTI, a psychologist at the Kore University of Enna in Sicily, is an adviser to the Policlinico, Milan's oldest hospital, which is at the centre of Italy's covid-19 epidemic. Of great concern now, says Mr Presti, is staff burnout. He is particularly worried about post-traumatic stress disorder among some medics. If hospitals reach the point at which they no longer have the capacity to treat every patient, some of them "will be forced to decide who should go into intensive care and who should be left to die".

Similar accounts are emerging elsewhere. Daniele Macchini is a doctor at the Humanitas Gavazzeni hospital in nearby Bergamo. It has been overwhelmed by covid-19 patients. "Cases are multiplying. We are getting 15-20 admissions a day," he wrote on Facebook. "The results of the swabs come in one after another: positive, positive, positive. All of a sudden, accident and emergency is collapsing." Nurses, he added, have been reduced to tears "because we cannot save everyone".

These reports are coming out of Lombardy, a wealthy region whose health service is judged to be among the best in a country that last year came second in Europe in a health-care efficiency ranking by Bloomberg. On March 10th Antonio Pesenti, the intensive-care co-ordinator for Lombardy's crisis unit, told journalists that the region's health system was "one step from collapse".

Italy's epidemic, which is still concentrated in Lombardy, spread rapidly. On February 25th the country's health authorities had detected 322 cases of covid-19. Two weeks later that number had passed 10,000. Deaths have risen even more steeply as the virus, which is disproportionally lethal to the elderly, has attacked Europe's oldest population. By March 11th, more than 800 of those infected had died.

The crisis in Italy is sending shivers down spines in Europe and America. In many countries the number of cases being detected is rising on a trajectory that will soon bring them to the point at which Italy currently finds itself. Governments elsewhere are watching to see whether Italy's efforts slow its epidemic, spreading infections out over time and giving its hospitals some breathing room.

On March 8th the Italian government imposed nationwide curbs on large gatherings. Big weddings and funerals were banned; museums, cinemas and theatres were closed. Nationwide travel restrictions followed a day later. Italians are not allowed to leave—or travel within—the cities and towns where they live, except for work or emergencies. Restaurants, bars and all shops except foodstores and pharmacies were told to close entirely from March 12th. Europe has not seen controls on this scale since the second world war.

Other European countries have, for the moment, opted for less restrictive measures. Like Italy, several countries including France, Spain and Greece have closed schools and universities. Some have banned big public gatherings. In America variations on these themes are being imposed at county or state level. A growing number of universities, including Harvard and Princeton, are switching to remote teaching or simply sending their students home. But if these limitations fail to slow rapidly and substantially the rate at which infections are increasing, Italy may become a role model.

Italy's national lockdown was prompted by its apparent success using comparable measures on a regional level. The government tested similar restrictions in two "red zones" around a handful of small towns in the northern part of the country where, in late February, it found its first big clusters of covid-19 cases. On March 8th Silvio Brusaferro, the president of Italy's national public health institute, said the number of new infections in both areas was falling.

But that is no guarantee the national quarantine will lead to similar results. The efficacy of the shutdown depends on two things: the extent to which people comply with the rules; and the length of time the rules can be left in place, given their vast social and economic costs. For those watching Italy, the crucial question is whether they need to go to similar lengths, or whether a more modest set of restrictions will slow the epidemic.

Italy is following the example set by China, which got a raging covid-19 epidemic in Hubei province under control and prevented outbreaks elsewhere by imposing stringent mass quarantines. Millions have been mostly stuck inside for weeks. In some cities, such as Wuhan, where the outbreak began, people have been prevented from leaving their homes for more than a month. The lockdown has been strictly enforced by neighbourhood committees and building managers, though restrictions are now being loosened as China's new cases have dwindled. In Italy, by contrast, the implementation of the travel restrictions depends on the public's co-operation. Authorities and doctors are imploring people to stay at home. But at checkpoints drivers need only show a self-certified form stating their reasons for travelling.

So far Italians seem to be adhering to the new rules. There have been exceptions. A hospital porter who tested positive for the virus and should have been in self-quarantine was found shopping in a supermarket at Sciacca in Sicily. He risks being charged with spreading an epidemic, which carries a maximum penalty of 12 years in jail. People were still gathering in bars and clubs—in at least one case, to watch a football match—before the strictest measures came into effect. But in Caserta near Naples, where a handful of infractions were reported on the first full day of police checks, a senior officer said: "Members of the public are starting to be aware that it's in the interests of their health to keep their movements to a minimum."

The extent to which people continue to comply with demands that they keep their distance from friends, colleagues and the general public depends in large part on how long they are required to do so. Social-distancing measures work best when they are put in place early, before an epidemic takes off, says Elias Mossialos from the London School of Economics. In China cities that imposed restrictions on mass gatherings and transport before identifying their first covid-19 case had fewer infections in the first week after that milestone than places that acted later.

In Britain, however, the government is worried about introducing such restrictions too soon. The country, which is at an earlier stage of its covid-19 outbreak than many others, has not yet banned mass gatherings, nor has it closed schools or instructed people to work from home. The scientists advising the government are concerned that if such measures come now, compliance fatigue may set in just as the epidemic is taking off. But tougher restrictions are almost certainly on the way. Sometime in the next two weeks everyone with symptoms of a cold will be asked to stay at home for seven days because at that point many such cases will be assumed to be covid-19 infections.

The experience of South Korea, which has seen one of the largest outbreaks of covid-19, suggests that scientists in Britain may be right to worry. Outside the city of Daegu, where most of the country's covid-19 cases have been identified, the government has not introduced any mandatory restrictions—hoping instead that people will voluntarily follow advice to stay at home and to take precautions during gatherings that they cannot avoid. In Gyeonggi province, which surrounds Seoul, mourners at funerals have been told to co-operate with temperature checks before writing their names in visitors' books. They have also been ordered to minimise contact and conversation with others in attendance (including relatives of the deceased). Across the country guests attending weddings must wear masks—as must the happy couples, prompting many to postpone their nuptials.

Restaurants and bars in Seoul were noticeably quieter for a few days during the peak of the government's official social-distancing campaign, which began in the capital on March 2nd. But that has changed in recent days. Seoul's popular nightspots are once again seeing long queues forming. Trains are filling up and people are getting laxer about wearing masks. The shift is probably the result of officials saying that, based on a steep fall in new cases in recent days, they hope that the country has passed the peak of its epidemic.

But on March 11th a new cluster of infections was discovered in a call centre in an office building in Seoul that sits next to one of the city's busiest subway interchanges. The outbreak may prompt people to stay at home once again. And the government may start enforcing its rules more strictly if the voluntary approach proves inadequate. On March 11th Park Won-soon, the mayor of Seoul, said that he may consider forcing call centres to shut down if they do not follow recommendations to keep their employees at a distance from each other.

As countries employ varying intensities of measures to battle their covid-19 epidemics, it should become clearer which work best—and whether the most drastic are the most effective. Gabriel Leung, an epidemiologist from Hong Kong University who was part of a World Health Organisation team that examined China's efforts to contain its epidemic, says nobody knows yet what combination of controls works best against covid-19. "Do you need to do everything that the Chinese have done to control it?" he says, or is it enough to copy only certain elements. "That", says Mr Leung, "is really the big question."

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BANYAN

Apocalypse, but no deliverance

The 'promised pastor' and the god-king of Pyongyang. How two Korean cults measure up against covid-19

CULTS AND coronavirus to do not mix—or perhaps mix only too well. Take South Korea which, until recently overtaken by Italy, had the highest number of covid-19 infections outside China. Of 7,869 diagnosed cases, three-fifths trace back to a sect called the Shincheonji Church of Jesus.

Shincheonji's 88-year-old founder, Lee Man-hee, is said to descend from ancient Korean kings. As the "Promised Pastor", he is uniquely able to interpret the Book of Revelation and to foresee the apocalypse it describes. He will take 144,000 followers with him to Heaven on the Day of Judgment, apparently.

Other Christian leaders call Shincheonji a cult. Many of its 245,000 adherents hide their membership from family and workmates. At church they worship sitting on the ground in serried ranks, are not allowed to wear glasses—or, at least until recently, face masks—and are encouraged to attend even when ill. In February one congregant with undiagnosed covid-19 infected dozens of worshippers in Daegu, a southern city.

Mr Lee, who has a taste for videos of white chargers and for mass games performed by his followers in stadiums, has become the butt of nationwide invective. He has therefore had to abase himself. Not long ago he blamed the epidemic on evil types jealous of Shincheonji's success. But at a press conference last week he was on his knees apologising for his church's role in spreading the virus. Shincheonji, he said, would do everything to help the authorities check its spread. Meanwhile, politicians are grandstanding. The mayor of Seoul wants prosecutors to investigate Mr Lee for murder through negligence. A provincial governor and presidential hopeful showed up with 40 officials at Shincheonji's headquarters demanding a full list of members.

What of that other cult leader, North Korea's Kim Jong Un? He also goes in for white chargers, mass games and dodgy family mythology, but is far swifter at spotting threats. In January, soon after reports surfaced of a growing epidemic in China, North Korea slammed its borders shut. The country responded similarly to China's outbreak of SARS in 2003 and even to the outbreak of Ebola in West Africa in 2014. The measures were much more comprehensive this time. All travel in and out of the country was stopped. Foreigners already in the country, notably diplomats and aid workers, were put in quarantine. Trade across the border with China, three times higher than in 2003, has ground to a halt, including (to judge by rising domestic prices for staples) the huge, officially sanctioned smuggling rackets that get around UN sanctions. North Korea has even refused to take back defectors rounded up by Chinese authorities.

Soldiers wearing protective suits spray disinfectants in front of a branch of the Shincheonji Church of Jesus in Daegu. *Newsis/AP*

A nasty virus is yet another foreign threat—like Japanese or American imperialism—against which a loving leader must guard his pure, vulnerable people. The response includes the mobilisation of tens of thousands of "disease-control workers" and the production of "our-style" disinfectants. Vagrants are being rounded up to stop them bringing illness into the capital, Pyongyang. In official pictures Mr Kim, who this week fired off another round of missiles, is the only North Korean not wearing a mask. The question is whether the "super-special" quarantine measures are working. North Korea supposedly has not a single infection. Perhaps its extreme quarantine has worked. As Andrei Lankov of Kookmin University puts it, the regime is readier to see tens of thousands of already malnourished citizens starve to death, as the price of staple foods rises sharply, than it is to let the virus take hold. Mr Lankov predicts pockets of hunger in remoter rural areas and among groups deemed to be disloyal.

But with so much cross-border activity before the clampdown, it seems implausible that the virus has been kept wholly at bay. It is impossible to know for sure. One report claims that 200 North Korean soldiers have died from covid-19. If that is true, and anything like the typical ratio of infections to deaths holds true, then tens of thousands of North Koreans have the virus—and the chances of keeping it away from the well-fed elites in Pyongyang are close to zero.

If the new coronavirus does take hold, it will ravage the malnourished (including many army conscripts) before anyone else. To Mr Kim, these people are expendable. Nonetheless, the ferocity of his response suggests he is terrified of the virus. A big epidemic would make him look ineffective—something no all-powerful god-king can afford.

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Classifieds

PERSONAL

It is for general information that I Sunil Kumar Chopra S/O Late Satpal Chopra R/O,- H.No.C-772 J.J. Colony Hastsal Road Uttam Nagar West Delhi-110059 inform that the name of mine and my father has been wrongly written as Sunil Kumar and Satpal in my service record.The actual name of mine and my father are Sunil Kumar Chopra and Satpal Chopra respectively.Which may be amended accordingly. 0040535721-9

It Is For General Information That I,Laxman Kumar Singh,S/O Late.Bhagwan Singh, Residing At-H.No-455, Sector-1, R.K.Puram, New Delhi-110022 Have Changed My Old Name In All Document,From Laxman Kumar Singh To Laxman Kumar Arya,For All Future Purposes. 0040535716-7

It Is For General Information That I, Laxman Kumar Singh,S/O Late.Bhagwan Singh Residing At H.No-455, Sector-1, R.K.Puram, New Delhi-110022.Have Changed My Daughter Old Name,From Somya To Somya Arya In All Document,For All Future Purposes. 0040535716-8

I,Ranveer Singh S/o Ramji Lal Singh R/o-H.No.144,Teachers Colony,Dankaur, G.B.Nagar,U.P.,Have Change My Name From Ranveer Singh to Ranveer Singh Nagar for all,Future Purposes. 0040535694-2

I, Wazir Ahmed S/o Babu Khan R/o-PN-15, Gali No-1, Welcome Seelampur Delhi-110053 have changed my name to Wazir. 0040535721-4

I, Virendra Kumar S/o Chetram residing at D-349, Ganesh Nagar Complex, Pandav Nagar, Delhi-110092 have changed the name of my minor son Rishabh Singh Jayant aged 06-10-2006 and shall hereafter be known as Rishabh Singh. 0040535729-2

I, Vikram Sekar S/o Pichaimuthu Sekar R/o 6A/6, Raju Flats, Alexandra Road, Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu-620001, have changed my minor son's name from Brahan aged 9 years to Brahan Vikram forever 0070703053-1

I, Vaishali Sethi (alias Vaishali), W/O Abhinav Grover, R/O B-7 Dronacharya Apts, Mayur Vihar-1, Delhi, have changed my name to Vaishali Sethi Grover for all future purposes. Affidavit dtd: 4Feb2020. 0050163892-1

I, Singh Govindsingh S/O Gyan Singh R/O Gurudwara Dashmesh Darbar, Behind Telephone Exchange, Palghar, Maharashtra-401404 have changed my name to Govind Singh. 0050163899-1

I, Siddhartha Niyogi S/o Balai Chandra Niyogi R/o-F3/215, Southend Apartments, Charmwood-Village, Surajkund-Faridabad, Haryana-121009.changed my minor daughter name, Svetlana Niyogi to Svetlana Neogi. 0040535721-6

I, Shyam Lal Regar S/O Kailash Chandra Regar, Village Changedi Tehsil Mavli District Udaipur, have changed my name as Radheshyam Regar 0050163898-1

I, Sheeba Mohsin W/o Akhtar Husain R/o-RZ-D-1, 2ndFloor, Pankha-Road, Sitapuri, Dabri, New Delhi-110045 affirm and confrim that Sheeba Mohsin and Sheeba Akhtar both name are the same person. 0040535727-9

I, Shamim Ahmad Khan S/o- Kamaluddin Khan R/o-N-89/A, Lane-No.2, Batla-House, Jamia-Nagar, ND-25.inform that name'of my wife wrongly-written in my passport as Ghazala Khan instead,of Ghazala Ameer. 0040535727-1

I, Shamim Ahmad Khan S/o Kamaluddin Khan R/o-N-89/A, Lane-No.2, Batla-House, Jamia-Nagar, ND-25.inform that name 'of my mother'wrongly-written in my,passport as Masooda Khanam instead,of Masudah Kamal. 0040535727-2

I, Shakil Ahmad S/o Abdul Sattar R/o-B-5/147,Yamuna Vihar Delhi-110053. have changed my name to Shakeel Ahmed. 0040535721-5

I, Shahzadi W/o Wazir R/o- 15/80, Gali No-1, Welcome Seelampur Delhi-110053 have changed my name to Shehjadi. 0040535721-3

I, Satinder Pal Sahi S/o Joginder Singh Sahi R/o House No-135, Sector-21D, Faridabad-121002 Have Changed my Name to Satinder Singh Sahi. 0070703030-1

I, Satender Singh serving 25 Raj Rif C/o 56APO have changed my wife name Suman to Suman Devi d.o.b 04-04-1986 for all future purposes. 0040535608-1

I, Sanowar Jahan W/o Shakeel Saifi R/o-C-382 Sector-10,Noida U.P.,have changed my name Sanovar for all Purpose. 0040535699-1

I, Samriti Kundan W/o Mr. Sijit Xavier R/o Flat No. 442, Block-20, DDA Flats, Dakshinpuri Extension New Delhi 110062, do hereby confirm that Samriti Kundan and Samriti is one and same person. 0040535696-1

I, Sakshi Anand D/o Sheel Kumar Anand R/o J-9/12, Rajouri Garden, N.Delhi-110027 have changed my name to Vishakha Anand permanently. 0040535727-4

I, Rajinder Singh S/O Ram Singh R/O-Hno.96, Bazad Wali Gali, Hiranki, Delhi-110036. Changed My Name To Rajender Singh. 0040535729-8

I, Preeti Gupta w/o Shailendra Kumar Gupta r/o vill and post - Sataon, distt- Raebareli, U.P- 229122 have changed my name to Preeti Sahu for all purposes. 0070703031-1

I, Pooja Sehgal W/o Dr. Retesh Gambhir R/o B-46, U.G.F., Inderpuri, N.Delhi-12 have changed my name to Pooja Retesh Gambhir. 0040535727-7

I, Pooja Retesh Gambhir W/o Dr. Retesh Gambhir R/o-B-46, U.G.F.,Inderpuri, N.Delhi-12 changed my minor daughter's name Srishti Sehgal to Srishti Gambhir. 0040535727-6

I, Pankaj Kumar, S/o Suresh Pal Singh R/o Village & Post Noorpur Tehsil and District Ghaziabad inform that my Wife's name is RITA but in my Service Document her name is REETA which is wrong. Her Correct Name is RITA which is true & Correct. 0040535681-1

I, PRAKUL VERMA S/o DHARMENDRA KUMAR VERMA R/o-D-38, IstFloor, Block-D,Sector-108, Gautam Buddhanagar, Noida, U.P.- 201301, have changed my name to KENNY VERMA. 0040535727-8

I, Varun Kumar S/o Late Sh. Amar Nath R/o B-145, Sector-22, Noida have changed my minor daughter's name from Pragya Varun Kumar Pathak to Pragya Pathak permanently. 0040535712-1

I, Nitish Kumar S/o Jaikaran Singh Baisoya R/o-96, Morna Sector-35, Noida, Gautam-Buddha Nagar,U.P.-201301, have changed my name to Nitish Baisoya for all future purposes. 0040535736-4

I, Nikki S/o Sh.Rakesh Kumar R/o-H.No.1581/21, Gali.No.21D, Surat Nagar, Phase-II,Gurugram-122001, Haryana,have changed my name to Nikki Rastogi,for all future purposes. 0040535716-1

I, Nagina W/O Abdul Mazid R/O Hno.21-C, III-Floor, Block-B3, Dda Flats, Inderlok,Onkar Nagar,Delhi-110035. Changed My Name to Nageena Begam. 0040535729-5

I, Monika W/o Ajay Uppal R/o-108 Top-Floor Sandesh Vihar Pitampura Delhi-110034, changed my name to Monika Uppal for all purposes. 0040535721-8

I, Mohd Arif Rehman S/o Aziz Ur Rehman R/o H.No. 2338, Gali Mir Madari, Rodgaran Lal Kuan Delhi-6 have changed the name of my minor daughter from Yuza Rehman to Yashfeen Rehman for all purposes. 0040535693-1

I, Mohammed Jubar S/O Haji Israil R/O-VPO-Akera, District-Mewat Nuh, Haryana-122107, Have Changed My Name To Juber Ahmed For All,Future Purposes. 0040535716-3

I, Mohammed Arif(UID.NO-514393170048), S/o Mohammad Yusuf R/o-716, New.No.1772, Street.No.4,Islam-Nagar, Ghaziabad, Uttar-Pradesh-201001,have changed my name to Mohammad Arif for all,future purposes. 0040535716-2

I, Mohamad Yunus S/O Abdul Mazid R/O Hno.21-C, III-Floor, Block-B3,Dda Flats, Inderlok, Onkar Nagar,Delhi-110035. Changed my Name to Yunus Khan. 0040535729-4

I, Mohamad Abdul Mazid S/O Ewaj Ali R/O Hno.21-C, III-Floor, Block-B3, Dda Flats, Inderlok,Onkar Nagar,Delhi-110035.Changed My Name to Abdul Mazid. 0040535729-6

I, Meena W/o Sh.Mohd Yasin R/o-E-68/H70, E-Block, Kathputli Colony New-Patel Nagar, Delhi-110008,have changed my name from Meena to Najma Begam for all purposes. 0040535675-1

I, Luxmi Devi W/o Jai Bhagwan R/o D-83,Rajdhani Park,Mundka,Delhi-41,have changed my name to Laxmi Devi for all purpose. 0040535694-1

I, LIZY MOL.K.P W/o LATE.NANDA KUMAR R/o-A-113/F-2, BLOCK-A, DILSHAD-COLONY, Delhi-110095,Have Changed my Name to LISSY NANDA KUMAR for All future Purposes 0040535700-1

I, LHACHOE DOLMA D/o Late NIMA CHHUMBAY R/o-L-Village H.No-6, Tibetan-Settlement, PO-Kollegal, Chamrajanagr, Karnataka-571457, India Presently Delhi,have changed my old name LAJO DOLMA to LHACHOE DOLMA for all purpose in future. 0040535700-2

I, Khushbu Kumar/Khushbu Chanana W/O Neeraj Chanana R/O-B-402,Jhulelal Apartment, Road no.44, Pitampura, Delhi-110034. Changed My Name to Khushboo Chanana. 0040535716-6

I, Kamal Rastogi S/o Nathu Singh Rastogi R/o-289, Thater-Wada, Meerut City, UP-250002 have changed my name Kamal Kant Rastogi. 0040535716-5

I, Jyoti Bharadwaj D/o Sanjeev Kumar R/o MCF-70, Gali No-5B, Bhudatt Colony Ballabgarh Faridabad-121004 Have Changed my Name to Jyoti Bhardwaj. 0070703029-1

I, Jasvir Singh S/O Gurcharan Singh Sabharwal R/O-J-3/184, Rajouri Garden Delhi-110027 Have Changed My Name To Jasvir Singh Sabharwal. 0040535729-1

I, Manjeet Kumari W/O Rajiv Kumar R/O Hno.96, Bazad Wali Gali, Hiranki, Delhi-110036. Have Changed My Name To Manjeet. 0040535729-7

I, JC No.340319F Sub (H/LT) Sanjiw Kumar S/o Kundan Singh R/o Vill-Kotyoura, PO-Hupuli, Teh.- Munsiyari, Distt-Pithoragarh, (UK)-262553, inform that my son's name wrongly written in my service record as Master Abhishek Singh instead of Abhishek Singh. His correct DOB is 05/02/2004. 0040535678-3

I, JC No.340319F Sub (H/LT) Sanjiw Kumar S/o Kundan Singh R/o Vill-Kotyoura, PO-Hupuli, Teh.- Munsiyari, Distt-Pithoragarh, (UK)-262553, inform that my daughter's name wrongly written in my service record as Kumari Priya instead of Priya. Her correct DOB is 01/06/2002. 0040535678-2

I, JC No.340319F Sub (H/LT) Sanjiw Kumar S/o Kundan Singh R/o Vill-Kotyoura, PO-Hupuli, Teh.- Munsiyari, Distt-Pithoragarh, (UK)-262553, inform that my daughter's name wrongly written in my service record as Kumari Pooja instead of Pooja. Her correct DOB is 05/02/1999. 0040535678-1

I, Hiba Arif D/o Mohd Arif R/o G-43/B, Abul Fazal Enclave-1, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Friends Colony, Delhi-110025, name of my father has been wrongly written as Mohammad Arif in my Educational Documents, Pan Number BZIPA3568B and Passport R6396395 and name of my mother has been wrongly written as Huma in my Birth Certificate. The actual name of my father and mother are Mohd Arif and Huma Arif respectively 0070703049-1

I, Gyaneshwar, S/o Lakhan Singh, R/o-B-292,Camp No.2, Nangloi, Delhi-41, have changed my name to Gayneshwar, for all purposes. 0040535721-2

I, Gulam Rasool S/o Abdul Barik R/o D-247, Amar Park, Zakhira, Delhi-110035 have changed my name to Gulam Rasul permanently. 0040535727-5

I, Gajendrasingh Singh S/O Govind Singh R/O Gurudwara Dashmesh Darbar, Behind Telephone Exchange, Palghar, Maharashtra-401404 have changed my name to Gajendra Singh 0050163903-1

I, Dilkhush S/o Munna Nand Choudhary R/o-257, Punjabi-Gali Adarsh-Nagar, AzadPur, M.S.Mandi, North-West, Delhi-110033 have changed my name to Darsh Choudhary,for all future purposes. 0040535729-10

I, Bhup Singh R/O Vill-Jhal, Teh-Kosli, Dist-Rewari-HR-123302 Have changed my wife name Pinky Devi to Pinki for all future purposes. 0040535607-1

I, Asif ali s/o abid ali H.No. 1455, gali no.2, Near govt. school, surat nagar phase-1, gurugram. Have changed my name from mustveen hussain to asif ali for all future purposes. 0040535732-1

I, Arvind Kumar R/o Qtr No 161-E C PWD Quarters Chitra Gupta Road Aram Bagh New Delhi 110055 have changed my name to Arvind Kumar Yadav 0070703028-1

I, Anand Kumar Gupta S/o Nand Kumar Gupta R/o B-11, Madiaon Janki Puram, 60 Feet Road, Lucknow, UP-226021, have changed my minor daughter's name from Khushi Gupta aged 17 years to Mudra Gupta forever 0070703040-1

I, Ajay Kumar Tiwari s/o Ramakant Tiwari R/o H.no 102, Gautam colony, chhawla ext, Chhawla, Delhi 110071 have changed my name Ajay Tiwari. 0070703033-1

I, AMRITA SAWHNEY, W/o- Jaspreet Singh Sahni, R/o- E30E, Rajouri Garden New Delhi-110027,have changed my name AMRITA KAUR SAHNI for all purposes 0040535721-1

I Sunaina D/o Jang Bahadur R/o-3A, G.F Masjid-Moth N.D-110049, have Changed my Name to Sunaina Gill, for all purposes. 0040535721-7

I Shrabani Pramanick D/O Adhir Kumar Pramanick R/o- Baneshwarpur, Bagda, North-24 Pargana, West Bengal-743270.have changed my name to Shrabani Das, for all purposes. 0040535729-9

I Sayara W/o Mohd Arif R/o-F-4, DDA Flats turkman gate Delhi have changed my name to Saira for all purposes. 0040535727-3

I Radha Rahu W/O Raju Chellappanachary H.No-G-1/542 Fif Dal Mill Road Uttam Nagar Delhi. Changed My Name To Radha Raju. 0040535736-3

I Naseem Kauser W/O Nawab Ali R/O-456 Zakir-Nagar West-New Delhi Changed My Name As Naseem Kausar, For All Future Purposes. 0040535729-3

I Mohmmad Ansari S/O Shokat Ali H.No-C-40, Block-C, Ground-Floor, Jafeabad North/East Delhi-110032, Changed My Name To Mohammad Aslam Ansari. 0040535747-1

I Mohit S/O Raj Kumar Bangia H.No-110 Street No-5, Surya Vihar, Part-2, Faridabad, Haryana-121013. Changed My Name To Mohit Bangia. 0040535736-1

I Mohd Razi S/O Mohd Wasi H.No-11, Kh.No-136/1, 1-Floor Street-No-9 Block-B, Wazirabad Village North Delhi-110084.Changed My Name To Razi Khan. 0040535747-2

I Milan Munjal S/o Indra Munjal R/o A/1, Krishna Nagar Colony, Metro Gali Ratu Road, Hehal, Ranchi, Jharkhand-834005, have changed my name to Siddharth Munjal 0070703041-1

I Laxmi Nandan S/O Awdhesh Kumar Rai H.No-Rz-7/29, Geetanjali-Park, Sagarpur, South/West Delhi-110046 Changed My Name To Lakshmi Nandan Rai. 0040535736-2

I Kashi Bai W/O Parma R/O-64, Ekta Vihar, Sector-6, R.K. Puram, New Delhi-110022 Have Changed my Name to Kashi. 0040535716-4

I Devendra Singh S/O, Nain Singh R/o D-298 Sector-108, Noida, Gautam Budhha Nagar, UP-04 have changed my name to Devender Singh for all purposes. 0040535697-1

I Dalchand S/o Ramji Lal R/o X-627-28, JJ Colony, Camp No-1, Nangloi, Delhi-110041, have changed my name to Dalchand Lalit. 0070703052-1

I Bhoopendra Singh S/o Ved Pal Singh R/o E-422, Street No-16, Ashok Nagar, Mandoli, Delhi-110093, have finally changed my name to Bhoopendra Ken 0070703051-1

I Amisha Kumari D/o B.K. Singh R/o C-2/2297, Pocket-A, Vasant Kunj, Delhi-110070, have changed my name to Amisha Singh . 0070703054-1

I Ranuka Sharma W/o Kewal Krishan Kaushal R/o 380, Sector-3A, Mandi, Gobindgarh, Mandigobindgarh, Fatehgarh Sahib, Punjab-147301, have changed my name to Veena Kaushal . 0070703043-1

I, Saurav D.O.B. 01/04/2000 S/o Sarvesh kumar R/O Gram-Banamua, Post-Simriya,Tahsil-Sawajpur, Jila-Hardoi, have changed my name to SAURABH D.O.B.-03/07/2003. 0040535781-1

LOST & FOUND

I PARUL BAHRI D/o B K MONGA Lost my Original documents of Flat No.722, CA Apartment, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi, return if found. Mobile 9892233334. 0040535698-1

I, Smt. Meera W/o Sh. Pradeep Kumar Tyagi R/o H.No. Old 303, New 207, Mohalla Sarvodaya Nagar, Gram Mawai, Pargana Loni, Tehsil & District Ghaziabad, UP, have lost above property Sale Deed Registered as on 15/12/1984 by Jagpal Singh in Favour of Late Sh. Trilok Chand. If found please contact above address and Mobile No.9953597219. 0040535677-1

It is notified for the information that my original-Marksheet & Pass-Certificate of class-10th, passed-out year-2014, from RYAN International School, Kharghar, Navi Mumbai, issued by CISCE has been actually lost.Abhimanyu Sharma,S/o Santosh Sharma and Ruchi Sharma R/o-B-43, Raghunath Vihar-CHSL, Sector-14, Kharghar, Navi Mumbai-410210.If found, please return to above address. 0040535736-6

I Neeru D/o Kailash Chand R/o.C-45 D.D.A.Colony Jafrabad Delhi-32, have Lost my Lease Deed Conveyance Deed Suppl Lease Deed and Other documents of Shop No.103 Edward Line Delhi. Finder Contact-8920453805. 0040535736-5

I Anant Rastogi, S/o-Ravish Kumar Rastogi, wish to declare that I have lost two documents pertaining to my property H.No.-6487, B-9, Vasant Kunj. The documents are Demand Letter against 5th and Final instalment and Allotment Letter, File No.125(6281)83/SFS/VK/II. 0040535730-1

Lost & Found

LOST FILE CONTAINS OF ORIGINAL & PHOTOSTATES OF PROPERTY NO. P-4/6 BEARING PART OF BUILT ON PLOT NO. 6, BLOCK NO. 4, AREA 100 SQ. YRDS KHASRA NO. 775 DOCUMENTS NUMBERS (1) 457 DATED 16/10/1956 (2) 5444 DATED 4/10/1973 IN ADDITION BOOK NO. 4 VOLUME NO. 195 PAGE NO. 195 TO 196 IN OFFICE OR SR. DELHI (3) 14072 DATED 28/12/1973 (4) 10371 DATED 06/06/1995 (5) GPA ATTESTED BY NOTARY PUBLIC DELHI DATED 20/02/1996 FOUNDER MAY INFORM ANIL KUMAR SINGHAL S/O DHANI RAM SINGHAL R/O-115, SAVITA VIHAR, DELHI-110092

LOST & FOUND

My original Property 4 Documents i.e.1 lease deed & 3 Affidavits Lease deed in the name of Late **Smt. Sushila Kumari** W/o Late Bodh Raj Vaid dated **15-05-1963** registered Document no.5636, Book No.1, Addl. volume No.944 Page No.186-190 and 3 Affidavits(1) affidavit in the name of **Bhupinder Kumar Vaid** S/o Late Bodh Raj Vaid Document No.78561 Dated 15-02-1993 (2) Affidavit in the name of **Suman Bakshi** S/o Late Bodh Raj Vaid Document No.78564 dated 15-02-1993 (3) Affidavit in the name of **Manorma Bali** W/o Jagdish Chander Bali Document No.78559 Dated 15-02-1993 have been lost. Finder contact **Suman Bakshi** Mobile No.**9312423692**

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all concern that my client Sh. Chand Babu Gupta, S/o. Late Sh. Ram Kumar Gupta, R/o. G-234 behind PVR Sonia, Vikas Puri, New Delhi - 110018, has disowned and disinherited to his son, namely Sh. Sumeet Gupta @ Babloo, with immediate effect from his all moveable and immovable properties. anyone dealing with him, shall be to do so at his/her own risk and consequences and my above said client and his family members will not be liable in any manner for the acts, deeds of the above named him in future.

RAVINDER SINGH ADVOCATE
Ch. No. C-35, C.L. Joseph Block, Tis Hazari Court; Delhi-110054

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Shri Surender Kumar S/o Late Shri Karam Chand, and Mrs. Reena W/o Sh. Surender Kumar, R/o RZ-49, Aggarwal Colony, Near New Anaj Mandi Najafgarh, Delhi-110043, has disown their son, Mr. Vishal Bagri aged about 25 year and his wife Mrs. Poonam, D/o Late Shri Laxman aged about 25 year for the misconduct and threat done by them on various occasions, from my client's all movable and immovable property/properties. That They shall not inherit any of my client's property/properties and shall not be entitled to grant of probate to my client's will. Anybody transacting any business with Mr. Vishal and his wife Mrs. Poonam in respect to my client, is doing that in his or her own risk, my client and his family shall not be responsible at all, General Public take notice.

Sd/-
BALRAM (Advocate)
(M) 8860175911

PUBLIC NOTICE

"It is to inform to the public at large that Mr. Ashwani Rana 37.5% Share, Mr. Suresh Kr 37.5% Share and M/s. Navani Associates prop. Mr. Vinod Kr acquired the property i.e Plot no. 38, measuring 47 sq. yrds. Village Nawada Block-L, @ Block-L-Extn. Art-III, Mohan Garden Uttam Nagar, New Delhi, vide Sale Deed dated 23.09.2019 executed by Mr. Ajit Pal Katyal and they are the undisputed owner of said property till date and there is no dispute pending on said property till date in any court of INDIA. OR Any person / firm / institution / company having any claim or right in respect of the said Property by way of inheritance, share, sale, agreement, lease, license, gift, possession, legal heirs, partners or encumbrance howsoever or otherwise is hereby required to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice of his/her/their share or claim, if any, with all supporting documents at below mentioned address. After expiration of notice period, the claims, if any, of such person shall be treated null and void and also treated as waived and not binding on our client.

Ajay Kumar Giri - Advocate
H.No. 26/161, Basement, Vikram Vihar, Lajpat Nagar 4, New Delhi 110024

PUBLIC NOTICE

"It is to inform to the public at large that Mrs. Pooja Mehra acquired the property i.e Built up Entire Upper Ground Floor without roof rights on Property No.10A/30, East Patel Nagar, New Delhi, vide Sale Deed dated 08.05.2019 executed by Mrs. Dr. Rama Luthra, regd as document no. 5175 and Mrs. Pooja Mehra is the undisputed owner of said property till date also there is no dispute pending on said property till date in any court of INDIA. OR Any person / firm / institution / company having any claim or right in respect of the said Property by way of inheritance, share, sale, agreement, lease, license, gift, possession, legal heirs, partners or encumbrance howsoever or otherwise is hereby required to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice of his/her/their share or claim, if any, with all supporting documents at below mentioned address. After expiration of notice period, the claims, if any, of such person shall be treated null and void and also treated as waived and not binding on our client.

Ajay Kumar Giri - Advocate
H.No. 26/161, Basement, Vikram Vihar, Lajpat Nagar 4, New Delhi 110024

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for general public at large that my client Smt. **BANARSHI DEVI** W/o Late Shri Ram, R/o RZH-159, Gali No.6, Back Side, Near Solanki Chowk, Raj Nagar-II, Palam Colony, New Delhi-110077 has severed his all relations and disowned her son **SANJAY KUMAR** and daughter-in-law **DIVYA** from all her movable and immovable properties due to their misconduct and bad activities. Therefore, my client and her family shall not be responsible for any wrongful and illegal act in future by them. Any person(s) deals with them shall be self-responsible.

S.K. Gupta (Advocate)
En. No. D-1048/08
Chamber No. D-209, Karkardooma Courts, Delhi-110032

सार्वजनिक सूचना

मेरे मुवक्किल मौ० आशरफ पुत्र श्री अख्तार हुसैन निवासी–मौहल्ला [illegible] कैला जिला मुरादाबाद यू०पी० ने अपने पुत्र मौ० सरफराज के अभद्र व्यवहार के कारण तथा एक लड़की (नौशाबा पुत्री हसन पता – मौहल्ला [illegible] कला, मुरादाबाद यू०पी०) के कारण मुवक्किल का पुत्र दिनांक 20.02.2020 को घर छोड़ कर चला गया है, इस कारण मेरे मुवक्किल उसे अपनी चल अचल सम्पत्ति से बेदखल करते है, भविष्य में किसी भी अनुचित कार्यों के लिए वह स्वयं जिम्मेदार होगा मेरे मुवक्किल कि कोई जिम्मेदारी नहीं होगी, म०न०-6, गली न०-3, [illegible] एन्कलेव, [illegible] टेढ़ा नोएडा, यू०पी०।

S.K. Gupta (Advocate)
En. No. D-1048/08

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, ZAKIR HUSAIN son of TAHIR HUSAIN, residing at 2637 Gali Khajoor Wali, Kucha Chalan Darya Ganj, Delhi-110002, declare that name of mine and my father has been wrongly written as SYED ZAKIR HUSAIN and SYED TAHIR HUSAIN in my PAN Card No. AABPH8453M and ZAKIR HUSSAIN and TAHIR HUSSAIN in my Passport No.M0718695 and my Driving Licence No. DL-0619940088056. and Syed ZAKIR HUSSAIN and SYED TAHIR HUSSAIN in my AADHAR CARD The actual name of mine and my father are ZAKIR HUSAIN and TAHIR HUSAIN respectively, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

IT IS HEREBY INFORMED THAT MY CLIENT **SMT. PRITI HANS PAL D/O SH. TRILOCHAN SINGH R/O 62, STATE BANK NAGAR, PASCHIM VIHAR, NEW DELHI,** IS THE PURCHASER OF **SHOP NO. 7, ON GROUND FLOOR, CSC MARKET, U.P. SAMAJ, DEEPALI, PITAM PURA, DELHI** AND SHE HAS MISPLACED/ LOST THE ALL ORIGINAL DDA DOCUMENT PAPERS SUCH AS DEMAND CUM ALLOTMENT LETTER, DDA POSSESSION, NOC FOR ELECTRICITY AND WATER, POSSESSION, SLIP, BANK CHALLAN, INCLUDING ORIGINAL CONVEYANCE DEED, SALE DEEDS 3 NOS. (1) PARVEEN KUMAR IN FAVOUR OF SUNIL SHARMA, (2) SUNIL SHARMA IN FAVOUR OF VED CHANDNA & (3) VED CHANDNA IN FAVOUR OF PRITI HANS PAL & HAVE LODGED A FIR/NCR VIDE LR NO. 205448/2020 DATED 27.02.2020, WITH POLICE STATION, CRIME BRANCH, DELHI, IF ANY BODY FIND THE SAID DOCUMENT, PLEASE INFORM HIM AT THE ABOVE SAID ADDRESS OR PH. NO. 7011763861.
IF ANY OTHER CLAIMENT HAS ANY RIGHT IN THE AFORESAID PROPERTY, HE/SHE SHOULD FILE AN FIR AND HIS/HER CLAIM WITHIN 15 DYAS, OTHERWISE MY CLIENT MAY DISPOSE OFF THE SAID PROPERTY.

Sd/-
RENU BALA
Advocate
Enrol No. D-4533/2014

PUBLIC NOTICE

My clients Shri Praveen Bansal S/o Late Sh. Vishesvar Dyal, and his wife Smt. Mamta Devi W/o Praveen Bansal Both R/o H. No. B-1-8, Hastal Vihar Uttam Nagar, D.K.Mohan Garden, West, Delhi, Delhi -110059, have debarred and disowned his daughter Ms. Kanshma Bansal D/o Sh. Praveen Bansal R/o H. No. B-1-8, Hastal Vihar Uttam Nagar, D.K.Mohan Garden, West, Delhi, Delhi-110059, from all their moveable and immoveable properties and severed all relations with her out of control and creating trouble to my above said clients. If any body deal with her he/she shall be responsible for the same at his/her own risks and consequences, My clients shall not be responsible for their acts and deeds whatsoever, in any manner.

Shivendra Pratap Singh (Advocate)
Ch. No. 135, Patiala House Courts, New Delhi-110001

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given on behalf of Mr. Pawan Singh Chauhan who it's the owner of the Plot on land area measuring 69.66 Sq. Yards, out of Khasra No.111, Situated at Sandeep Enclave Village Akbarpur, Behrampur, Pargana Loni, Tehsil & Distt. Ghaziabad U.P. vide Sale Deed dated 04.02.2020 and Further will be mortgaging against the Financial assistance from Unmeed Housing Finance Pvt. Ltd. That the death Certificate of Late Mr. Sukhpal Singh & Surviving Member Certificate of Legal Heirs of Late Mr. Sukhpal Singh is not available. To comply the requirements of bank/NBFC we give this Public Notice that if any person(s) having any objection regarding ownership and /or creating mortgage of the said property is/are hereby requested to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 07 days from the date of this notice, at below address.

Lucem Legal LLP
269, Rama House, Ground Floor, Masjid Moth, Opp. Uday Park, South Ext.II, New Delhi-49 Contact 011-40046316

PUBLIC NOTICE

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF MY CLIENT (1) SH. VED PARKASH GUPTA S/O LATE SH. S. R. GUPTA & (2) SMT. VINITA GUPTA W/O SH. VED PARKASH GUPTA BOTH R/O FLAT NO. 307-B, POCKET J&K, DILSHAD GARDEN, NEW DELHI - 110095, I RENU BALA (ADVOCATE) SERVE THIS PUBLIC NOTICE THAT HENCEFORTH MY CLIENT HEREBY SEVERE ALL THEIR RELATION WITH THEIR SON VIVEK GUPTA, THEIR DAUGHTER-IN-LAW PRITI MITTAL AND THEIR GRANDSON VIVAAN GUPTA (MINOR) S/O VIVEK GUPTA & PRITI MITTAL AND HEREBY DEBAR AND DISOWN THEM FROM ALL THEIR MOVABLE & IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES, AS THEY ARE NOT OBEDIENT TO MY CLIENT & DUE TO THEIR DISRESPECTFUL, THREATENING OF IMPLICATION IN FALSE CASE AND OUT OF CONTROL BEHAVIOR. ANYONE DEALING WITH THEM WILL BE DOING SO AT HIS/HER/THEIR OWN RISKS AND IN CASE THEY HURT OR MAKE FRAUD WITH ANYONE, MY CLIENT SHALL HAVE NO CONCERN.

Sd/-
RENU BALA (ADVOCATE)
Enrl. No. D-4533/2014

PUBLIC NOTICE

This public notice is being served on behalf of my client Sh. Umed Singh S/O Sh. Ratan Singh R/O Vill Tajpur Kalan, Delhi-110036.
This is to inform public at large that M/S CMD Ushay Buildwell Pvt. Ltd. and Sh. Neeraj Narula entered into an agreement to sell with Sh. Umed Singh S/O Sh. Ratan Singh in respect of sale of their land measuring 16 Kanals/2 Acres comprised in Khewat No. 27, Khata No. 52 and Kila No. 10/9 (8-0) and 14/17 (8-0) situated at within revenue estate of Mouja Kheri Ragdan, Tehsil Jagadhari, Distt. Yamuna Nagar, Haryana.
The said owners failed to perform their part of the contract and as a result there of a civil suit bearing No. 1408/2017 was filed and is pending in the court of Smt. Pratibha Mahla Hon'ble CJJD Jagadhari.
Any body dealing with M/S CMD Ushay Buildwell Pvt. Ltd. and Sh. Neeraj Narula and/or their assigns successors or any body claiming through them, in respect of the above said land shall be doing so at their own risk as to cost expense and consequences. The rights of the Parties shall be subject to the decision in the above referred pending civil suit as per section 52 of the Transfer of Property Act & any such deal entered by any of the parties, without prior permission of the Court shall be voidable.

Sanjay Relan (Advocate)
Ch. No. 310, Rohini Courts, Delhi-85

सार्वजनिक सूचना

मेरे मुवक्किल अमर सिह पुत्र जवाहर सिंह निवासी–14/135, गीता कालोनी, दिल्ली–31 ने अपने पुत्र इन्द्रजीत सिंह व पुत्रवधू नवनीत कौर (सपरिवार) को अभद्र व्यवहार (अनियन्त्रित होने) के कारण इनसे सभी सम्बन्ध–विच्छेदकर इन्हें अपनी समस्त चल व अचल सम्पत्ति से बेदखल कर दिया है, अपने कार्यो/लेनदेन के वे स्वयं जिम्मेदार होंगे मेरे मुवक्किल (सपरिवार) जिम्मेदार नहीं होंगे, पवन चौधरी एडवोकेट, En. No. D2235/2004

Sd./-
PAWAN CHAUDHARY
Advocate

MUMBAI RAILWAY VIKAS CORPORATION LTD.

NOTICE

Name of Work: Construction of Important bridges No. 92 & 93, Major Bridges No. 98, 99, 166 & 169, Minor Bridges No. 95, 96, 97, 100 & 101 including dismantling of existing Br. No. 166 & 169 and Earthwork for embankment from Km. 68/16 to Km. 75/24 in connection with quadrupling work of Virar – Dahanu Road section and construction of bridge No. 92 & 93 in lieu of existing bridge No. 92 & 93 with associated earthwork for proposed diverted alignment of existing tracks between Vaitarna and Saphale station of Mumbai Division of Western Railway in State of Maharashtra.

RFP No. MRVC/W/103.

RFP No. MRVC/W/103 due for opening on 20.03.2020 is cancelled on administrative reasons.

Fresh notification will be issued shortly

(Sunil Maske)
Chief Project Manager – II

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E-Notice of Invitation of Tender

Divl. Rly. Manager, N.W.Rly, Bikaner for and on behalf of President of India invites sealed open tender for the following works on the date shown as below. **Tender No.** : S&T-BKN-ET 166 **Name of Work with its Location** : Strengthening of Quad cable network by replacing of defective patches of Quad cable over BKN division. **Approx. Cost of Work** : Rs. 2144406.52 **Earnest money Rs.** : Rs. 42900.00 **Date & Time for submission of tender** : Up to 15.00 Hrs. on 08.04.2020 **Website from which complete Tender details can be seen & download : www.ireps.gov.in** 290-DH/20

Please join us on /NWRailways

"IMPORTANT"

Whilst care is taken prior to acceptance of advertising copy, it is not possible to verify its contents. The Indian Express (P) Limited cannot be held responsible for such contents, nor for any loss or damage incurred as a result of transactions with companies, associations or individuals advertising in its newspapers or Publications. We therefore recommend that readers make necessary inquiries before sending any monies or entering into any agreements with advertisers or otherwise acting on an advertisement in any manner whatsoever.

HSIIDC

Extension in Time Period

Request for Proposal (RFP) for Selection of Independent Engineer for its Mining Project at Village Khanak, Distt. Bhiwani

e-Tender ID 2020_HBC_119439_1 uploaded on the Portal **https://etenders.hry.nic.in** on 20.02.2020. The Proposal Due Date (PDD) is hereby extended from 13.03.2020 to 20.03.2020.

All other terms and conditions of advertisement shall remain unchanged.

For any clarification, intending bidders may contact DGM, HSIIDC, Sh. Shashi Bhushan Kaushik, HSIIDC, Panchkula-0172-2590481-83 (Extension 215), 94177-85636, E-mail ID: **Shashi_kaushik@yahoo.com**.

HARYANA STATE INDUSTRIAL & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED

Regd. Office: C-13 & 14, Sector-6, Panchkula. Ph.: 0172-2590481-83
Fax: 2590474, Website: www.hsiidc.org.in, E-mail: info@hsiidc.org.in,
CIN: U29199HR1967SGC034545

80407/HRY.

CCS Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar

(Established by Parliament Act 16 of 1970)

Tender Notice

CCS Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar is inviting Tender for following Equipments/Items :-

1. Purchase of One No. Hydraulic Tractor Trolley for KVK, Yamunanagar.
2. Purchase of Media Pripator for the Dept. of MBB&B, CCSHAU, Hisar
3. Purchase of Thermal Cycler for the Dept. of MBB&B, CCSHAU, Hisar
4. Purchase of Distillation Unit for the Dept. of MBB&B, CCSHAU, Hisar

For detail information and e-Tendering schedule, please visit the website **http://etenders.hry.nic.in** and University website **http://hau.ac.in**.

Date of Start of Bid Preparation and Submission on 18.03.2020 (09:00 hours) and Closing on 27.03.2020 up to 17:00 hours. Opening of Technical Bid on 30.03.2020 at 10:00 A.M. Opening of Financial Bid on 30.03.2020 at 12.00 Noon.

Note: 1. All updates, amendments, Corrigenda etc. (If any) will be posted only on the CCS HAU Website/Tender website. There will not be any publication of the same through Newspapers or any other Media.

2. Interested Bidders are advised to Deposit Bid Security/EMD on or before 48:00 hrs of expiring Date and Time of Bid Online so as to get the payment verified.

Sd/-
Director (Store & Purchase)
CCSHAU, Hisar

HARYANA STAFF SELECTION COMMISSION

BAYS NO. 67-70, SEC.-2, PANCHKULA-134151
(Website: www.hssc.gov.in)

CANCELLATION NOTICE

CANCELLATION NOTICE TO THE CANDIDATES FOR ONLINE WRITTEN EXAMINATION (COMPUTER BASED TEST) FOR THE POST OF ASSISTANT LINEMAN (ALM) AGAINST ADVT. NO. 11/2019, CAT NO. 21 (2nd & 3rd Shift) FOR DHBVNL & UHBVNL DEPARTMENT, HARYANA AND VARIOUS POSTS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND INDUSTRIAL TRAINING DEPARTMENT, HARYANA AGAINST ADVT. NO. 12/2019 OF VARIOUS CATEGORIES

Reference Haryana Staff Selection Commission Online Written Examination Notice Dated: 01.03.2020, 03.03.2020 & Reschedule Notice dated 01.03.2020 which was published in various Leading Newspaper of Hindi & English and also uploaded on the Commission's website for holding the Online Written Examination for the Post of Assistant Lineman (ALM) against Advt. No.11/2019, Cat No. 21 **(2nd & 3rd Shift)** on 15.03.2020 for DHBVNL & UHBVNL Department, Haryana and Various Posts of Skill Development and Industrial Training Department, Haryana against Advt. No. 12/2019 schedule from 16.03.2020 to 17.03.2020 and reschedule exam of Advt. No. 11/2019 on 18.03.2020.

It is notified for the Information of all concerned that the **aforesaid Examination Schedule from 15.03.2020 (From 2nd Shift) to 18.03.2020 are hereby cancelled due to spread of Corona Virus and Administrative reasons.**

Inconvenience is regretted.

Place: Panchkula
Dated: 15th March, 2020

Sd/- Secretary,
Haryana Staff Selection Commission, Panchkula.

80406/HRY.

verka

THE PUNJAB STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS FEDERATION LTD.
SCO 153-155, SECTOR 34-A, CHANDIGARH-160022, EPABX NO. 0172-5041812-13 www.verka.coop

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Section-A : e Tenders are hereby invited for the purchase and supply of following items –

Sr. No.	Name of the Item	Contract Period/ Quantity	Consignee/ Place of Tender Opening	Tender Cost (Rs.)	E.M.D (Rs.)	Date & Time for Sale/ Downloading of e-tendersonline	Last Date & Time of Submission of online e-tenders	Date & Time of opening of e-tenders
1	Cars Such as Swift Desire, Verito, Indigo, Honda Amaze etc for marketing activities.	01 no's for 01 year	Verka Patiala Dairy, Ph. No. 80549-98531, 80549-98533, 80549-98534	-	5,000/-	18.03.2020 from 12:00 PM	25.03.2020 Upto 11:00 AM	**Technical Bid** 26.03.2020 at 11:00 AM **Financial Bid** 28.03.2020 at 11:00 AM
2	Hiring of insulated vehicles for supply of packed milk and fresh milk products in Ludhiana city and adjoining towns.	One year with extension up to one year	Verka Ludhiana Dairy Ph. No. 0161-5203300, 5203301, 5203334	500/-	50,000/-	24.03.2020 from 11:00 AM	14.04.2020 Upto 03:00 PM	**Technical Bid** 15.04.2020 at 11:00 AM **Financial Bid** 21.04.2020 at 11:00 AM
3	Packing of Milk & Milk Products, Panjiri and Loading/Unloading of Milk Products, Packing Material with Store etc.	01.05.2020 to 30.04.2021	Verka Bathinda Dairy 0164-2240406	500/-	1,00,000/-	20.03.2020	07.04.2020 Upto 11:00 AM	**Technical Bid** 08.04.2020

Bidders shall have to pay required Tender Processing fee through online mode only i.e. through debit/credit card for getting registered for e-tendering system. EMD should be made only through online mode i.e. Credit/Debit card, NEFT/RTGS, Internet Banking. For participating in the above e-tender, the parties shall have to get themselves registered with our e-Tendering portal i.e. **eproc.punjab.gov.in** and get USER ID and Password well in time. For downloading tender through e-tendering, process flow, please contact e-Procurement help desk on given Nos. 0172-2970263, 2970284 immediately so that process of timely registration and downloading the tender is completed in time by the date of tender opening. For additional details regarding e- tendering please visit website **eproc.punjab.gov.in.**

Tender processing Fee is Non-Refundable.

Section-B : Sealed Tenders are hereby invited on the prescribed Performa for the purchase of following items :-

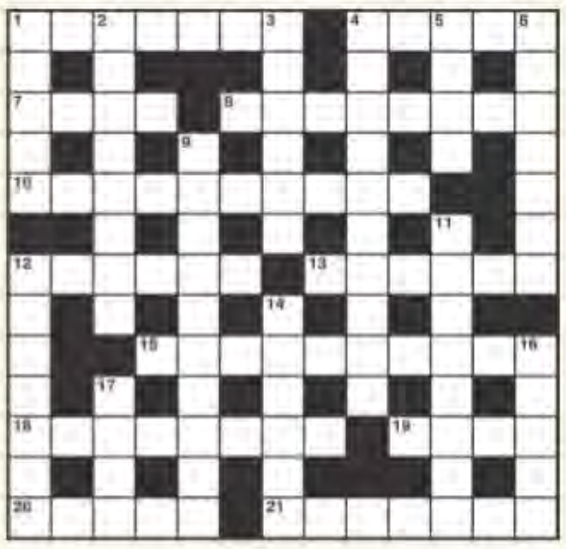
Sr. No.	Name of the Item	Qty/Contract Period	Consignee/ Place of Tender Opening	Tender Cost (Rs.)	E.M.D. (Rs.)	Last Date for Submission of Tenders	Auction Date and Time
1	Outsourcing of Milk Booths at – Mini Rose Garden Ludhiana	Two years	Verka Ludhiana Dairy (Ph.No. 0161-5203300, 5203301, 5203336)	200/-	25,000/-	26.03.2020 upto 05:00 PM	27.03.2020 at 02:30 PM

Interested parties may obtain detailed Tender Documents from the office of Consignee where tender is to be opened on any working day from (9 AM to 5 PM). If any clarification is required may contact on Phone Numbers given above. The Tender Notice may also be seen at Verka Website (**www.verka.coop**). **TENDER (S) WITHOUT EARNEST MONEY ARE LIABLE TO BE REJECTED**. The Consignee reserves the right to accept/reject any/ all tender(s) without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Note : Corrigendum if any will be uploaded on website only.

General Manager (P&LM)

CROSSWORD 4067



ACROSS
1 Delivery from Ontario (7)
4 Impressive stamp edged with gold - the last word in France (5)
7 They may be found in a creel, squirming (4)
8 Decoration for the brave perhaps (3,5)
10 Highland disasters as clans have a riot (10)
12 Make clear (6)
13 Brief note about an unfounded rumour (6)
15 Coming to sure reappraisal of risks (10)
18 A partner placed inside is cut off (8)
19 Nobleman is in real trouble (4)
20 Birds found in Eastern establishments (5)
21 He backs Poles in track appearances (7)

DOWN
1 One may go to the theatre to see it sometime after work (5)
2 League match (8)
3 It shows a certain delicacy of feeling (6)
4 Parcels apt to go astray - they have fruit in them (5,5)
5 Flower girl (4)
6 Under it changes are yet to be made (7)
9 Potential MPs outspoken over unsettled seat (10)
11 Good reasonable roads for drivers (8)
12 Unusual seaside shingles for instance (7)
14 Deep water shelter put up around the small port (6)
16 A sunny expression (5)
17 Bridge piles are up (4)

Solutions Crossword 4066: Across: 1 Solemnities, 9 Offbeat, 10 Ideas, 11 Mark, 12 Sculptor, 14 Influx, 16 Burden, 18 Full load, 19 From, 22 U-boat, 23 Lucifer, 24 Stand at ease. **Down:** 2 Offer, 3 Eyed, 4 Notice, 5 Trial run, 6 Elected, 7 Comme il faut, 8 Astronomers, 13 Bulletin, 15 Fall out, 17 Dahlia, 20 Rifts, 21 Acme.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis

CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson

MARVIN by Tom Armstrong

DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
There are times when a major career change seems to be unavoidable. Yet, although an upheaval is indicated in your chart, the stars' impact may now have diminished, and you'll be susceptible to pleas for improvement. Welcome developments will follow.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
This is a decisive period of the year for matters related to matrimonial contacts and all intimate relationships. In some senses emotional encounters and experiences will be a prologue to what will be taking place over the next three, marvellous months.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
The future is not here yet, but it's coming fast. The great thing to remember is that approaching emotional lunar alignments are already having an initial impact on your consciousness. Happily, it is due to signify a whole new fresh start in family and domestic affairs.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
You would be well advised to play safe and not try to even the score on the home front, seven if a loved one has got the better of you. You have almost played your last card, and must now move with great circumspection. The emphasis must be on getting on with partners at all costs.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
You need to do your sums and not allow yourself to be sidetracked by what other people, perhaps lovers, or children, may want. At the heart of the matter is your need to press ahead with projects which may make very much more sense to you than to others.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
You're walking a very thin tightrope and even a minor disagreement with loved ones could turn into a major source of conflict. It might be in your best interests to throw all arrangements and agreements into the melting pot, enabling new decisions to be made.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)
Current planetary positions indicate that you have all the ingenuity and intelligence to deal effectively with the tasks that lie ahead. But you may have to recognise that you will have to do without the personal support that has sustained you so far.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)
Your imagination is colourful indeed, but you have been rather over-influenced by your fantasies, and if you have taken them too far you may soon have some explaining to do. You must proceed with maximum caution, especially in joint financial matters.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)
It is important to establish who is responsible for what, so you can feel more confident about the chances for success. This may not be a time for genuine partnership, but it is a fine moment for doing your own thing. Strike out by yourself and show other people the way.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)
The past couple of years have undoubtedly been ones of upheaval, combined with periods of confusion. Your current stars indicate that now is the time to enquire within, coming up with unusual answers to familiar problems. If you're out on the town, be sure to let your hair down.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
Your current experiences relate to developments which took place a few months ago, when Saturn, planet of long-range hopes, last occupied a similar position. When dealing with long-term responsibilities you should realise that only genuine teamwork will allow you a way out.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
It is beginning to look very much as if you are in the middle of a major career push. You must press ahead as hard as you can, making no allowance for other people's weakness or failure to fulfil their promises. This also happens to be a highly romantic period, so if you're ready for love, you could be pleasantly surprised.

JUMBLED WORDS

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

The_____is to keep out of range - Italian proverb (4,6)

PPAER

UPTIME

MWORS

AADLBM

SOLUTION: PAPER, WORMS, IMPUTE, LAMBDA
Answer: The **best armour** is to keep out of range - Italian proverb

SUDOKU 4151

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

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

2	3			5	4			7
	9		1				5	4
		1		3		2		
3			4		5		1	
6		5				8		2
	2		8		6			3
		4		8		9		
9	1				3		6	
7			6	1			2	5

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4150

4	7	3	9	1	5	6	2	8
1	2	8	4	6	7	5	3	9
6	5	9	8	2	3	7	1	4
8	1	4	7	5	9	3	6	2
2	3	6	1	8	4	9	7	5
7	9	5	2	3	6	8	4	1
5	6	1	3	9	2	4	8	7
3	8	7	5	4	1	2	9	6
9	4	2	6	7	8	1	5	3

GOVERNMENT OF PUNJAB
DEPARTMENT OF POWER
(Energy Branch)

Applications are invited for the Post of Director/ Technical, Punjab State Transmission Corporation Limited, Patiala

For details, login to **www.punjab.gov.in, www.pspcl.in, www.pstcl.org** and **www.pserc.nic.in**. Last Date of Receipt of Applications is 08.04.2020.

573-C/Pb.

Dakshin Gujarat Vij Co. Ltd.
CIN U40102GJ2003SGC042909
Regd. & Corp. Office: "Urja Sadan", Nana Varachha Road, Kapodara Char Rasta, Surat 395 006 GUJARAT

DGVCL Toll Free No. 19123 (Or 1800 233 3003)
Install MCB/ELCB/RCCB & Prevent Electric Shocks/Electrical Accidents

Tender Notice

Details are available on www.dgvcl.com (for view and download tender documents) and www.dgvcl.nprocure.com (for view, download and online tender submission).

Sr. No.	Tender No.
1	DGVCL/SP/20039/LT Bill Forms & DMR

Note: Bidders may visit the Company website for regular updates till opening of the tender.
ACE (P), DGVCL, Surat.

Consumer Redressal Committee meets:
Every month on 10th at Division Office and on 20th at Circle Office

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED GIRL

MUSKAN

General public is hereby informed that this girl namely Muska D/o Om Prakash R/o Kh. No. 304, Narendra Ka makan, Near Transformer, Kanjhawala Road, Bawana, Delhi **Age :** 14 years, **Height :** 120 cm., **Face :** Long, **Complexion :** Wheatish, **Identification :** A mole on chin, wearing red colour kurti and black colour jeans, has been missing/ kidnapped since 13.02.2020. In this regard FIR No. 86/20 dated 14.02.2020 U/s 363 IPC has been registered at P.S. Bawana, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing/kidnapped girl may kindly inform to the following.

E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in
Website: http://cbi.nic.in
Fax: 24368639,
Tel.: 24368638/24368641

SHO : P.S. Bawana, Delhi
Ph. : 011-27752534, 27741949

DP/58/ON/20

NMDC Limited
(A Government of India Enterprise)
'Khanij Bhavan', 10-3-311/A, Castle Hills, Masab Tank, Hyderabad - 500 028, CIN- L13100TG1958GOI001674

E-Tender Notice (Open Tender Enquiry for Domestic Bidding)
CONTRACTS DEPARTMENT/ENGINEERING & PROJECTS DIVISION
Tender Enquiry No. HO (Contracts)/ Drive System/BC-414&504/DIOM/2019/215 Dated 17/03/2020
(MSTC Ref No.NMDC/HO/1/20-21/ET/1)

NMDC invites bids in e-tender mode on MSTC website (NMDC's e-tender service provider): http://mstcecommerce.com for the work of *"Design, Manufacture, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Drive System for Belt Conveyors BC'-414 & BC-504 with all control accessories at Donimalai Iron Ore Mine (DIOM), Donimalai Complex on Lump Sum Turnkey (LSTK) Basis"*.

For viewing / downloading the schedule of e-bidding and the detailed NIT alongwith pre-qualification requirements and tender document, prospective bidders may visit MSTC web site link: **http://www.mstcecommerce.com/eprochome/nmdc/** and register on-line as **'New Vendor'**. For further help, the 'Vendor Guide' given therein may be referred. Link to MSTC e-tender platform is also available through NMDC website **www.nmdc.co.in**. The tender documents can also be accessed from NMDC website: **www.nmdc.co.in** and CPP Portal **http://eprocure.gov.in**

Any corrigendum to the tender will be uploaded only in above mentioned websites. Prospective bidders should visit these websites from time to time to take note of corrigendum, if any.

For further clarification, GM (Contracts), NMDC Ltd., Hyderabad can be contacted on fax: **040-23534746, Tel: 040-23532800**, email: **contracts@nmdc.co.in.**

General Manager (Contracts)

हर एक काम देश के नाम

SUPPLYCO
THE KERALA STATE CIVIL SUPPLIES CORPORATION LIMITED
MAVELI BHAVAN, P.B.NO.2030, GANDHINAGAR, KOCHI-682020
Ph.No.PABX- 0484-2206775, 2206795, Purchase Section: Ph No: 0484 2207924, 2206786, 2206782.
E mail: agmp@supplycomail.com • Website: www.supplycokerala.com
No.P.10/9368/2020 Date:16.03.2020

TENDER NOTICE
(ONLY THROUGH ELECTRONIC TENDERING SYSTEM)

The Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation Ltd intends to purchase Pulses, Spices, Rice and Sugar through e-tender, which will be accepted up to **2.00 PM on 24.03.2020** and will be opened thereafter. Tender Form and Terms & Conditions may be downloaded from our website **www.supplycokerala.com or www.tenderwizard.com/KSCSC.** For additional details please contact at the above address. Only suppliers possessing digital signatures will be permitted to participate in the e-tender.

Sd/-, Addl. General Manager (Purchase)

TNPL TAMILNADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED
Kagithapuram – 639 136, Karur Dist. Tamil Nadu
E-mail : pmd5@tnpl.co.in / Web : www.tnpl.com
Phone : 04324-277001 (10 Lines). Extn. 4402/4568

GLOBAL NOTICE INVITING BIDS (GNIB)

Sl. No.	Description	Date of issue of Bid Document	Due Date for submission
1	Supply, Fabrication at shop, Transportation and Erection of D0 and D1 Towers at site in SMO Material for Hardwood Fibreline	17.03.2020	06.04.2020
2	Supply of two (2) stationary grab unloaders and one (1) tyre mounted grab unloaders capacities of each 200 m^3 of solid logs/hr. for Chipper House	17.03.2020	06.04.2020

Bidders may request the tender document at the above address by Post/Mail. Detailed GNIB may be viewed in websites: **www.tenders.tn.gov.in/www.tnpl.com**

DIPR/1424/Tender/2020 *TNPL - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper*

बी एण्ड आर B AND R
BRIDGE & ROOF CO. (INDIA) LTD.
(A GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ENTERPRISE)
CIN No.U27310WB1920GOI003601
"KANKARIA CENTRE", (4TH & 5TH FLOOR), 2/1, RUSSEL STREET, KOL-71

Notice Inviting eTender (eNIT) No. : B&R / HO / ERE / 40079 / COLD INSUL / PARADIP / NIT / 01, Dated 17.03.2020

ONLY SINGLE PERCENTAGE RATE OFFER(S) IN TWO PART BID SYSTEM ARE INVITED FROM REPUTED, RESOURCEFUL AND EXPERIENCED AGENCIES FOR "CARRYING OUT COLD INSULATION WORK OF PRODUCTS, UTILITY & FIRE FIGHTING PIPELINES AT IOCL SOUTH OIL JETTY AREA & LPG TERMINAL, PARADIP, ODISHA. 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 31.03.2020 UP TO 16:00 HOURS.

ADDENDUM / CORRIGENDUM IF ANY, SHALL BE HOSTED IN COMPANY'S WEBSITE : www.bridgeroof.co.in AND CPP PORTAL : http://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app ONLY.

COMMANDANT, ARMY HOSPITAL
(RESEARCH AND REFERRAL), DELHI CANTT-110010
REGISTRATION OF VENDORS FOR THE FY 2020-21

1. Authorized vendors for supply of following expendable/non expendable Medical Stores are invited to apply for registration at Army Hospital (R&R), Delhi Cantt for the Financial Year 2020-21. (It is mandatory for Vendors of Medical Gases: to be located at Delhi/NCR to be eligible for registration).
   (i) Drug/Disinfectants/Topicals (ii) Surgical Consumables
   (iii) Intra Optic lenses (IOL) (iv) Hearing Aids and Cohchlear Implants
   (v) Medical Gases
   (vi) Nuclear Medicine consumables and Radio immune assay kits
   (vii) Non-expendables stores (viii) ART consumables
   (ix) Cardiac Disposable incl pacemakers, stents
   (x) Lab reagents and consumables (xi) JRC implants
2. Application forms may be collected from Medical Stores, Army Hospital (R&R), upon production of ID proof and authorized distributorship certificate from Medical Stores, on any working day between 11am to 2pm from the date of publication of advertisement.
3. Vendors registered with the hospital for the Financial Year 2019-2020 are also required to renew their registration for the Financial Year 2020-2021.
4. Completed application forms should be forward by Regd Post / Drop box kept in Administration block to reach Office of the Brig i/c Adm and Cdr Troops by 1700 hrs 31 Mar 2020. Applications received beyond due date will not be accepted.

DAKSHINANCHAL VIDYUT VITRAN NIGAM LIMITED
(UNDERTAKING OF U.P. GOVERNMENT)
(CIN: U31200UP2003SGC027460)
e-Tender Extension Notice
पत्रांक : 843 / अधी0अभि0(कार्यशाला)/वि0वि0नि0लि0 / निविदा सूचना दिनांक:- 16.03.2020

Tender No.	Short Description	Estimated Cost in Rs.	Revised Earnest Money in Rs.	Revised Tender Fee in Rs.	Tender Opening Date & Time
827/ 2019-20	Providing Computer Operator & Peon at various workshops under SWG, Agra	Approx. Rs 160.00 Lac	Rs. 80,000.00	Rs. 5,000.00 (GST Extra)	26.03.2020 16:00 Hrs.

Other Terms & Conditions have been given in detailed tender for which please visit at eprocurement portal of UP Government https://etender.up.nic.in or contact us at given address as follows

Urja Bhawan, 220 KV Sub-Station, Bye Pass Road, Sikandra, Agra-282007(UP) Ph. No. 9068944455

Superintending Engineer (Workshop)
D.V.V.N.L. AGRA

RAIL WHEEL FACTORY
(Ministry of Railways)
Materials Management Division
Yelahanka, Bangalore - 560 064
Website : www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in

TENDER NOTICE NO .RWF/S/P1/009/2019-20 dt. 12.03.2020

On behalf of the President of India, Principal Chief Materials Manager invites electronic Tenders from Interested Vendors for supply of the following items on the Indian Railways E-Portal – www.ireps.gov.in. The Tender documents and the Corrigenda to the Tenders, if any, will be available on the Portal only

Sl.	Tender No.	Due Date	Short Description	Qty
1	P1190349	08/04/2020	Graphite Electrodes as per RWF specification	366 MT

Principal Chief Materials Manager

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

1. The Executive Engineer, Shimla, Division No. I, HPPWD, Shimla-3, H.P on behalf of Governor of H.P invites the Online Bids on Item Rate, in Electronic Tendering System, in 2 Cover System for the under mentioned work from the Eligible and Approved Contractors/Firms Registered with HPPWD Department.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	EMD	Cost of Tender	Time Allowed
1.	**Construction/Improvement of Pedestrian Path on Circular Road in Shimla Town (SH:- Construction of Foot Path, Covered Drain, Paver Blocks Flooring and Safety Railings V. Shape and U-shape Drain on KSC, MRR Road at RD. 148/300 to 148/345, 148/380 to 148/435, 148/750 to 148/798, 148/795 to 148/915 and 151/060 to 151/125).**	1,23,83,033/-	1,56,400/-	5000/-	180 days

2. **Availability of Bid Document and Mode of Submission:** The Bid Document is available Online and Bid should be submitted in Online mode on website: **https://hptenders.gov.in.** Bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is Free of Cost. For Submission of Bids, the Bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the Authorized Certifying Authorities (CA). "Aspiring Bidders who have not obtained the user ID and Password for participating in e-Tendering in HPPWD may obtain the same from the website: **https://hptenders.gov.in.** Digital Signature is mandatory to participate in the e-Tendering. Bidders already possessing the Digital Signature issued from Authorized CAs can use the same in this Tender.
3. **Key Dates:**

1.	Date of Online Publication	26.03.2020 18.00 Hrs.
2.	Document Download Start and End Date	26.03.2020 18.00 Hrs. upto 08.04.2020 16.00 Hrs.
3.	Bid Submission Start and End Date	26.03.2020 18.00 Hrs. upto 08.04.2020 16.00 Hrs.
4.	Physical Submission of EMD and Cost of Tender Document	09.04.2020 upto 10.30 Hrs.
5.	Date of Opening of Technical Bid	09.04.2020 11:00 Hrs.
6.	Date of opening of Financial Bid	

4. **TENDER DETAILS:**
The Tender Documents shall be uploaded Online in 2 Cover.
i) **Cover 1:** Shall contain Scanned Copies of all " Technical Documents/ Eligibility information."
ii) **Cover 2:** Shall contain " BOQ / Financial Bid", where Contractor will quote his offer for each item.
5. **SUBMISSION OF ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS:** The Bidders are required to submit (a) Original Demand Draft towards the Cost of Bid Document and (b) Original Bid Security/Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and other Technical Documents in the O/o Executive Engineer, Shimla Division No. I HPPWD., Shimla-3 as specified in Key Dates Sr. No. 3 on Tender Opening Date, failing which the Bids will be declared non-responsive.
6. **BID OPENING DETAILS:** The Technical bids shall be opened on 09.04.2020 at 11:00 Hrs. in the office of Executive Engineer, Shimla HPPWD Shimla, H.P. by the authorised officer. In their interest the tenderer are advised to be present along with original documents at the time of opening of tenders. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.
7. The bids for the work shall remain valid for acceptance for a period not less than **120 days** after the deadline date for bid submission.
8. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents. The officer inviting tender shall not be held liable for any delays due to system failure beyond its control. Even though the system will attempt to notify the bidders of any bid updates, the Employer shall not be liable for any information not received by the bidder. It is the bidders' responsibility to verify the website for the latest information related to the tender.

Eligibility Criteria:-
(i) The bidders must have successfully completed similar nature of one work not less than 40 % of estimated cost during the last five years under Govt. Department State or Central PSU,s (without Liquidated damages or compensation).
(ii) The executive Engineer reserves the right to accept/reject any tender/application or all tenders without assigning any reason.

5519/HP

U.P. RAJKIYA NIRMAN NIGAM LIMITED
(ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company)
Vishweshwaraiya Bhawan, Vibhuti Khand, Gomtinagar, Lucknow

Notice No. 194/Cardiology Lift Tender / E.U.-Kannauj/RNN/2020 Dated : 06.03.2020

Short Term e-Tender Notice

E-Tender are invited from the eligible contractor/firms for the following given works on Trunkey Basis.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Estimated cost Approx (in Lacs)	Bid Earnest Money (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of Bid Documents	Time of Completion	Address of Unit	Address of tender Receiving Officer
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Lift Work for Cardiology Hospital, Kannauj	29.37 Lakh (Including all taxes)	1.50 Lakh	1180.00 (including Stationary charges)	02 Months (Including Rain Season	Addl. Project Manager(E) U.P.R.N.N. Ltd. Electrical Unit Rajkiya Medical College, Kannauj Mob. 7007099225	Addl. Project Manager(E) U.P.R.N.N. Ltd. Electrical Unit Rajkiya Medical College, Kannauj Mob. 7007099225

The Tender can only be downloaded from the website **www.etender.up.nic.in** during the period **06.03.2020** to **19.03.2020.** All the prospective bidders are requested to get their digital signature, register themselves on the website **www.etender.up.nic.in** Any amendment should regularly be watched on above website and nigam website **www.uprnn.co.in.** Undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason.

Addl. Project Manager (E)
Electrical Unit, Kannauj

कार्यालय प्रबन्ध निदेशक
पश्चिमांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि. विक्टोरिया पार्क, मेरठ

अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना निविदा विशिष्टीकरण संख्याः पविविनिलि/मे/मु./23/ Swift Dzire/Tours/2019-20 के खुलने की तिथी दिनांक 16.03.2020 थी जिसको अपरिहार्य कारणों से दिनांक 23.03.2020 तक विस्तारित किया जाता है। निविदा की नियम व शर्तें यथावत रहेगी। हस्ता./- अधीक्षण अभियन्ता (मु.) कृते प्रबन्ध निदेशक राष्ट्र हित में बिजली बचायें "बिजली चोरी की सूचना हेल्पलाईन नम्बर पर दें। 1800-180-8752 (लखनऊ)" पत्रांकः- 2844 दिनांकः 16.03.2020

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE

Dy. Chief Engineer (Construction)-I, North-Western Railway, Makrana through for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders under **"Two Packet System"** with e-Reverse Auction Type for the following work :- **Tender No.:** MKN/Const.-I/FL-DNA/T-419150415 **Name of the work with its location :** Construction of 224 nos. of Type-II quarters, 110 nos. of Type-III quarters & 18 nos. of Type-IV quarters including pathways and service/link roads, Officer Rest House at Kucharan city, Subordinate Rest house, Supervisors cum ADEN office, Track Machine rest house, RCC Overhead Tank and other ancilliary works at various stations between Phulera to Degana in connection with Phulera-Degana doubling. **Approx. cost of work :** Rs. 77,50,60,467.15 **Earnest Money to be deposited :** Rs. 40,25,300.00 **Tender Closing date & time :** 07.04.2020 up to 15.00 hrs **Detail of particular, where e-tender can be seen & filled up : www.ireps.gov.in Official email address : dycec2ju@gmail.com Note :- 1.** No manual tender will be accepted. **2.** The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and Tender Document Cost (TDC) will be submitted by the tenderer only through net banking or payment gateway only. **Note -** Fixed Deposit Receipt (FDR), Demand Draft, Banker Cheque, Deposit Receipt will not be accepted as EMD & TDC. The payment is to be made in favour of FA&CAO (C), North Western Railway, Jaipur, otherwise tender will not be considered. *288-DH/20*

Please join us on /NWRailways

FROM THE RUMOUR MILL

The much-talked about relationship of English poet William Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy is the centre of an exhibition at Wordsworth House and Garden in the UK to celebrate his 250th birth anniversary. The show explores the duo's traumatic childhood and has been titled "The Child is Father of the Man" after one of his poems.

Art in Quarantine

COVID-19 casts its shadow on museums and art soirees across India while galleries explore online sales

VANDANA KALRA AND BENITA FERNANDO

RECENTLY, THE National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) in Delhi invited art aficionados to visit its permanent galleries for a rare viewing of a copy of the Constitution of India. But with the number of COVID-19 positive cases in India on the rise, Adwaita Gadanayak, Director General, NGMA, has decided to temporarily shut the doors of the institution starting today. Gadanayak stated, "All branches of the NGMA across India will be shut. The galleries are visited by several tourists and it is wise not to have gatherings at a time like this."

With several state governments banning social gatherings and shutting schools, theaters, malls and colleges, museums and art institutions are following suit. In Mumbai, the Dr Bhau Daji Lad Museum has closed down on orders from the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai. The museum had already recorded a fall in visitor numbers. A comparison of mid-March 2019 and mid-March 2020 showed a drop in 696 footfalls.

In Delhi, the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA) also announced its closure on the weekend. "By reducing large gatherings, we aim to make sure that the museum visitors and community in general are protected and remain in best of health," read a statement issued by KNMA. The Rashtrapati Bhavan Museum Complex, National Museum, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, Rabindra Bhavan Museum at Visva Bharati University in Santiniketan, and Kolkata's Victoria Memorial Hall and Indian Museum have closed as well.

While world over several art events have either been postponed or cancelled — including Paris Photo New York and Venice Biennale of Architecture — art gatherings in India too are being gradually called off. Delhi's Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) has cancelled "all internal events". Lalit Kala Akademi has postponed the second edition of Print Biennale. The first edition of the Bihar Museum Biennale has been postponed from March 25 to June 29. Anjani Kumar Singh, chairman of Bihar Museum's advisory committee, said the decision was taken as a safety measure and the difficulty foreseen in many international museum directors visiting India.

Private galleries, on the other hand, have adopted a wait-and-watch policy. Mortimer Chatterjee of Chatterjee & Lal, which opened Mark Prime's solo 'Heavy to Light | Light to Heavy', said that instead of the standard preview evening, they had a day-long preview on March 12, which saw a good turnout without ever having too many people congregating. However, not all artists want to risk an opening in the days that follow. Delhi-based artist Dhanur Goyal's exhibition 'Measuring Volume of Perspective' that was to open at Visual Arts Gallery, Delhi, on April 7, has been postponed, as is octogenarian Lalu Prasad Shaw's exhibition at Bikaner House.

While most galleries expect lesser visitors, it's likely that they may not face a problem with their sales. Most establishments have a well-established collector base, with some of the best works usually sold before the preview night itself. Mumbai-based art consultant and curator Farah Siddiqui says, "Social media tools like Instagram are connecting artists and collectors by exploring current and upcoming exhibitions online. This worldwide health crisis is definitely going to impact sales but collectors are still in the market for exquisite quality works and great provenance."

Online sales may be the way to go for gallerists and art fairs, depending on how long the pandemic lasts. The announcement that Art Basel will be launching Online Viewing Rooms has been received with optimism, especially by galleries who had signed up to participate at the prestigious fair's eighth edition in Hong Kong that was to be held from March 25 to 27. "While nothing can replace the experience of seeing art in person, we hope that this initiative can bring some support and visibility to all the galleries and their artists affected by the cancellation of our March show," said Adeline Ooi, Director Art Basel Asia, in a statement.

The virtual viewing platform, on the fair's website and app, will begin with a preview on March 18 and open to a larger audience on March 20. It will see the participation of more than 200 galleries, including five from India — Jhaveri Contemporary, Gallery Espace, Vadehra Art Gallery, Chemould Prescott Road and Experimenter. Gallerist Priya Jhaveri, who runs Jhaveri Contemporary, said the Online Viewing Rooms is free, at least for participants of the fair.

Shireen Gandhy, gallerist of Mumbai's Chemould Prescott Road, said that if the model is a success, it can be replicated in the years to come. "We can reduce our carbon footprint and the expenses of shipping and crating this way," Gandhy said. She added that Art Basel has refunded 75 per cent of the booth charges after cancelling the on-ground event. Booths can cost about Rs 40 lakh, depending on the carpet area and the walls required for display, which means the remainder is still a major loss for galleries. However, the sales through the free Online Viewing Rooms are expected to compensate for this loss.

Much of the model's success depends on how good the viewing software is. "Moreover, when you walk into an art fair, you get a chance to meet collectors, who introduce other collectors to you. This time, we have to see if collectors are in a mood to buy, given the economy," Gandhy said.

WHEN ART IS JUST A CLICK AWAY

ART LOVERS CAN view works online as international museums offer virtual tours. Among the exhibitors is Google Arts & Culture. Their collection includes British Museum, London; Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam; and Guggenheim in New York City. There are 79 collections from India as well. Among them, NGMA, National Museum, CSMVS and Dr Bhau Daji Lad Museum.

■ The Metropolitan Museum of Art has Instagram posts that run with a #MetAnywhere hashtag, and convey a sense of peace and hope. Among them are Albert Bierstadt's tranquil *Sunrise on the Matterhorn* (after 1875) and Vincent van Gogh's life-affirming, joyous *Oleanders* (1888 - *pictured*)

■ The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) has initiated an Instagram series called #MuseumFromHome. The series includes Henri Matisse's *Goldfish and Sculpture* (1912) and Yoko Ono's *Instructions for Paintings* (1960)

■ The Frick Collection in New York offers virtual tours and encourages followers on Instagram to enjoy #MuseumMomentOfZen. They recently posted a serene landscape by James Whitney Fosburgh, asking followers to "imagine the soothing sound of waves"

Not Out of the Woods

Suspense builds in the film industry too as shootings and film releases come to a halt

Angrezi Medium will see a re-release, says film director Homi Adajania

EXPRESS FEATURES SERVICE

IN THE wake of the COVID-19 outbreak that is rapidly spreading around the world, the global entertainment industry has been forced to hit pause. On March 13, Netflix announced that it was suspending production on all scripted TV series and films in the US and Canada for at least two weeks. That same day, Apple TV announced that projects such as *See, Servant, For All Mankind*, and *The Morning Show*, their tentpole show starring Jennifer Aniston, are temporarily suspended. Over the weekend, Amazon announced that they have shut down production on the *Lord of the Rings* series in New Zealand, after the country closed its borders last Friday; and Marvel Studios has halted the production for all of its Disney+ series, including *Loki, WandaVision*, and *The Falcon and the Winter Soldier*.

At home, attempts to "flatten the curve" by practising social distancing led to cinema halls running nearly empty before state governments declared them closed to the public. Rohit Shetty's latest action-drama starring Akshay Kumar, *Sooryavanshi*, did not release last week, but the Friday the 13th curse came true for Irrfan, who was making his comeback to Bollywood after a prolonged illness with *Angrezi Medium*. The film collected Rs 9.50 crore before cinema halls across the country were shuttered. The film's director, Homi Adajania, released a statement: "We will re-release *#AngreziMedium* when it is safe to do so."

On Sunday, the Indian Motion Picture Producers' Association (IMPAA) issued a press release in conjunction with other entertainment associations in Mumbai, declaring that "shootings for all entertainment formats" will be stopped from March 19 till March 31. "Decision about re-starting shootings shall be taken on March 30, 2020, after considering the prevailing situation," said the release signed by six administrative heads of Bollywood's entertainment industry, including TP Aggarwal, IMPAA, and Ashoke Pandit of the Indian Film and Television Director's Association.

Carnival Cinemas, the multiplex chain that boasts of over 450 screens in 120 cities across India, released a statement addressing the downturn in their business due to the COVID-19 outbreak. "This quarter is completely washed out and shall be down at least 40-50 per cent as compared to last year… After everything gets back to normalcy and film schedule is in place again, we are expecting that first quarter of 2020-21 should yield at least five-eight per cent more revenue as the current line-up of the films looks very promising, including *83, Raadhe, Laxmi Bomb*, Bond movie and many more," said the press release issued by Mohan Umrotkar, CEO, Carnival Cinemas.

> **Shouldn't we in the film industry set up a fund for the junior technicians, our light boys, set workers, sound assistants, etc**
>
> **SUDHIR MISHRA**
> ON TWITTER

While actors and directors take a break from shooting, filmmaker Sudhir Mishra took to Twitter to share his concerns about how the two-week break will affect other crew members financially. He tweeted: "Shouldn't we in the film industry set up a fund for the junior technicians, our light boys, set workers, sound assistants, etc." Filmmakers Anurag Kashyap and Vikramaditya Motwane have agreed to support such an initiative, with the latter replying, "I'm in. Daily wage workers are going to have a really hard time, especially if this carries on beyond the end of the month."

SNAP SHOTS

Blocked Movement

HOLLYWOOD ACTOR Tom Hanks has been using his Twitter handle to keep fans updated on his health after being detected with COVID-19. Hanks, 63, and his wife Rita Wilson have been in hospital isolation in Australia since the duo were infected by the virus. The couple were in Australia for the shooting of an Elvis Presley biopic starring Hanks. On Sunday, Hanks shared a photograph of his quarantine breakfast *(pictured)* comprising a toast with vegemite spread, placed alongside a kangaroo doll, as he captioned the image as: "Thanks to the Helpers. Let's take care of ourselves and each other."

Hanks is not the only Hollywood actor to have fallen victim to the coronavirus outbreak. French actor Olga Kurylenko, who starred in the James Bond film *Quantum of Solace* opposite Daniel Craig, has also been diagnosed with coronavirus and has been "locked up at home since".

She took to Instagram to share her experience: "I've actually been ill for almost a week now. Fever and fatigue are my main symptoms. Take care of yourselves and do take this seriously!"

Man in the Making

PENGUIN RANDOM House India has announced that a book on the life of Goa's former chief minister Manohar Parrikar *(pictured)* will hit bookstores in April. *An Extraordinary Life: A biography of Manohar Parrikar* has been written by journalists Sadguru Patil and Mayabhushan Nagvenkar. Parrikar, who had also served as the defence minister, passed away in 2019, at the age of 63, after battling pancreatic cancer.

While Nagvenkar describes it as a "lively scrapbook of his Tom Sawyer-like childhood and youth", co-author Patil says, "Parrikar was a towering personality, who defined an era in Goa's politics, after the turbulent '90s, which produced 13 chief ministers in a decade...he had the talent, intellect and the drive to achieve more."

In Memoriam

ITALIAN ARCHITECT Vittorio Gregotti *(pictured)* has passed away at the age of 92 in Milan on Sunday, after catching the coronavirus. Gregotti, popularly known as the father of modern Italian architecture, was a driving force behind the design of the 1992 Barcelona Summer Olympics stadium and the Marassi Stadium in Genoa that was the base of the 1990 Football World Cup in Italy. Gregotti shaped many university campuses including University of Calabria, alongside important institutions like the Belem Cultural Center in Lisbon and the Arcimboldi Opera Theaterin Milan.

A River Runs Through It

A cultural festival spotlights Orchha as a destination for food, history and heritage

TANUSHREE GHOSH

JUST DAYS before '*Hindustan ka dil*' skipped a beat with a political jolt last week, Madhya Pradesh set in motion a new tourism policy. A three-day festival celebrated Orchha, a town along the Betwa river, hidden by forests, founded in 1531 by the Bundela kings, who built the chhatris that dot its landscape.

Orchha's Jehangir Mahal's walls came alive to actor Manoj Bajpayee's voice and projection mapping the legend of Lord Ram's leaving Ayodhya to accompany the Bundela queen to Orchha on three conditions, including that he be made its king. This, in fact, is the only place in India where he is worshipped as a king. He is also the new favourite to help boost tourism.

"It behoves us to speak of Ram's qualities of governance as a ruler, marked by benevolence towards his subjects. Our politicians should imbibe that, not just use his name," said actor Swara Bhasker, who was emcee for a section of 'Namaste Orchha: Discover to Rediscover' festival, that saw Hindustani classical vocalist Shubha Mudgal dedicate her guru Pandit Ramashreya Jha's bandish *Jab hari dhanush dhare* to Lord Ram.

The town has been repainted, its roads levelled, under three months. Designer Anupamaa Dayal with local artists made frescoes and Gond bird motifs on the walls of locals' houses, which have been turned into homestays — modelled on Kerala homestays — with cattle, charpoys and mud stoves for the rustic experience. The state has signed an MoU with Kerala, till 2022, in implementing Kerala's Responsible Tourism model. Other experiences include mountain cycling, river rafting, helicopter rides, photography and heritage walks.

Manu Chao in performance at the festival (above); a view of Orchha's monuments from the Betwa river

"The town's proximity to the Golden Triangle (Delhi, Agra, Jaipur) is a huge plus," said Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, managing director of Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board, which is co-hosting the event. The Best Heritage City (National Tourism Awards, 2017-18) is already popular with foreigners. "Not only 1/3rd tourists of Orchha are foreigners but 1/3rd of Madhya Pradesh's tourists come to Orchha, which has 84 heritage properties," said state Chief Secretary Sudhi Ranjan Mohanty, quoting festival director Yasmin Kidwai — a documentary filmmaker and Municipal Councillor of Delhi's Daryaganj constituency — who spoke of the town's syncretism: a mandir and masjid in the same building, and a confluence of Rajput and Mughal architecture in the fort and chhatris.

Roadside hoardings announced the in-absentia chief minister's waiver of Rs 7,154 crore farmer loans. Farmers weren't present, either, to show gratitude. But the "farm to fork" food curation, by writer-columnist Anoothi Vishal, featuring tasteful takes on local Bundelkhandi dishes like mangore, was there for sampling. "We have a fascist approach to our own ingredients, say, parwal, tinda, tori, the reaction changes when I say avocado or lamb chops," said Chef Vikramjit Roy, who dished up Kadaknath Chicken in an Asian-flavoured green curry, as Vishal served guacamole made with the humble parwal.

The state hopes to offer 100 such places for sustainable tourism and marriage destination, in three years, with local-community participation. "It won't just be survival of the fittest but the revival of the weakest," said Mohanty, inviting industries to set up shop, like incubation centres for Bollywood, such as the technical help centre director Prakash Jha had set up in Bhopal some years ago. Not too long back, *Peepli Live* (2010) had cast many Adivasis from Bhopal's Badwai region as actors. "About 80 per cent of *Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi* (2005) has been shot in Orchha," said singer, Indore boy, and festival emcee Swanand Kirkire, who did a *jugalbandi* with the band Indian Ocean under a beautifully-lit baobab tree.

For the first time, artistes from Madhya Pradesh have collaborated with internationally-acclaimed artistes: sitarist Smita Nagdev with fusion band Mrigya; bhakti folk singer Kaluram Bamaniya with Indian Ocean; santoor-player Shruti Adhikari, Kabir-folk singer Prahlad Tipaniya, singer Shilpa Rao, with composer Clinton Cerejo, who, perhaps, mistook the setting to be Coke Studio, for his solo acts with his band struck few chords with the audience. Tipaniya could barely finish one song when rain washed out the evening. The showstopper act, Franco-Spanish musician Manu (short for Manuel) Chao though, pulled forth the crowd with his lively and high-spirited *Clandestino* and *La Vida Tombola* (from the documentary *Maradona by Kusturica*).

The writer was a guest of the Namaste Orchha festival

SURREY CRICKETERS SELF ISOLATE

Six Surrey players are self isolating as a precautionary measure over coronavirus fears, the English county cricket club announced Monday.

BRIEFLY

Lynn leaves PSL in midst of coronavirus pandemic fears

Lahore: Australia top-order batsman Chris Lynn, who plays for Lahore Qalandars in the Pakistan Super League, on Monday left for home midway into the tournament due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Lynn, who was bought by the Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL auction last year, is the latest player to join the list of foreign players who left the ongoing PSL amid raising concerns over the spread of the coronavirus. "Thoroughly enjoyed my time at the @thepsl unfortunately in these circumstances I've chosen to head home, I've always said there is more to life than cricket and this is certainly one of these cases," Lynn wrote on his official Instagram account. "I have full faith in the @lahoreqalandars to go all the way but more importantly have fun lads! Thank you to everyone involved, Pakistan you have been a blast," he added. Several cricketers including England's Alex Hales, Jason Roy, Tymal Mills, Liam Dawson, Liam Livingstone, Lewis Gregory and James Vince, West Indian Carlos Braithwaite, South African Rilee Roussouw and James Foster (coach) had earlier withdrawn from the PSL owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. Lynn will have to spend 14 days in self-isolation when he arrives in Australia as per the government's directives. **PTI**

Pakistan postpone matches against Bangladesh

Islamabad: Pakistan has postponed next month's Test match and a one-day cricket international against Bangladesh amid the Coronavirus pandemic. Bangladesh was due to arrive at Karachi on March 29 ahead of a one-dayer on April 1. The Test match — the second in the series — had been scheduled to start April 5. The Pakistan Cricket Board on Monday said it will work together with the Bangladesh Cricket Board "to identify a future opportunity to complete the ICC World Test Championship commitment." Bangladesh played the first Test lat month at Rawalpindi, where Pakistan won by an innings and 44 runs. The PCB has also postponed its domestic limited-overs tournament — the Pakistan Cup — which was due to start March 25. The cricketing activities in Pakistan will be halted after Wednesday's Pakistan Super League Twenty20 final, which will be played at Lahore in an empty stadium. A number of foreign players competing in the tournament have already left for their homes. **PTI**

NZ Cricket cancel Plunket Shield

Wellington: New Zealand Cricket (NZC) cancelled the last two rounds of the Plunket Shield due to the coronavirus pandemic and awarded the title to league leaders Wellington Firebirds on Monday. Chief executive David White said NZC took the "difficult decision" after receiving expert medical advice and following the government's move to tighten border controls. "We're informed the risk is very real; the pace of change is great – and we have a duty of care to not only our staff and players but our communities as well," White said. The Wellington Firebirds clinched the 2019-20 title thanks to their 26-point lead over Central Stags. More than concerns around mass gathering, NZC said it wanted to curb heightened risk of transmission in airports, planes and hotels. **REUTERS**

CRICKET, FEVER?

South Africa's David Miller during a thermal scanning at a Kolkata hotel. The team had a brief stopover in the city before flying home. *Partha Paul*

South Africa players take 'safe route' back home

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA, MARCH 16

The Quinton de Kock-led South African team on Monday checked into a city hotel near the airport as Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) took all precautions for their safe return home amid the COVID-19 pandemic. After their three-match ODI series was called off due to the virus outbreak, the South African players and the support staff stayed put in Lucknow where the second match was slated. They had the option to fly out from Delhi but they preferred the 'safest city' Kolkata as the Eastern metropolis was yet to record a single positive case for COVID-19.

"We have made full arrangements so that the South African players return home safe. We have a three-member medical team looking into their arrangements. We are taking adequate precautions," medical committee chairman Pradip Dey told reporters at the city hotel on Rajarhat.

Maintaining social distancing, the team was received at the airport by Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) president Avishek Dalmiya, secretary Snehasish Ganguly and joint-secretary Debabrata Das. "Everything is fine. Their rooms are all sanitised. Our liaison manager, medical team are also there in two rooms. They are all equipped with special masks, sanitiser. We have spoken to the players, they are fine," Avishek said.

The visiting team is flying out to their respective destinations in South Africa on Tuesday morning via Dubai. The first ODI in Dharamsala on Thursday was washed out.

IPL teams cancel training

New Delhi: The eight Indian Premier League (IPL) franchises have called off their respective pre-tournament camps till further notice, three days after the COVID-19 pandemic forced a suspension of the cash-rich event from March 29 to April 15.

Royal Challengers Bangalore on Monday deferred their training camp, which was scheduled to begin on March 21, due to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus in the country. Three-time champions Mumbai Indians, Chennai Super Kings as well as Kolkata Knight Riders have already cancelled their camps.

"Keeping in mind the health and safety of everyone involved, the RCB Training Camp scheduled to start on the 21st of March has been deferred until further notice. We request everyone to follow the guidelines provided by the Health Ministry and stay safe," RCB tweeted.

The RCB outfit is led by Indian cricket team skipper Virat Kohli.

The BCCI last Friday suspended the IPL following government-imposed travel restrictions and refusal by three states to host any matches owing to the pandemic that has so far claimed more than 6,000 lives globally while infecting over 1,60,000 people. India has so reported 114 positive cases for COVID-19 with two deaths.

Three-time winners Chennai Super Kings had suspended their camp on Saturday, after which their talisman Mahendra Singh Dhoni left the city. The franchise owners are hoping that in case the IPL starts on April 15, the state governments, which have denied permission for matches, will be ready to give the green light should the situation improves.

Royal Challengers Bangalore on Monday deferred their training camp, which was scheduled to begin on March 21, due to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus in the country.

Good old coaches

BCCI insists Team India should hire those below 60, but Lal and Ghavri prove experience is invaluable

SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY
KOLKATA, MARCH 16

THE ARUN LAL-Karsan Ghavri embrace after the Ranji Trophy final struck a memorable frame. The Bengal head coach had walked up to his Saurashtra counterpart after the outcome of the match was decided. It was also a symbolic moment. Lal is 64 years old and Ghavri is 69. The former transformed a bunch of also-rans into a winning unit; Ghavri presided over Saurashtra's maiden Ranji title.

Age-wise, they weren't cases in isolation. Chandrakant Pandit, who would turn 59 in a few months, is one of the most successful coaches in domestic cricket, the mastermind of Vidarbha's back-to-back title triumphs in 2017-18 and 2018-19. Delhi have had been steadily supplying talent to the Indian team and India A under their KP Bhaskar, a 57-year-old former domestic stalwart. Tamil Nadu's Diwakar Vasu is in his fifties. Thus, old guards have made their young teams tick.

Rewind to BCCI's advertisement for coaching staff, issued under the Committee of Administrators (CoA), last year. The three-point eligibility criteria had specified that the applicant must be below 60. So hypothetically, if someone like Lal or Ghavri or Pandit (it was a two-year contract), or experienced coaches like Sandeep Patil, Madan Lal and Anshuman Gaekwad had applied for the job, their applications would have been summarily rejected--disqualified for being too old.

Former Mumbai captain Amol Muzumdar knows the best of both worlds. Apart from being a domestic legend, the former middle-order batsman has earned his coaching badges and worked as South Arica's batting coach when they toured India last year. Muzumdar falls for experience. "See, it's a very grey area but I feel there's no substitute for experience. Ghavri coached us (Mumbai) in 1993-94, my first season. At that time there was no concept called coach. But he was the senior guy, along with Ravi Shastri, who was guiding us. Sometimes we get muddled up with some things – Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 coaches, this and that. All the fancy stuff of putting different drills, do this and that, it makes a good package," he tells *The Indian Express.*

Bengal coach Arun Lal is 64, while Saurashtra coach Karsan Ghavri is 69.

The value of experience

But experience still has a role, he asserts. "Experience counts a lot; experience to handle different situations, experience to tell the players what it is at that moment of time. That's the most important thing for me. I think it's a myth that people over 60 can't coach," Muzumdar says.

He digs deeper and points out how their ability to call a spade a spade makes the likes of Ghavri, Lal and Pandit successful coaches. "Nowadays, people shy away from it. Earlier, people never used to shy away from calling a spade a spade. But these guys will not spare anyone. If they see something, they will let the player know."

Age is a not a factor as long as a coach is evolving withtime. "All these successful coaches aren't stuck to their old and previously tested ways. They have evolved, because they are dealing with modern-day-cricketers. They can strike a balance between their old-school virtues and what modern-day cricketers want," Muzumdar observes.

Generation gap is cited as a disadvantage for the older coaches. Then again, both Lal and Ghavri gelled brilliantly with the players. According to Ghavri, good man-management skill bridges the age-gap. "If you know man-management, you can be friends to the players who are half your age.At first-class level, it's not about teaching the basics to the players. Good man-management keeps the confidence level high," Ghavri tells this paper.

He offers an example. "Harvik Desai dropped Anustup Majumdar on the fourth day when he was on 18. It could have been very costly for us. If Majumdar had stayed there for an hour (on the fifth day), the game would have gone in Bengal's favour. Luckily, he got out early (on the fifth day). But there was absolutely no blame game in our dressing room, when he was building a partnership. Good man-management creates a happy dressing-room atmosphere. Players forget mistakes and carry on. They start afresh."

The BCCI is now being run by its elected members. One of India's finest captains helms it. So going ahead, Pandit expects the cricket board to decide what serves the Indian cricket best, age (cap) or experience. "I don't want to compare between young and old. I think the BCCI should look intowhat is required from a coach (in international cricket) and which age-group is providing that. I think if someone is fit enough, experience is invaluable. Being 60-plus doesn't prevent you from creating a friendly dressing-room atmosphere. You should have someone (in charge) whom the players can look up to," Pandit says.

The penchant for earning coaching badges started to grow at the turn of the century after John Buchanan became Australia coach and started to steer the team to unprecedented success under Steve Waugh's captaincy.

Buchanan didn't have a cricket career to speak of – only seven first-class matches. But he brought in new ideas and earned Waugh's respect. Shane Warne, on the other hand, was never impressed. The spin king had once accused Buchanan of being a "goose", who suffered from "verbal diarrhoea". Coaching degrees versus cricket career has long been a subject of debate.

The two successful coaches in Indian domestic cricket this term don't have formal coaching badges, but they carried loads of practical experience as former India and first-class cricketers. Do the coaching badges offer anything extra?

"There's no harm in learning. There's no age for learning. I feel that Level 1, Level 2,Level 3, Level 4 badges are helpful to get the system going. But it's not the be-all and end-all thing. These coaching courses teach you modern techniques. So it's a tool that can be used," Muzumdar explains.

Lal feels that earning the badges is fine as long as a coach is not flaunting his degrees. Ghavri believes certified coaches are more useful at age-group levels, where coaching, dealing with the basics to be precise, is most important.

"The coaching badges give you theoretical knowledge and even for former cricketers it could be helpful to attend some of the classes or sessions. But what you deliver (as a coach) is through your practical knowledge; what you have gone through as a cricketer," Pandit opines.

After finishing on the wrong side, Tiwary counts positives of Ranji season

SANDIP G
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

JUST BEFORE the Bengal players wrapped up their kitbags after the heartbreaking Ranji Trophy final, coach Arun Lal and seniormost player Manoj Tiwary called an informal meeting inside the dressing room. The theme was forgetting and remembering. Of forgetting the final day of their campaign, but remembering the days that preceded it. "That's the irony, we had so many good days, but the memories of this one bad day would live with us for the rest of our lives," says Tiwary.

But he didn't want his teammates to part on a gloomy note, rather with their heads held high. "So we reflected on some of our good days, the fight we showed and the belief we had. Like in the semifinal against Karnataka, the quarterfinal against Odisha. The victories over Punjab and Rajasthan. We had 20-25 great days, few teams enjoy that over a season. We talked about the highs and positives. There were several positives. So we should be immensely proud of what we achieved and hence show no grief," he says.

The speech fired up Tiwary's teammates and they broke the huddle with a quiet promise. "We took a vow that we will come back stronger next year. Fitter, tougher, sharper and hungrier, with more belief in our abilities. Every individual will be a better individual and a better cricketer next season. You could see that resolve on their face. As a leader, that's what you look for in a team," he asserts.

Tiwary insists that he has already forgotten that day. Well, almost. "Until someone reminds me of that day or match, or when I watch the television or read the newspapers, I don't think of that day. Otherwise, I have shut myself out from the noise. I'm in a beautiful world of my own, where I forget everything else," he says. A world that revolves around his home, family, son Vivaan - whose name he has inscribed on his bat - and pet German Shepherd, Maximus.

"Different people react differently to setbacks. But I am not someone who broods over what could have been or what should have been. You should move on," he adds.

That there's little cricket around has helped Tiwary in the healing process. "I can fully focus on my family. I don't need to think of my next match for a while. So this takes your mind off what has happened yesterday or day before yesterday. It's when you have a match and you have to prepare for it that the memories of the previous match starts getting to you. Even if my mind slips onto the match, I can only think of the positives. Yes, we lost the final. But was it not an inspirational season?" he asks.

The Ranji Trophy final was Manoj Tiwary's 100th game. *CAB*

In many ways, it was a defying-the-odds season. No one wagered on Bengal to land the trophy; only a few would have imagined them in the knockouts. Maybe, they didn't have big enough names, barring Tiwary; Wriddhiman Saha and Mohammed Shami would be mostly away on international assignments, Ashoke Dinda was a force on the wane; new captain Abhimanyu Eeswaran was waddling through a slump. Ishan Porel apart, fast bowling looked modest at best; spinners Shahbaz Ahmed and Arnab Nandi had a collective experience of 21 games before the season. Their batting lacked depth and stability. They seemed bereft of heroes.

But Tiwary had high hopes. "It's not like we were performing badly in the last few years. We have reached quarterfinals and semis several times. It was just one bad day, or one bad session that had cost us, like it did in the final this time," he points out.

In the previous season, they lost only one match, but a large number of draws roadblocked their knockout hopes. The year before, they lost to Delhi in the semifinals, after being detonated for 86 in the second innings. So Tiwary, the captain for the last few years, had seen adequate potential in his teammates to feel convinced that they could challenge for the title.

There were unlikely heroes all around. Like Akash Deep, who resumed his cricketing dreams after nearly quitting for three years when his father had a paralytic attack and then died, before he lost his elder brother and then suffered a career-threatening back injury. But in his maiden Ranji season, he nabbed 35 wickets at 18.02. "He embodies our policy of backing players and giving them the right sort of opportunities," Tiwary says.

Others lesser-known names too sprung up. One of them was Akash Deep's medium-pace colleague, Mukesh Kumar, the semifinal hero. There was Shahbaz and Nandi, who picked 49 scalps between them. There was a revitalised Anustup Majumdar, glossing over the patchy form of their bating pillars, Easwaran and Abhishek Raman. There was the defiant Shreevats Goswami, whose 78 in the second innings against Odisha was priceless. "We had the bowlers to take 20 wickets, and if our batsmen started chipping in, we would be an unstoppable force," Tiwary says.

Galvanising them was the elder-brotherly Arun Lal, who Tiwary calls the biggest force behind their successful season. "His very presence lifts us. His experience as a cricketer and the trauma he has undergone is enough to inspire us. To have him in the dressing room de-stresses us," he says.

In a way, the season sums up his career — in eight of his 15 seasons, Tiwary has amassed 600-odd runs, but could never quite manage a break-out 1,000-run season. This season he made 707 runs at 50.50, including his first triple hundred. But he is quite satisfied with his returns. "To have scored 600-plus runs in almost every other season is quite satisfying. Especially, in the last three-four seasons wherein there had been a lot of green-tops back home. So it was even more difficult to score those runs."

The past 15 seasons of domestic churn has ensured that Tiwary is a completely different batsman, evolved from a trigger-happy no-holds-barred aggressor to a steadier batsman. He reasons: "At 19, suddenly I became the senior-most batsman, after a lot of our experienced batsmen retired. So I had to curb my instincts and bat with more circumspection. It helped me mature fast and the responsibilities I had to shoulder at a young age helped me become a better captain," he says.

The 34-year-old has no plans to wind up his career. At the start of the season, he had said that he wanted to play till 40. "Obviously, you have to be incredibly fit and work on it. Once you touch your 30s, your reflexes slow down and you are not as athletic as you used to be. So you have to put in that extra effort. But in the end, it's all in your mind. It's about your desire and motivation," he says.

From Delhi to Tokyo, via Gold Coast

Swimmer Kushagra Rawat has attained the 'B' standard for the Olympics, and promises to go even quicker

SHIVANI NAIK
MUMBAI, MARCH 16

Kushagra Rawat (left) clocked 3:52.75 at the 2020 NSW Open Swimming Championships, which helped him make the cut.

THERE ARE race rituals that swimmer Kushagra Rawat is getting a hang of. He is not too chatty around the time of a meet and refuses to acknowledge, even with a 'Thanks', when his sister messages an 'All the best' ahead of his competition.

"But I can't really do well unless my elder sister wishes me luck. I don't reply, but I need to see that message. When young, I wanted to be like her and then beat her in the pool. Now she has to wish me, or it doesn't feel right," says the Delhi boy.

His latest outing, at the New South Wales Open Swimming Championship, saw him finish with a bronze medal as well as erase Sajan Prakash's 400m national freestyle mark, clocking 3:52.75. It helped him get to the 'B' standard of Olympic qualification in his pet event, and brought in Part Two of the ritual he's keen to cultivate.

"Sajan sent me a very nice message that read, 'I am so proud of you. Keep doing the good work. Take care of your health now as well.' We are really close friends and he's always been supportive. He's one of India's greatest swimmers for me and my idol. That message meant a lot," Rawat says.

The Olympic 'A' standard is still 6-plus seconds away at 3:46. "The world's Top 16 make the 'A' standard. No one in India has. But many Indian swimmers are inching close," he added. Rawat also cleared the 'B' marks over 800m and 1500m (where he holds the Indian record), but it's the 400 in which he's keen and that took him all the way to Gold Coast, Australia, two months back.

Aided by a Sports Authority of India-Glenmark Programme scholarship, Rawat began training with some of Australia's very best under coach Michael Bohl. It wasn't the ideal lead-up to the 400m race over the weekend though. "Four days before the race, I developed a bad back. Some muscle strain. It was a setback, but once I got into competition mode, I didn't focus on it. It was a good race. My splits were almost evenly paced," he says.

Rawat's earliest memories in swimming are of failure. "First year of Delhi state, I came second last in heats. At the 2015 age-group nationals in 200m Individual Medley, I came last. I medalled in 2017, but was rejected by the SAI academy. I used to get rejected so often that it built up my motivation," he says of a time when he literally splashed around aimlessly at school in St Xavier's, at Talkatora, and then at Jhandewalan before he wound up at Bal Bharti Public School at Sir Gangaram Hospital Marg.

"My sister was my inspiration in swimming. And my parents are my biggest motivation. My dad is with me in Australia and has been looking after my physical training. And he cooks everything for me too — cuts fruit, bread butter, makes my whey protein shake, cooks *daal, subji,* rice and boiled chicken breast. My family will do anything for me," Rawat says.

The youngster believes he's still some paces off his top game, though he' still conflicted about workouts in the gym and prefers his 45-minute dry-land physical training. "I do just 1-2 sessions a week in the gym. My body tends to get tight if I do lot of weights. It's not good for distance swimming," he believes.

The Olympic 'A' standard is at 3:46. The world's Top 16 swimmers make the 'A' standard. No one in India has made the cut. Rawat cleared the 'B' marks over 800m and 1500m (where he holds the Indian record), but it's the 400 in which he's keen and that took him to Gold Coast, Australia, two months back.

Training in Australia was a sea change after he landed Down Under funded by Glenmark. "Everything in my turns, starts and finish was rejigged. The middle part of races is OK. My improvement has been good — I cut 16 seconds over 1500m. Australian coaches focus on strength in the stroke. There's a lot of analysis through sports science. All sessions are smarter though fewer than in India," he explains. One crucial element that literally pulled Rawat back was his time under water right after the turns. "I was losing velocity in the kick under water after the turn. I've improved my starts also," Rawat says.

Improving upon Sajan Prakash's 3:54.93, set at Thiruvananthapuram in 2018 (and leaving behind the 'B' cut of 3:53.58), has been a logical progression of swimming marks improving over a generation.

"Sajan was an idol because of his work ethic. He would push others to do well. When I was with him at the India camp, his discipline between workout sessions was excellent. I need to learn from him," the 20-year-old says.

In fact, it was Sajan who would ignite the fire in Rawat in 2017.

"He told me then that he had started training in a serious way a little late. He told me three years ago that it was the right time for me to start working hard and learn from him. That motivated me a lot," Rawat says.

However, it's been a conflicting season. "The coronavirus situation is worse in Australia than in Delhi. Though there's not been many cases in the Gold Coast, pools are getting shut and meets cancelled," he says from Sydney, uncertain about how things will pan out in June when he was targeting the Singapore Championship to aim for the 'A' cut. His base in 800/1500 has helped him in endurance work for the 400, complete with a high-elbow technique and all. Guilty of opening very fast earlier and running out of steam, Rawat has cracked the pacing challenge. "1:55 forward, 1:57 on the back. I'm on track," he says.

Funding has been another challenge, and though Glenmark takes care of his expenses, his father has had to dip into savings to be around him.

"Cost of living in Australia is high. A burger costing Rs 100 in India is Rs 250 here," he says of a number-crunching quite apart from slashing seconds.

But things are moving from splash to a wave in Indian swimming. "We are five swimmers close to the 'A' mark. So anytime now," he promises.

"Indian coaches have also improved significantly. Aryan Makhija, Advait Page are doing well in 800-1500 free. We are all good friends outside the pool. Inside the pool, *sabko kaatne ka sochna padta hai* (you have to think of getting ahead of everyone). Everyone is training abroad, and I realise Australia *mein jaan lagaani padegi* (work as hard as you can) in training," he says. Life's looking up, 400m at a time.

RISK AND REWARD

Oman trip in times of pandemic pays off for Sharath

Sharath Kamal won the Oman Open — his first international title in a decade.

SHAHID JUDGE
MUMBAI, MARCH 16

A BIG smile on the face, that's how Achanta Sharath Kamal reacted to his first tour title in 10 years. In the final of the Oman Open, he came up against top seed Marcos Freitas of Portugal, a former world no. 7, but managed to pull off an upset 6-11, 11-8, 12-10, 11-9, 3-11, 17-15 (6-2) win at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex.

And with all that has been happening in the world and in sport these past few weeks due to the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, and with his own fears of the risk he took in even travelling to Muscat, the 37-year-old's reaction had a great degree of relief mixed in it.

"After winning, I was smiling so much. Not celebrating vehemently, just smiling a lot. I don't know why, these reactions just happened," Sharath says. "Sometimes I'm very aggressive in my reactions. Probably (during the match) I had things in control, then it went out, then again it was in control. I think all of that mattered a lot. It's an important title. I'm quite happy, especially beating Marcos who has been doing very well in recent times."

Sharath, who has been the flag-bearer for Indian table tennis for a very long time, had become the first from the country to win a tour title when he triumphed in Egypt in 2010.

But on Sunday, in his match against Freitas, the pressure was obviously palpable. So much so that it was getting difficult for the Chennai native to keep his emotions in control.

"At 3-1 ahead, my head was all over the place because it was a big chance of winning the title. It was really hard to control the emotions," he says. "In the sixth game, I started with a 4-0 lead. Things were fine, then suddenly I went down 6-8. I saved five game points, but managed to convert my only match point. It was a mental roller-coaster ride, but I'm really happy I managed to pull it off."

Over the past few days, sporting events all over the world have been affected due to the spread of the coronavirus. Table tennis too faces a break from the tour till the end of April, but there was a possibility that the Oman Open may get cancelled midway, which would have meant the risk Sharath took to travel to the Middle East would have been futile.

"My family is paranoid. They didn't want me to go, but I thought that the Olympic qualifiers are coming up, so I need some match practice and this is a good chance to improve my ranking. But with all the tension and stress, it was probably better to stay home," he had told *The Indian Express* on Friday.

My family is paranoid. They didn't want me to go, but I thought that the Olympic qualifiers are coming up, so I need some match practice and this is a good chance to improve my ranking. But with all the tension and stress, it was probably better to stay home."

ACHANTA SHARATH KAMAL

NUMBER PLATE

10 This was Sharath Kamal's first win over Portugal's Marcos Freitas on the ITTF tour, having lost to him in German Bundesliga way back in 2010.

Another tournament, in Poland, was taking place at the same time as the one in Oman, but was cancelled during the qualification phase because of the pandemic. The same fate was feared for the event in Muscat.

"There was a lot going in the head. We didn't know if this would be completed. We still don't know if this will count for points or not," says the world no 38.

"(It's frustrating), but a lot of countries were not allowed to send a team. The maximum I could do was win the tournament since it had been a long time for me not winning an event."

Self-quarantine

A week filled with anxiety ended on a high note for the veteran. Still, there are repercussions for making the trip. Upon his return home, Sharath passed all medical checks at the Chennai airport but now has to stay in self-quarantine, as part of the sports ministry's advisory.

He says it will be hard staying away from his children, despite being at home, especially since they are young and keep running to him. But he will have to stay away, from table tennis as well.

"The most I can do is go out for early morning runs, around maybe 5 am, because there won't be anyone around that I can come in contact with. Then of course, I will try to take care that I don't touch things to my mouth."

The uncertainty still remains though, about when the next tournament will take place, and if the rankings points won in Oman will count (it can potentially take Sharath up to 33 in the ranking charts). But he can find satisfaction in knowing that he did his due diligence and won.

Shooters take part in Olympic trials to make up for WC pullout

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

IT WAS business as usual for India's top shooters on Monday as they competed in the Olympic team selection trials at a time when a pandemic has brought daily life to a grinding halt around much of the world.

As the world around them battled the COVID-19 affliction, the sound of shots fired from their guns, rifles and their pistols reverberated across the Karni Singh Shooting Range, tucked away in one corner of the national capital.

The likes of Manu Bhaker, Chinki Yadav, Apurvi Chandela, Mehuli Ghosh and Elavenil Valarivan, among others, participated in the trials for their respective pistol and rifle events.

India had last month pulled out of the Nicosia Shotgun World Cup and later the March 15-26 ISSF World Cup in Delhi was postponed to May — all due to the novel coronavirus outbreak.

"Due to India pulling out of the Nicosia Shotgun World Cup earlier this month and the postponement of the New Delhi combined World Cup due to the global COVID-19 outbreak, final trials are being conducted for those selected in the Indian squads for the above two mentioned World Cups, so that they can register their final remaining scores, before the Olympic team is announced," a release from the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) said. Monday was the first day of the trials.

Manu Bhaker, Chinki Yadav, Apurvi Chandela, Mehuli Ghosh and Elavenil Valarivan, among others, participated in the Olympic trials for their respective pistol and rifle events.

Shotgun shooters will have two trials while the rifle and pistol shooters will have one each.

India has so far reported 114 positive cases with two deaths. The global death toll has crossed 6,000 and the number of infected is over 160,000.

The disease has led to either cancellation or postponement of all sports events the world over in the Olympic year.

[SPORTS BAR]

Man Utd's Fernandes named Player of Month

Manchester United's January recruit Bruno Fernandes beat the likes of Marcos Alonso and Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang to be named the Premier League's player of the month for February after an exceptional first month with Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side. Portuguese midfielder Fernandes joined United for an initial fee of €55 million ($61.44 million) and has thrived as a playmaker in the middle of the park, winning over the fans to also be named the club's player of the month. The 25-year-old has been pulling strings in United's attack to bag two goals — against Watford and Everton — and three assists in the league since his debut last month, helping the club beat top four opponents Chelsea and Manchester City. His instant impact has allowed United to go unbeaten since his debut.

AFC congratulates FC Goa, Bagan & ATK

The Asian Football Confederation has congratulated FC Goa, Mohun Bagan and ATK for "winning the season titles in India". In a letter to All India Football Federation general secretary Kushal Das, AFC secretary general Dato Windsor John wrote: "On behalf of the Asian Football Confederation, I would like to congratulate FC Goa, Mohun Bagan and ATK for winning the season titles in India!" FC Goa were league toppers in the Indian Super League with 39 points in 18 matches and became the first Indian club to qualify for the AFC Champions League. Mohun Bagan won the I-League after a 1-0 win over Aizawl FC last week, while ATK became ISL champions for a third time.

Sports administrator Kehar Singh no more

Sports administrator Commander Kehar Singh (retd), who was associated with Mumbai's football and hockey bodies, died on Monday. He was 89. A senior Western Indian Football Association official said Singh was one of the founding members of the Mumbai District Football Association. Singh was secretary of erstwhile Bombay Hockey Association Limited (BHAL). According to son Ranvir, his father was also the secretary of Indian Navy Sports Control Board. Singh is survived by three sons and two daughters. He will be cremated in Navi Mumbai on Tuesday noon.

Simranjit Kaur secured a spot at the Tokyo Olympics at the boxing qualifiers in Amman, Jordan, earlier this month. *PTI*

Tokyo-bound Simranjit gets Rs 5 lakh cash award

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Monday announced a cash award of Rs 5 lakh for boxer Simranjit Kaur, who recently qualified for the Tokyo Olympics in the 60kg category. A spokesperson of the Chief Minister's office said that Sports Minister Rana Gurmit Singh Sodhi, accompanied by Simranjit and her family members, met Amarinder in Chandigarh. The Chief Minister congratulated Simrajit on her feat and wished her the best of luck for the Tokyo Olympics. He hoped that Simranjit would be a role model for other girls to excel in the arena of sports. He also assured that the state government would extend all possible support and cooperation to her in the future too. Sodhi also assured that the Sports Department would provide her a suitable government job as per her eligibility. The 24-year-old Simranjit, who hails from Chakar in Ludhiana district, has secured her Olympic quota on March 9 after advancing to the semifinals of the Asian/Oceanian Olympic Qualifiers in Amman, Jordan.

Ban on FMSCI chief Prithviraj overturned

The Indian Motor Sport Appellate Committee (IMSAC) on Monday overturned a ban imposed on FMSCI president J Prithiviraj from officiating in national championships, following the death of three trespassing motorists during the Rally of Jodhpur last year. According to a press release issued by the Coimbatore Auto Sports Club, the IMSAC has upheld his appeal, declaring that the ban imposed on Prithiviraj was violative of all principles of natural justice. "He was not put on sufficient notice before imposing (such a) major punishment," the release, quoting the order, stated, absolving him of any lapses. The IMSAC noted in its verdict that the process itself was illegal and could not stand any test of reasonable conduct.

Indian football legend Banerjee 'very critical'

The condition of legendary Indian footballer and two-time Olympian PK Banerjee, who is on life support since March 2, has deteriorated, family sources said on Monday. "He is very critical at the moment," a family source said. Suffering from respiratory problem due to pneumonia and with underlying history of Parkinson's disease, dementia and heart problems, the 83-year-old has been on pacemaker. Banerjee was part of the Indian team that won the gold medal at the 1962 Asian Games in Jakarta.

Koepka says not joining Premier Golf League

Brooks Koepka has said he has no interest in the Premier Golf League, another setback to a league promising guaranteed money and a team concept. "I am out of the PGL. I'm going with the PGA Tour," Koepka said. "I have a hard time believing golf should be about just 48 players." Later on Sunday, *Golfweek* reported that world No. 2 Jon Rahm said he will not join, meaning the world's top three players are sticking with the PGA Tour. Rory McIlroy, who replaced Koepka at No. 1 in the world, said last month that he was not interested in the new league. He said he valued his freedom to decide when and where to play instead of the proposed schedule of 18 tournaments, not including the Majors. Koepka said he made up his mind after meeting with organisers in Los Angeles a month ago during the Genesis Invitational,

Contract woes, unhappy openers and breaking protocol

Extending leagues, as FIFA is deliberating, could complicate player contracts and transfers; Chelsea star sneaks out of self-isolation. Elsewhere, Warner and Finch are unhappy with the Australian government's measures to contain the virus

CORONA AND CONTRACTS
The onset of the coronavirus has brought about a peculiar problem. Usually in football, the last year of a player's contract ends on June 30. But with FIFA thinking of extending a current season due to the ongoing global pandemic of coronavirus, these players may very well be out of a contract during the period the global body is considering on extending the season. The off-season transfer window could also be likely affected on this basis. As of now, FIFA is considering postponing the Euro 2020 to allow domestic leagues and cups to finish their season. The Italian FA was the first association to come out in support of this appeal.

CLOSED-DOOR OLYMPICS NOT AN OPTION
According to a report on the Guardian, the IOC will not consider holding the Tokyo Olympic Games behind closed doors. "An event with closed doors and no spectators is not an option," said a Guardian source. But the IOC has accepted that it may need to relax qualifying standards for athletes because of the multiple cancellations and disruptions across the globe faced by players because of the coronavirus epidemic. With regards to this move, the IOC has already begun talks with organisers to look for ways to house more athletes.

MOUNTING PROBLEMS
Chelsea midfielder Mason Mount was reprimanded by his club after it was found that he along with West Ham United midfielder Declan Rice had broken protocol and taken himself out of self-isolation. According to a report in the Guardian, Mount and Rice were spotted playing some five-a-side football in London, a clear violation of the guidelines set by the club. Mount's case is especially irresponsible considering his teammate Hudson Callum-Odoi was diagnosed with Coronavirus recently and the club had to self-isolate as has been the guidelines provided by the English government.

FIFA 20 REPLACES THE GAME
The coronavirus epidemic may have brought a standstill in terms of football being played across the world, but Leyton Orient, who are a part of Football League Two, have started a mass FIFA 20 tournament to combat the unprecedented postponing of football across England. Social media accounts of teams have had to find innovative ways to come up with content in these times and many have played tic-tac-toe over Twitter, but Orient's invitational has garnered support and then some. 128 clubs from around the world have entered their tournament including Manchester City, Derby County and Brentford.

FINCH AND WARNER CRITICAL
Australian white-ball captain Aaron Finch and opener David Warner have raised concerns over the effectiveness of the self-isolation policy of the government to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic. The Australian government had announced that anyone arriving in the country from overseas will be forced to self-isolate for 14 days starting Sunday midnight (March 15) in a bid to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus. However, a lot of citizens are confused regarding the working of the precaution. An Australian sports journalist Veronica Eggleton tweeted: "Genuine question - how does the government know if new arrivals are actually self-isolating?"

Finch re-tweeted Eggleton's tweet adding "Have been wondering the same thing!!" Finch's remarks prompted a response from teammate Warner, who wrote "Or, what about the uber/taxi/bus/train they catch from the airport to their place."

"Straight home into isolation, get home to this note from my legendary wife who's gone to stay with her parents for a few weeks. See you guys in 14 days," he tweeted. The sports calendars were shredded worldwide, including international and domestic cricket all over. Australia's ODI series against New Zealand was called off after the first match, as was India's ODI series against South Africa. Both series were to be held without spectators before being scrapped. England's tour of Sri Lanka was also cut short before the beginning of the two-match Test series.

After fleeing, Chinese teams rush home to avoid virus

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
SHANGHAI, MARCH 16

MOST CHINESE Super League (CSL) clubs fled abroad when the deadly coronavirus hit the country but they are now rushing back again as it takes hold elsewhere.

The national side is still training in Dubai -- where many CSL teams also went in recent weeks -- but they too are now making hasty arrangements to get home as soon as possible.

Wuhan Zall, from the city at the epicentre of the outbreak, had been training in Spain since late January but left at the weekend because of the worsening situation in Europe, now the focal point of the pandemic. Wuhan will reportedly continue their chaotic pre-season preparations in Shenzhen. Wuhan itself is still in lockdown, despite virus numbers in China reducing.

The CSL season was supposed to begin on February 22 but was indefinitely postponed. It could start behind closed doors in May, according to reports.

Leo Baptistao, Wuhan's Brazilian attacker, told Chinese media before departing Spain that the situation "has flipped".

"We are more in danger (here). It now appears... better to leave," he said.

Fabio Cannavaro's CSL champions Guangzhou Evergrande, who were in Dubai, and runners-up Beijing Guoan are among the clubs that have recently returned to China. Guangzhou R&F, coached by former Arsenal and Barcelona star Giovanni van Bronckhorst, on Monday became the latest club to say they were cutting short their Dubai training camp.

However, getting back to China is not straightforward because of flight disruptions and strict quarantine rules when coming home. Wuhan Zall were stranded in Frankfurt, Germany on Sunday, according to Chinese media, and their current location was not immediately available.

The Beijing News reported that Li Tie's national team were curtailing their stint in Dubai and had planned to fly back to the Chinese capital from Dubai.

However, their return is also becoming complicated, as Beijing authorities are now sending all international arrivals in the capital to quarantine facilities.

Europe goes in a huddle

UEFA calls for an emergency meeting to discuss the possibility of postponing Euro 2020 by a year

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
MARCH 16

A decision over whether to postpone football's Euro 2020 by up to a year, with all the sporting and financial consequences that would entail, is set to be made when UEFA holds a crisis meeting on Tuesday as Europe battles the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

European football's governing body will hold a videoconference with representatives from all 55 member associations as well as from clubs and players bodies. UEFA will then hold an executive committee meeting at their Swiss headquarters.

The future of the European Championship, due to take place for the first time in 12 different cities spread across the continent from June 12 to July 12, is up in the air along with those of the Champions League and Europa League.

The "dark scenarios" that UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin warned against envisaging when he spoke at the organisation's congress in Amsterdam just two weeks ago now have to be considered.

All of Europe's leading domestic leagues ground to a halt last week, while UEFA suspended all Champions League and Europa League games due to be played this week. Both tournaments are still in the last-16 stage. Europe has become the epicentre of the coronavirus pandemic, with Italy and Spain on lockdown, France gradually following suit, and other countries closing borders to halt the spread of the outbreak.

More than 1,800 people have died in Italy, which is supposed to host the opening game of Euro 2020 in Rome.

Postponed for a year?

The head of the Italian football federation, Gabriele Gravina, has already proposed that the Euro be postponed, with Italy coach Roberto Mancini calling for it to pushed back 12 months. "We would have won the European Championship this summer, we can also win it in 2021," Mancini told television station Rai Sport.

It is a position that many around the continent are coming round to amid much uncertainty as to when club football can resume. "UEFA has no choice. They have to postpone the Euro and the Champions League," one senior figure in the world game told AFP, although finding agreement across the board may not be easy.

A worker mows the grass in front of the Baku Olympic Stadium, one of the venues planned for Euro 2020. *Reuters*

"There are people who want to play, and others who don't," French football federation president Noel Le Graet told broadcaster TF1 on Sunday. German broadcaster ZDF reported that two possible options are on the table for the European Championship.

One is to push it back to 2021, although that is not as simple as it might appear, as it would need FIFA president Gianni Infantino to agree to halting the inaugural edition of his highly lucrative Club World Cup, due to take place in June and July next year in China with some of Europe's top club sides involved. FIFA offered "no comment" on Monday on the matter.

There is also the issue of the women's European Championship, scheduled to run from July 7 to August 1 next year in England, with the final at Wembley. The London venue is also supposed to hold the semi-finals and final of Euro 2020.

The alternative option, according to ZDF, is to maintain a Euro 2020 by playing it towards the end of the year.

Financial stakes 'enormous'

That supposes that the crisis will have calmed down by then, and there is also the issue of all the other football that has been suspended. Le Graet said "it is probable" that all friendly matches scheduled to be played at the end of this month will be postponed. Play-off matches to decide the last four berths at Euro 2020 can be expected to go the same way.

In any case, world governing body FIFA has already moved to say that clubs no longer need to release players for the scheduled international dates.

They may come to a decision to try to complete the Champions League and Europa League by curtailing the competitions, meaning ties up to the semi-finals could be decided in one-off matches.

From a financial viewpoint, UEFA would undoubtedly prefer postponing their flagship tournaments to cancelling them altogether, or playing matches behind closed doors. "The financial stakes are enormous," according to one senior figure in the international game.

"We know that FIFA has significant reserves but we don't know about UEFA or the different leagues."

In any case, the European Leagues grouping of almost a thousand clubs in 29 countries across the continent warned that "cooperation, coordination and flexibility are going to be essential".

No May deadline for Olympics: IOC

ASSOCIATED PRESS
SYDNEY, MARCH 16

THE LEADER of the IOC's coordination commission for the Tokyo Olympics said there is no May deadline to cancel the games and he remains confident the event will go ahead despite sports coming to a virtual standstill globally amid the coronavirus outbreak.

John Coates, who will have to go into government-mandated self-isolation when he returns to Australia this week from Olympic business in Europe, told the Sydney Morning Herald newspaper: "It's all proceeding to start on the 24th of July."

Dick Pound, a former IOC vice president, said in an interview with The Associated Press last month that the end of May loomed as a possible deadline for the IOC to make a call on the Tokyo Olympics.

But Coates, an IOC vice president and head of the Australian Olympic Committee, told the paper in a telephone interview from Switzerland that the IOC didn't recognize the deadline and he thought Pound had backed away from it, too.

"It's never been the IOC's position. It was Dick's idea. There is four months to go," Coates told the newspaper on Monday.

More than 169,000 people have been infected and 6,500 killed in the coronavirus pandemic. The COVID-19 illness causes mild or moderate symptoms for most, but severe symptoms are more likely in the elderly or people with existing health problems. More than 77,000 people have recovered from it so far, mostly in China where the outbreak started late last year.

Though China still has the most infections, a dozen other countries have more than 1,000 cases, mostly in Europe. Coates was in Europe when the Australian government announced the mandatory two-week self isolation on all people arriving in the country after the weekend. The latest restrictions, including bans on gatherings of more than 500 people, came in the wake of the cancellation of the Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne over the weekend, and the suspension of sporting events and large-scale gatherings in parts of the world affected by the virus outbreak. That has caused postponements and uncertainty for qualifying in some Olympic sports, although the IOC and Tokyo organizers have consistently said the games will go ahead as scheduled.

CON STARS

Smartphones, buzzers, and even yogurt: Chess cheats have tried it all

DAVID WALDSTEIN
MARCH 16

UNTIL THE sports world ground to a halt last week over the coronavirus outbreak, perhaps the biggest issue looming over professional sports in the United States was the Houston Astros' cheating scandal. The revelations of their scheme led Major League Baseball's commissioner, Rob Manfred, to deliver a stern warning to all 30 club owners that there was a "culture of cheating" in the game.

But baseball's malfeasance — sign-stealing or otherwise — has nothing on chess. At prestigious live tournaments and among thousands of others playing daily online, cheating is a scourge. Whether it's a secret buzzer planted in a shoe, a smartphone smuggled into the bathroom, a particular flavor of yogurt delivered at a key moment — or just online players using computerized chess programs — chess has perhaps more cheating than any other game in the world.

"Of course it is a problem," said Leinier Domínguez, the Cuban-born player currently ranked No. 1 in the United States. "Because with all the advances in technology, it's always a possibility. People have more chances and opportunities to do this sort of thing."

Last year, a grand master named Igors Rausis was caught examining a smartphone in a bathroom at an event in France.

In both chess and baseball, both real and rumored instances of cheating have been around for decades, but an explosion in technology and data over the past 10 to 15 years has made the problem much harder to curb for both.

The Astros' scheme, which helped propel them to the 2017 World Series title, involved illegally deciphering the signs of opposing catchers via a live video feed and then banging on a trash can to signal the next pitch to the batter. MLB is now grappling with how to prevent similar electronic-based schemes in the future. In chess, players at live tournaments are now required to leave their phones behind and pass through metal detectors before entering the playing area. Some have even been asked to remove clothing and been searched. And some tournaments now put players behind one-way mirrors to limit visual communication.

But, like the Astros, many chess players still try.Just last year, a grandmaster named Igors Rausis was caught examining a smartphone in a bathroom stall at a tournament in France. In 2015, Gaioz Nigalidze of Georgia was barred for three years by FIDE, chess' global governing body, and had his grandmaster status revoked for the same offense.

FIDE's anti-cheating commission has recently stepped up its efforts to combat the problem. The group met last month and resolved to give financial support to national federations that need it to help them root out cheating, and will share detection techniques with online chess platforms. They are currently investigating 20 cases.

"The cheaters have been winning for a long time," Arkady Dvorkovich, the president of FIDE, said in a telephone interview from Moscow. "But in the last few months we showed our determination to fight it and I think people realize it is serious."

In 2013, Borislav Ivanov, a young player from Bulgaria, was essentially forced into retirement after he refused to take off his shoes to be searched for an electronic device that might be used to transmit signals to him. A device was never found — Ivanov reportedly refused to remove his shoes because, he claimed, his socks were too smelly — but he retired after the tournament.

There are players who cheat by sandbagging — intentionally playing poorly in order to qualify for a lower tournament and win the prize money. There are some who create fake accounts online, build up the stature of that account, and then beat it to improve their own ranking. Sometimes opponents agree to an outcome and share meager prize money.

In 1978, Viktor Korchnoi accused Anatoly Karpov of cheating with blueberry yogurt. After Karpov received purple yogurt .

from a waiter during the game, Korchnoi worried that the flavor was a signal from someone on the outside.

Korchnoi later claimed his accusation was a joke, but officials took it seriously, ultimately mandating that the same snack would be delivered to both players at a predetermined time. "It sounds crazy," said Gerard Le-Marechal, a full-time monitor and anti-cheating detective for Chess.com, one of the world's largest online chess platforms. "But it's a legitimate concern because there are so many ways to help a player."

Le-Marechal is one of six people employed by the website to combat cheating. They rely on algorithms of statistical data, and Le-Marechal says he gets ping alerts throughout the day about cheaters — many amateurs, some professionals and even the occasional grandmaster. During a 40-minute telephone interview, at least three pings could be heard in the background, and Le-Marechal said all were alerts for cheating.

Daniel Rensch, a former junior champion and one of the owners of Chess.com, said his cheat-detection team had consulted for live tournaments to help stop cheating. There is little doubt, he said, that haptic buzzers have already been used. **NEW YORK TIMES**

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SOHNA: NEXA SOHNA, PASCO AUTOMOBILES, PH: 9899961000
REWARI: NEXA DELHI ROAD, DINCO 4 WHEELS LLP, PH: 7082100301
NOIDA: NEXA SECTOR 1, ROHAN MOTORS, PH: 8376800026; NEXA SECTOR 63, VIPUL MOTORS, PH: 9599814775; NEXA SECTOR 10, FAIR DEAL CARS, PH: 9953993450
GREATER NOIDA: NEXA IND AREA GREATER NOIDA, ROHAN MOTORS, PH: 8744000600

* T&C Apply. Features and accessories shown may not be part of standard fitment. Black glass shade on the vehicle is due to lighting effect. Images used are for illustration purposes only. Offers may vary across variants. Maruti Suzuki reserves the right to withdraw offers at any point in time.

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