

**UP Govt**  
plasters photo,  
address of  
ex-IPS, activists  
booked for  
CAA protests



Those on posters say will move court. Vishal Srivastav

**ASAD REHMAN**  
LUCKNOW, MARCH 6

THE LUCKNOW administration has started putting up hoardings with photographs and addresses of those booked in cases of alleged vandalism and arson linked to protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in the city on December 19.

Among those shown in the posters are leading activists, including Congress leader Sadaf Jafar, Rihai Manch founder Mohammad Shoaib and Deepak Kabir, prominent Shia cleric Kalbe Sadiq's son Kalbe Sibtain Noori, and retired IPS officer and activist S R Darapuri.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, all of them said they would approach the courts against the UP government's

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THE EDITORIAL PAGE

TWEETS FROM IRAN:  
WHAT THEY MEAN

BY KC SINGH  
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**I&B ORDERS 48-HOUR BLACKOUT FOR DELHI RIOTS COVERAGE**

## Govt bans 2 TV channels: 'Critical of RSS, siding with one community'

**KRISHN KAUSHIK**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

"SIDING" WITH one community and being "critical towards Delhi Police and RSS" — these are the reasons cited in two unprecedented orders by the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting banning two Malayalam news channels, Asianet News and Media One News, for 48 hours starting 7.30 pm Friday for their coverage of the Delhi riots.

Both the orders accuse the channels of having "highlighted the attack on places of worship and siding towards a particular community" during their reporting on the riots.

In the order against Media One



WHEREAS it appeared that telecast of reports on North-East Delhi violence had been shown in a manner which highlighted the attack on places of worship and siding towards a particular community. Channel's reporting on Delhi violence seems to be biased as it is deliberately focusing on the vandalism of CAA supporters. It also questions RSS and alleges Delhi Police inaction. Channel seems to be critical towards Delhi Police and RSS.

Asianet News and Media One News went off the air Friday; the I&B order that mentions criticism of RSS, Delhi Police

News, the I&B Ministry said that the channel "questions RSS and alleges Delhi Police inaction," "seems to be critical towards Delhi Police and RSS" and focuses on "vandalism of CAA supporters".

The two separate orders, citing alleged violations of the Programme Code of the Cable TV Network (Regulations) Act, 1995, were issued Friday.

Media One Editor-in-Chief C L Thomas described the decision as the "biggest encroachment of a government on freedom of the media".

"In the history of India, such a ban has never happened. During the Emergency period, there were restrictions on the media. Now the country is not going through Emergency. The

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

**ED SEARCHES RANA KAPOOR'S PREMISES**

## Day after, RBI unveils its revival plan for Yes Bank, says SBI willing to invest

Scheme says investor bank should agree to invest in equity up to 49%

**GEORGE MATHEW & SUNNY VERMA**  
MUMBAI, NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

WORKING TO bail out the troubled Yes Bank, Reserve Bank of India Friday unveiled a reconstruction scheme that suggested a clear possibility of the State Bank of India (SBI), India's largest bank, acquiring a 49 per cent equity stake in the private sector lender. The acquisition cost is likely to be around Rs 11,760 crore as per the face value of Yes Bank share fixed by the RBI.

In the "Yes Bank Reconstruction Scheme, 2020," issued less than 24 hours after it superseded the board of the bank and appointed an administrator Thursday, the central bank said: "State Bank of India has expressed its willingness to make investment in Yes Bank and participate in its reconstruction scheme". However, the RBI did not indicate whether other lenders are involved in the scheme.

The scheme states that the investor bank should agree to invest in the equity of the reconstructed bank (Yes Bank) to the extent that post-injection, it holds 49 per cent shareholding

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Account-holders queue outside a Yes Bank branch in Ahmedabad, Friday. Javed Raja

## RBI plan could wipe out over ₹ 10,000-cr worth of bondholders' money

Mutual funds, financial institutions are likely to move court Monday

**SANDEEP SINGH**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

THE RECONSTRUCTION scheme announced by the Reserve Bank of India to revive Yes Bank could face its first legal hurdle as early as Monday.

With the RBI announcing its decision to permanently write down the Additional Tier 1 (AT1) capital raised by Yes Bank and, effectively, putting the entire Rs 10,800 crore worth of AT1 at risk, the impacted subscribers are set

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**CONSTITUTION BENCH RULES ON TWO CONFLICTING SC ORDERS**

## SC: Land takeover won't lapse if money deposited even if owner refuses to accept

Justice Mishra-led bench reaffirms view of 2018 ruling he was part of

**ANANTHAKRISHNAN G**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

DEALING WITH two conflicting judgments of the Supreme Court on the interpretation of Section 24 (2) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013, a five-judge Constitution Bench Friday ruled that proceedings under the Land Acquisition Act, 1894 will not

lapse if the compensation payable to the land owner is tendered by depositing it in the treasury even if the land owner refuses to accept it.

Section 24 (2) of the Act states that an acquisition will lapse if physical possession of the land has not been taken "or" the compensation has not been paid.

The Bench, comprising Justices Arun Mishra, Indira Banerjee, Vineet Saran, M R Shah

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## Ruling that got overturned was precedent in 999 cases

**APURVA VISHWANATH**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

BY RULING Friday that land acquisition proceedings under the 1894 Act will not lapse if compensation payable to the landowner has been tendered by depositing it in the treasury and not in the court or with the landowner, the Supreme Court

has overruled its own 2014 ruling that was considered "settled law" and was widely followed.

In 2014, a three-judge bench, in the case of Pune Municipal Corporation & Anr v Harakchand Misrimal Solanki & Ors, while interpreting Section 24 of the new 2013 Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EXPLAINED

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By UNNY



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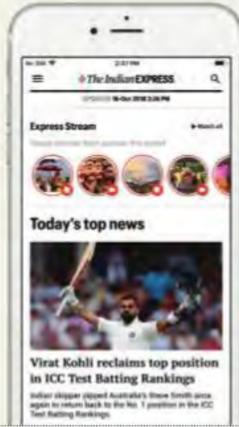
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STREETWISE KOLKATA: WHY THIS TAGORE SCION GOT A ROAD NAMED AFTER HIM

On a narrow lane in Kolkata's Pathuriaghata, named 'Prasanna Kumar Tagore Street', one can find remnants of the large "castle" that once belonged to the Tagore family. The street is also locally known as "Tagore Castle Road".

VIDEO OF THE DAY



IS YOUR MONEY SAFE IN YES BANK?

RBI has superseded the Yes Bank board and capped withdrawals

FULL COVERAGE



RBI MONITORING YES BANK SINCE 2017: FM

RBI acted after finding risky credit decisions by the bank: Sitharaman

EXPRESS AUDIO

Unpacking BBK, the company behind Vivo and Oppo

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

How the BBK group, which is behind smartphone brands like Vivo, Oppo, OnePlus and Realme, came to dominate the smartphone market.

FROM PAGE ONE

Yes Bank, SBI

in the bank at a price not less than Rs 10 — face value of Rs 2 and a premium of Rs 8.

Setting conditions for the investment, the RBI said the investor bank should not reduce its holding below 26 per cent before completion of three years from the date of infusion of the capital.

While the authorised capital has been pegged at Rs 5,000 crore, the number of equity shares will stand altered to 2400 crore shares of Rs 2 each, aggregating to Rs 4,800 crore, the scheme says. This means that a 49 per cent stake at Rs 10 per share (including the Rs 8 premium) will cost SBI about Rs 11,760 crore.

Meanwhile, the Enforcement Directorate raided premises associated with Yes Bank's founder and former managing director Rana Kapoor in Mumbai. Sources said the searches were conducted at multiple locations in the city and were in connection with an alleged case of money laundering. "The agency had registered a case of money laundering against an entity associated with a family member of Kapoor. This entity had received funds from a company that had been granted loan by Yes Bank," an ED official said.

Earlier in the day, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said: "The resolution (Yes Bank) will be done very swiftly, it will be done very fast... 30 days which we have given is the outer limit. You will see very swift action from RBI."

In a press conference after the RBI announced the plan for Yes Bank, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said: "We are ensuring customers' interests are protected. We can assure all depositors that their money is safe." She said a new board will be put in place to run the bank and employment and salaries of the bank's employees will be protected for one year.

The RBI had to take action to protect the bank as genuine attempts by the management to raise capital did not fructify on three occasions, she said.

Apart from investigative agencies, RBI will also assess the factors behind a problem of this "size and scale" at the bank, she said. The Securities and Exchange

Board of India has also started its investigation, especially issues relating to allegations of insider trading.

To a query on whether the financial system is safe after a series of failures such as DHFL, IL&FS, PMC Bank, the Minister said: "I am closely monitoring every institution which requires that kind of monitoring along with RBI."

Sources said SBI will also rope in private investors, including banks, to form a consortium that will infuse capital in Yes Bank and stabilise the bank. On queries regarding the amount of funds to be put in by SBI, Sitharaman said that RBI and SBI will work on these details.

On Thursday, hours before the RBI slapped a one-month moratorium on Yes Bank, sources said a consortium of investors led by SBI was in talks to pick up a significant stake in Yes Bank to provide much-needed equity support and, thus, ensure stability in the financial system. There were indications that Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) and some private sector banks could be part of the consortium. However, the RBI surprised the markets by superseding the board of Yes Bank and capping withdrawals at Rs 50,000 per depositor.

Meanwhile, according to the reconstruction scheme, the investor bank will have two nominee directors appointed on the board of the reconstructed bank. The RBI may appoint additional directors under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949. "It will be open to the board of directors of Yes Bank to co-opt more directors to it," it said.

The scheme says that all deposits and liabilities of the reconstructed bank, except as provided in the fineprint, and the rights, liabilities and obligations of its creditors, will continue in the same manner and with the same terms and conditions, completely unaffected by the scheme.

"All the employees of the reconstructed bank will continue in its service with the same remuneration and on the same terms and conditions of service (T&C), including terms of determination of service and retirement, as were applicable to such employees im-

mediately before the appointed date, at least for a period of one year," the proposal said. The board of directors of the reconstructed bank will, however, have the freedom to discontinue services of key managerial personnel (KMPs) at any point of time after following due procedure, it said.

The scheme also states that there will be no change in offices or branch network of the reconstructed bank — they will continue to function in the same manner and at the same places as they were functioning prior to the effective date without in any way being affected by this scheme, it noted.

Bondholders

To approach the courts. Those impacted include Nippon Life India AMC, mutual fund house Franklin Templeton, UTI Mutual Fund, SBI Pension Fund Trust and Indiabulls Housing Finance among others. These, among others, had invested in bonds issued by Yes Bank that qualified as AT1 that now stands written down permanently.

Announcing its reconstruction scheme, the RBI said: "The instruments qualifying as Additional Tier 1 capital, issued by the Yes Bank Ltd. under Basel III framework, shall stand written down permanently, in full, with effect from the Appointed date. This is in conformity with the extant regulations issued by Reserve Bank of India based on the Basel framework. No account holder shall be entitled to get any compensation from the Reconstructed bank on account of the changes occurred in the Reconstructed bank by virtue of the Scheme."

This is in sharp contrast to what the bank itself had said when it sought AT1 capital. Its information memorandum for one AT1 instrument said that "the claims of the bondholders in bonds shall be superior to the claims of investors in equity shares and perpetual non-cumulative preference shares issued by the bank." In other words, as a CEO of a bondholder told The Indian Express: "This memorandum implies clearly that unless the equity is Zero, bond holders

can't be Zero."

So the matter is set to reach the courts and a top official of one of the subscribers of Yes Bank's AT1 bonds said it could come as early as Monday morning.

For bondholders, the stakes are high. Sources said while Nippon Life India AMC has exposure of around Rs 2,480 crore to NCDs issued by Yes Bank that qualify as AT1, Indiabulls Housing Finance has holds bonds amounting to Rs 600 crore. SBI PF Trust also holds AT1 Bonds worth Rs 97 crore issued by the beleaguered bank. Others that have exposure to AT1 bonds of the bank include Templeton MF, UTI MF among others. Even high net worth individuals and retail investors have exposure to these bonds.

Shares of Nippon Life India Asset Management fell 10.6 per cent. Indiabulls Housing share price, too, fell by 10.9 per cent on Friday.

According to Basel III definition of capital, "Additional Tier 1 capital is neither secured nor covered by a guarantee of the issuer or related entity or other arrangement that legally or economically enhances the seniority of the claim vis-à-vis bank creditors."

However, mutual fund companies questioned this aspect of the plan. Said the CEO of a leading MF who did not wish to be named: "This is the first time when AT1 bonds are written-off ahead of equity. Equity shareholders will still own 51 per cent of reconstructed bank but AT1 bond holders will suffer full loss. This will shut down AT1 market. Most PSU banks can't access equity capital market other than from LIC. With this step they won't be able to participate in debt market as well. This is a retrograde step."

Land takeover

and S Ravindra Bhat, said the word "or" must be read as "and", meaning thereby that the acquisition will lapse only if physical possession has not been taken "and" compensation not paid.

It also said: "We are of the considered opinion that Section 24 cannot be used to revive dead and stale claims and concluded cases. They cannot be inquired into within the purview of Section 24

of the Act of 2013. The provisions of Section 24 do not invalidate the judgments and orders of the Court, where rights and claims have been lost and negated. There is no revival of the barred claims by operation of law. Thus, stale and dead claims cannot be permitted to be canvassed on the pretext of enactment of Section 24. In exceptional cases, when in fact, the payment has not been made, but possession has been taken, the remedy lies elsewhere if the case is not covered by the proviso."

The Bench ruled that deemed lapse of land acquisition proceedings under Section 24 (2) of the 2013 Act will take place only "where due to inaction of authorities for five years or more prior to commencement of the said Act, the possession of land has not been taken nor compensation has been paid. In other words, in case possession has been taken, compensation has not been paid then there is no lapse. Similarly, if compensation has been paid, possession has not been taken then there is no lapse".

It said a land owner cannot insist that the compensation must be deposited in court or the acquisition under the 1894 Act would fail. Mere tendering of the compensation, it said, was enough. "In case a person has been tendered the compensation as provided under Section 31 (1) of the Act of 1894, it is not open to him to claim that acquisition has lapsed under Section 24 (2) due to non-payment or non-deposit of compensation in court. The obligation to pay is complete by tendering the amount under Section 31 (1). Land owners who had refused to accept compensation or who sought reference for higher compensation, cannot claim that the acquisition proceedings had lapsed under Section 24 (2) of the Act of 2013," the order stated.

The Bench held that the expression 'paid' in the main part of Section 24 (2) of the Act of 2013 does not include a deposit of compensation in court. "The consequence of non-deposit is provided in proviso to Section 24 (2)", it said, adding that "in case it has not been deposited with respect to majority of land holdings, then all beneficiaries (landowners) as

on the date of notification for land acquisition... shall be entitled to compensation in accordance with the provisions of the Act of 2013".

"Non-deposit of compensation (in court) does not result in the lapse of land acquisition proceedings," the Bench said. It said the mode of taking possession of the land under the 1894 Act and as contemplated under Section 24 (2) of the 2013 Act is by drawing of inquest report/memorandum. "Once award has been passed on taking possession under Section 16 of the Act of 1894, the land vests in State" and "there is no divesting provided under Section 24 (2) of the Act of 2013," it ruled.

The matter was referred to the five-judge Bench in 2018 as two benches of the court had delivered conflicting judgments on the issue.

One decision came from a three-judge bench of Chief Justice of India R M Lodha and Justices Madan B Lokur and Kurian Joseph (all retired since) in 2014 in Pune Municipal Corporation & Anr v Harakchand Misrimal Solanki & Ors matter.

The second ruling was in 2018 by a bench of Justices A K Goel (since retired), Arun Mishra and Mohan M Shantanagoudar in Indore Development Authority vs Shailendra. It held that the 2014 ruling "per incuriam" (passed without due regard to the law).

The 2014 ruling had said that merely depositing the compensation in the treasury cannot be treated as compensation paid.

On February 8, 2018, the bench of Justices Mishra, Goel and Shantanagoudar, by a 2:1 decision in the Indore Development Authority matter, ruled that compensation not availed of within a stipulated five-year period could not be ground for cancellation of land acquisition — the order Friday by the Constitution Bench reaffirms the view in the 2018 ruling.

But days later, on February 21, another bench of Justices Lokur, Joseph and Deepak Gupta took exception to the February 8 order. Raising questions about a three-judge bench overruling another three-judge bench, this new bench requested High Courts and other Supreme Court benches,

which were hearing matters likely to be impacted by the February 8 order, to defer hearings till it decided whether to send the matter to a larger bench. Subsequently, it was referred to a five-judge bench.

999 cases

Act (LAAR), had held that land acquisition proceedings initiated under the 1894 Act would automatically lapse, and would have to be initiated again under the new 2013 law if the developer had not taken control of the land for five years, or if compensation was not paid to displaced farmers. The 2014 ruling had held that compensation would be deemed as "paid" only if it was deposited in the court, and not the treasury.

If proceedings lapsed under the old law, the acquisition process would be initiated again under the new law, allowing the owner to get higher compensation.

According to legal database Manupatra, the 2014 Pune Municipal Corporation case has been followed as a precedent in at least 999 cases — 29 Supreme Court cases and 970 cases by various High Courts across the country till questions were raised about the correctness of the case in February 2018 in Indore Development Authority vs Shailendra.

After Friday's verdict, the fate of the 999 cases that relied upon the Pune Municipal Corporation ruling is once again in question.

"Resultantly, the decision rendered in Pune Municipal Corporation & Anr. (supra) is hereby overruled and all other decisions in which Pune Municipal Corporation (supra) has been followed, are also overruled," the Constitution Bench said in its ruling.

As per the law, decisions of the court that have attained finality cannot be reopened. The doctrine of res judicata bars reopening of the same issue by the same parties once a ruling has been made. However, decisions rendered by the High Court can still be challenged before the Supreme Court and decisions of the SC can be reviewed by the court itself.

"In my view, the cases have attained finality. However, if the government wants to re-open a particular case and challenge it before the SC, it has to explain the delay," said Sushrith Parthasarathy, an advocate practising in the Madras High Court. "For condoning the delay, it would be absurd for the state to make an argument that the interpretation of the law has changed," he said.

For cases currently pending before High Courts and the Supreme Court, the new interpretation would apply. "Normally, it is understood that a new interpretation of the law will be prospective and would not affect cases that have attained finality. However, for cases where the High Court relied on the 2014 verdict and if they are currently under challenge before the SC, then the HC rulings ought to be reversed," said a government lawyer who did not wish to be identified.

The three-judge bench 2018 ruling in the Indore Development Authority case was in fact the first ruling that disagreed with the 2014 verdict, also by a three-judge bench that was delivered by then CJ R M Lodha, Justices Madan B Lokur and Kurian Joseph.

In a 2:1 majority ruling, a bench comprising Justices Adarsh Kumar Goel, Arun Mishra and Mohan M Shantanagoudar invalidated the 2014 judgment and declared it "per incuriam", or lacking in regard for the law and facts. Justice Shantanagoudar wrote a dis-

sending opinion, although he agreed with the majority judgement's interpretation of the law and said it was not proper for a three-judge bench to declare the verdict of another three-judge bench per incuriam and the case must be referred to a larger bench for clarity.

CAA protests

move because it poses a "serious threat" to their lives, amounts to gross "violation of privacy", and "violates the fundamental right to life and liberty".

City Magistrate Sushil Pratap Singh told The Indian Express that the administration is planning to put up 125 such hoardings across Lucknow. Singh also said that a total of Rs 1.55 crore will be recovered from 57 people named in these cases.

On Friday evening, UP Minister and BJP leader Sidharth Nath Singh tweeted: "#UP Name and Shame of rioters will put a deterrent under Yogi rule which is as per the law of the land. Those screaming r habitual to b on the wrong side & wish not to differentiate between 'Recovery and Conviction'."

Questioning the government's move, Darapuri said: "With photographs and addresses, what is the government and administration trying to do? This will put our lives at stake. This is being done to defame and intimidate us, and all those people who are protesting against the CAA and NRC."

Jafar, Shoaib and Darapuri face charges of rioting, attempt to murder and arson at the Hazratganj police station. Police have not yet filed the chargesheet in the case. Darapuri was arrested on December 20 and released on bail on January 7.

The protests on December 19 had turned violent in the Hazratganj, Hasanganj, Kaiserbagh and Thakurganj areas, leading to one death due to gunshot injuries. Police have denied charges that they fired at the protesters.

Shoaib said he will file a defamation case against the administration. "When the matter is subjudice, how can they pronounce us guilty like this? This is defamation," he said. According to police, Shoaib was arrested on December 19 and later released on bail.

Lucknow-based activist Deepak Kabir said he will approach courts regarding "gross violation of his privacy". Kabir was arrested on December 19 and released on bail on January 9.

City Magistrate Singh said that the posters were just one way of "making such orders or notices public."

But Congress's Jafar said her safety is being compromised. "Putting up these hoardings is vendetta because we are participating in protests against the CAA and NRC. It is also unethical and illegal. This is being done to intimidate us," said Jafar, 44, who also teaches at a private school.

Jafar was arrested from Hazratganj area on December 19 while she was doing a Facebook Live video questioning the role of police in curbing the violence. She was released on bail on January 7.

Kalbe Sibtain Noori accused the state government of "trying to intimidate Muslims". "If they can do this to me, one can imagine the hardships being faced by others," he said. Noori is facing charges of rioting and conspiracy to instigate riots. He is yet to be arrested.

It's not just leading activists and politicians who feature on the hoardings. Another face is that of Osama Siddiqui, a 20-year-old third-year student at Techno Group of Institutions, who is facing charges of rioting and violation of prohibitory orders at the Hasanganj police station. He was arrested on December 19 and was released on bail on January 10.

FULL REPORTS ON www.indianexpress.com

Advertisement for Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR). Text: 'Join hands with Government of Delhi to enable Children with Special Needs to seek admission in private schools under Right to education Act'. Includes details on who can apply, how many seats, and application deadline: 'Last day of application // 21 March 2020'. Contact: DIP/Shabdarth/D/0349/19-20.

# 3 THE CITY



**BRIEFLY**

**Man opens fire outside Noida society**

Noida: A man in a moving vehicle opened fire outside a residential society in Noida's Sector 134 on Thursday. No injuries were reported and an FIR was registered at Expressway police station. The bullets damaged the windows of an apartment belonging to a Delhi Police officer. Gautam Budh Nagar Police said that based on their initial investigation, it does not appear to be an assassination attempt. Police added that arrests in the matter will be made soon. **ENS**

**Two held for robbery**

New Delhi: Two men who met in jail and saw themselves as "Jai" and "Veeru", the popular protagonists of the iconic Hindi film *Sholay*, were arrested from Central Delhi's Karol Bagh for allegedly robbing several people in different parts of the capital, police said Friday. The accused have been identified as Rahul Partha (28), a resident of Trilokpuri, and Dinesh (35), a resident of Bhajanpura, they said. Seventeen cases of snatching and theft have been solved with their arrest, police said.

**Three held for snatching**

New Delhi: Three men, including two siblings, involved in several cases of snatching were arrested in Southwest Delhi's Dwarka, police said on Friday. The men would usually target women at dark and lonely spots during odd hours, police said. **PTI**

**200 CONTACTS OF 3 DELHI-BASED CASES TRACKED**

## Third positive Covid-19 case from Uttam Nagar

**ASTHASAXENA**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

DELHI'S DEPARTMENT of health has traced over 200 contacts of the three cases that have tested positive for Novel Coronavirus (Covid-19) in Delhi so far. Of these, 74 are from Delhi and 137 from other states. On Friday, the third positive case of Covid-19 was reported from Uttam Nagar. There are eight members in the family, including him, and samples of all have been collected and sent for testing.

Till date, 1,35,343 travellers from coronavirus-affected countries have been screened at the Delhi Airport and placed under surveillance. On Friday, 5,011 passengers were screened at the airport by health officers. A total of five passengers were hospitalised on Friday — three at Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital and two at Safdarjung hospital.

A national-level training session, attended by state-level officers, was held on Friday. Another such session on Covid-19 has been scheduled on March 9 for nodal officers and microbiologists from designated hospitals.

"A state monitoring group (SMG) has been constituted, headed by Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain, to review Covid-19 infection status at an hourly level and take necessary actions immediately. Public awareness messages regarding the virus through radio jingles is being aired on nine radio stations with a frequency of 60 spots per day," said a senior health official.



The Delhi gov't announced on Thursday that all primary classes in schools will be shut till March 31. **Amit Mehra**

**THE 3 DELHI CASES**

ACTION TAKEN	CASE 1	CASE 2	CASE 3
Contacts traced	105	95	11
Home quarantines done	105	93	11
Hospital isolations	-	2	Nil
Samples sent	19	4	11

The department has also asked people with suspected coronavirus not to travel in private cabs to the hospital. For this, a fleet of CATS ambulances have been earmarked to ferry suspected cases to designated hospitals. The total number of calls received by CATS stood at 23 on Friday. Of these, 12 patients were transferred to RML, and one each to Safdarjung Hospital and Lal Bahadur Shastri Hospital.

The department has set up control rooms in 11 districts along with the central control

room at the office of the Directorate General of Health Services in Karkardooma. The state control room in Karkardooma received 62 calls on Wednesday, 67 calls on Thursday and 41 on Friday.

Apart from this, the government has designated 25 hospitals in Delhi — 19 government and six private — to deal with the cases. Private hospitals like Action Balaji, Apollo, Max Super Speciality, St Stephen's, BLK and Sir Ganga Ram have been designated by the government to provide treatment to patients.

## Noida: TikTok friendship ends in murder

**AMIL BHATNAGAR**  
NOIDA, MARCH 6

A 49-YEAR-OLD woman was killed Thursday allegedly by a man she had befriended on social media two-and-a-half-years ago. The victim, Neeraj Chauhan, and accused, Raghav Kumar (25), came in contact through content creation apps Tik Tok and Likee, police said.

Kumar worked as a kitchen staff at an eatery in Noida, and would often ask Chauhan for

money. It was the latter's refusal to part with a few thousand that led to the murder, police said.

"We were informed a woman's body was found in a flat in Greater Noida's Arihant Garden Society. An FIR under IPC section 302 was filed in BISRakh police station. We began questioning locals and zeroed in on Kumar. He was arrested within eight hours and he confessed to killing her..." said Harish Chander, DCP (Central Noida).

"Kumar left her flat around 11.30 am and the woman's body

was discovered once her son came home around 5 pm. As the society is gated and there is constant surveillance, there was CCTV evidence of Kumar's entry and exit. We recovered the keys to Chauhan's flat and her mobile from the accused," said Chander.

Officers said Chauhan, a housemaker, would make videos of dubbed songs and movie scenes on Tik Tok and Likee, and had gained a sizeable following. This is how Kumar, also active on the two apps, came in touch with her. Police

said the victim's husband works in another state.

On Thursday evening, Chauhan's son called her multiple times to check if she had her food. When he didn't receive a response, he returned home and found the door locked from outside, police said. The son broke open the lock and found Chauhan's body in one of the rooms. She was declared dead on arrival at the hospital, police said.

While prima facie evidence points to strangulation, police are awaiting the post-mortem report.

## JNU's retired teachers not paid pension for February

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

THE JAWAHARLAL Nehru University has not paid its retired teachers their pension for February, citing non-payment of funds from the University Grants Commission (UGC). On February 24, JNU's deputy finance officer wrote to the JNU branch of the State Bank of India: "Due to non-receipt of funds for payment of pension of JNU pensioners from UGC, it will not be possible to pay pension for February 2020. In view of above, you are requested not to pay pension till further orders..." On Friday, the JNU Teacher's Association said it was "outraged" at the move: "Such sudden stoppage can have serious consequences. What is more alarming is that JNU apparently has a large deficit in its Salary and Recurring heads and has not secured approval for the 2019-20 Revised Estimates."

**KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA SANGATHAN (HQ)**  
18, INSTITUTIONAL AREA, SHAHEED JEET SINGH MARG, NEW DELHI- 110016  
TEL: 26858570 FAX: 26514179

**Recruitment to the post of Joint Commissioner (Finance) in Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan to be filled through Direct Recruitment**

Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India invites application for direct recruitment to one post of Joint Commissioner (Finance) in Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (HQ), New Delhi in the Pay Level-13 (Rs. 123100-215900) plus allowances as applicable. For detailed eligibility criteria and application format, refer to KVS website: [kvsangathan.nic.in](http://kvsangathan.nic.in).

**JOINT COMMISSIONER (ADMN.)**

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF PLANT HEALTH MANAGEMENT**  
Dept. of Agri. Cooperation & FW, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, GOI  
Rajendranagar, Hyderabad - 500 030, Telangana, INDIA. Telephone: 9140-24015374  
Tele-Fax: 9140-24015346; E-mail: [niphm@nic.in](mailto:niphm@nic.in); <http://niphm.gov.in>

**CORRIGENDUM TO ADVERTISEMENT NOTIFICATION No. 01/2020**  
The last date for submission of applications for the posts of Director (Pesticide Management) and Director (Plant Health Management) against the Advertisement Notification No. 01/2020 is extended upto 02-04-2020, 5.30 p.m. due to administrative reasons. The applications should reach the Registrar, National Institute of Plant Health Management, Rajendranagar, Hyderabad - 500 030 in hard copy on or before the above said due date. All other terms and conditions given in advertisement No. 01/2020 remains unchanged with respect to filling up of the posts of Director (Pesticide Management) and Director (Plant Health Management).

Date: 29.02.2020 **Sd/- REGISTRAR I/c**

**DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONER (HANDICRAFTS) & (HANDLOOMS)**  
Ministry of Textiles  
Women & Child Development

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**DATE: 27<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY TO 9<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2020**  
Time : 10.00 am to 6.00 pm

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**RECRUITMENT NOTICE**  
on behalf of  
**BarodaSun Technologies Limited IT Centre of Excellence**

BarodaSun Technologies Limited, a fully owned subsidiary of Bank of Baroda invites online applications for following positions.

Sr.No.	Post	Vacancies
1	Technology Architect	1
2	Program Manager	1
3	Quality Assurance Lead	2
4	Infrastructure Lead	1
5	Database Architect	1
6	Business Analyst Lead	2
7	Business Analyst	5
8	Web & Front End Developer	6
9	Data Analyst	4
10	Data Engineer	4
11	Integration Expert	2
12	Emerging Technology Expert	3
13	Mobile Application Developer	5
14	UI/UX Designer	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>39</b>

For detailed advertisement, kindly visit bank's website [www.bankofbaroda.in](http://www.bankofbaroda.in) (Career page). Eligible and interested candidates are advised to go through the eligibility criteria carefully and submit online application containing their Detailed CV, relevant qualification/ experience/ exposure for the applied post on the link provided. The last date of submission of the application is **27th March 2020 (23:59 hours)**.

Place: Vadodara **GENERAL MANAGER**  
Date: 07-03-2020 **HR INTEGRATION & STRATEGIC HR**

**GURU GOBIND SINGH INDRAPRASTHA UNIVERSITY**  
(Established by the Govt. of NCT of Delhi)  
Sector-16 C, Dwarka, New Delhi - 110 078  
Website : [www.ipu.ac.in](http://www.ipu.ac.in)

**ADMISSION NOTICE 2020-21**  
Online Applications are invited for the following programmes as per details given below:

Events	Dates
Last date for online submission of Application Form for CETs, National Level Test & Merit based admissions at Apply Online link available on the University website	<b>31<sup>st</sup> March, 2020</b>
Date of CET	From 25 <sup>th</sup> April 2020 to 5 <sup>th</sup> May, 2020
Mode of CET	Computer Based Test
Duration of CET	150 Minutes (2 ½ Hours)
Fee Payable by candidate per applications	Rs. 1200/- (Rupees One Thousand Two Hundred only) excluding processing charges and taxes, as applicable

GGSIU will conduct (CET) for admission to 68 programmes except B.Tech.; BALLB/ BBA LLB, LLM; MBBS, BDS, BHMS, BAMS, PGMC; PC Ayurveda; MCA; B.Arch. for which the scores of National Level Tests viz. JEE (Main), CLAT (UG/PG), NEET (UG/PG) PGAC, NIMCET, NATA will be considered. Admission in MBA will be through CAT-2019/ CMAT-2020 and CET 2020. Admission in MCA programme will be given through the NIMCET and CET conducted by the University.

CET PROGRAMMES		NON-CET PROGRAMMES
B.Com (Hons)	B.Ed. & B.Ed. (Special Education)	★ MBA (Weekend)
B.A. - English Hons./ Economics Hons. / Journalism & Mass Communication	BCA	★ LLM (Weekend)
MBA	BHMCT	★ M.Tech. (CSE) / (ECE) - Weekend
BBA	MAHARET	★ MBA - Disaster Management - Weekend
M.Ed.	MCA / MCA (LE)	★ PG Diploma in Yoga Therapy for Medicos & Paramedicos
MBA (IT)	B.Tech. (Bio Tech)	★ PG Diploma in Disaster Preparedness & Rehabilitation
B.Sc. Nursing (Post Basic)/ Yoga/ Nursing	BPT/ BPO/ B.Sc.(MLT)/ BASLP/ BOT (Paramedical)/ B.Pharma	★ PG Diploma in Disaster Management
M.Sc. (Env. Mgmt./ NRM/ Forensic Science/ Nursing/ Yoga/ Medicinal Chemistry & Drug Design/ Bio. & Cons.)	MA - English/ Mass Communication / Criminology/ Economics	★ PG Diploma in Fire & Life Safety Audit
MPT/ MOT (Neuro)/ MPO	Lateral Entry to B.Tech. (Diploma and B.Sc. Graduates)	★ B.Voc.
M.Tech. (Tool Engineering/ Robotics & Automation/ IT/ CSE/ IS/ Chemical Engg./ECE/ Nano Science & Technology/ Engg. Physics/ Bio-Tech.)	P.G. Diploma (Security Mgt./ Victimology & Victim Assistance/ Cyber Crime & Law) and Advanced Diploma in Child Guidance & Counselling	★ M.Voc. (Automobile / Software Development / Interior Design)
M.PHIL (English/ Clinical Psychology/ Psychiatric Social Work)		
Ph.D. (Education/Electronics & Comm. Engg./ Environmental Sciences/ Mechanical & Automation/Chemistry/ Management/ Mathematics/ English/ Information Tech., Computer Science & Engg., Computer Applications/ Chemical Technology/ Bio-Technology/ Physics/ Law & Legal Studies/ Mass Communication/ Pharmaceutical Chemistry/ Disaster Management).		

**Note:** For detailed information, please check the Admission Brochure uploaded on the University website [www.ipu.ac.in](http://www.ipu.ac.in) Candidates are advised to visit the University website regularly for further information, updates and corrigendum (if any).

**Registrar**

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HIGHEST 24-HR RAINFALL IN MARCH SINCE 2015

# Waterlogging, jams as rain lashes capital

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

STRONG SHOWERS lashed the capital Friday, causing waterlogging and traffic jams in parts of the city and also breaking the record of highest 24-hour rainfall in the month of March, since 2015.

Hail was also reported in parts of the National Capital Region Friday coupled with strong, gusty winds of about 50kmph, as per the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

The IMD's Safdarjung observatory, which is representative of the city, recorded 20.4mm of rainfall in 24 hours since 8.30 am Thursday. On Friday, between 8.30 am and 5.30 pm, there was 16.8mm of rainfall.

The 24-hour rainfall figure recorded on Friday is the highest for the month of March since 2015, when it was 56.8mm on March 2.

Kuldeep Srivastava, head of IMD's regional forecasting centre in Delhi, said, "The reason behind the rains has been a strong Western Disturbance, which was slow moving and that's why rains were recorded over two days."

Parts of the city received more rainfall than others, such as the Ridge, which recorded 24.8mm of rains between 8.30 am and 5.30 pm Friday. The figure in Palam was 22.3mm and



Strong, gusty winds were also witnessed. Praveen Khanna

### THE WEEK AHEAD

Day	Forecast
Sat	Cloudy, light rain
Sun	Clear sky
Mon	Strong winds
Tue	Cloudy, light rain
Wed	Partly cloudy
Thu	Strong winds

Lodhi Road 17.8mm.

Dark clouds covered the sky in parts of the city by late afternoon and the showers brought traffic to a standstill in some areas.

In North Delhi, traffic was affected on Rani Jhansi Road after a wall of an Eidgah collapsed in the rain. Delhi Traffic Police tweeted.

Waterlogging also affected traffic from Majnu Ka Tila towards Wazirabad, and obstructed

tion in the flow was reported from ITO towards Laxmi Nagar after a vehicle broke down around 7pm, police said.

The rains over the past couple of days have also brought down the mercury. The maximum temperature recorded Friday was 22.4 degrees Celsius, six degrees below normal, while the minimum temperature was 14 degrees Celsius, one degree above normal.

It is forecast that parts of the city may get slight drizzle or very light rain on Saturday, and the sky would be partly cloudy with maximum and minimum temperatures being 25 and 13 degrees Celsius.

Srivastava said the next Western Disturbance is expected to hit the capital on the day of Holi, March 10, when a slight drizzle is expected in the night. The following day could also receive light rain.

# 2 who duped foreigners from Gurgaon call centre arrested

SAKSHI DAYAL  
GURGAON, MARCH 6

IT WAS an investigation by a UK-based online "vigilante" that caught the attention of first the BBC and then the Gurgaon Police, which earlier this week arrested two men involved in running a fake call centre from Udyog Vihar. The call centre would dupe foreign nationals of lakhs under the pretext of providing them with "technical assistance".

The 5 minute 58 second documentary, *Spying on Scammers*, was uploaded by BBC on YouTube on March 2, and was the result of the work of a "British vigilante" who calls himself Jim Browning and had hacked into CCTV cameras installed at the fake call centre. It came to the attention of Gurgaon Police the following day, and an FIR was registered at the

Cyber Crime police station.

Police said one of the accused, a 24-year-old B.Com graduate, has since been discovered to be the accountant of the call centre, and hails from Jind. The other accused, Amit Chauhan (30), is the main offender and founder of the centre, police said. He was residing in an upscale gated condominium, Magnolias, on Golf Course Road. Police said he has since been discovered to be a B.Tech dropout. They were arrested on Tuesday and remanded in judicial custody, said Gurgaon Police PRO Subhash Boken.

Police said Chauhan founded the call centre in January 2019 and operated it until September. He would use pop-ups to dupe people into believing their computers had a "virus". The pop-up would direct them not to shut down or restart their computer, but to instead call a number that it claimed

belonged to the 'Microsoft Technical Department'.

"When the victims would call on the number, employees from the 'call centre' would demand a one-time charge amounting to more than Rs 1 lakh, to be paid through the payment gateway PayPal, to resolve the problem," said the PRO.

In the documentary uploaded by BBC, which has extracts from footage procured by hacking into CCTV cameras, employees can be heard speaking to people on the other end with heavy American accents, claiming to be working in California. In one call, an employee can be heard asking for a payment of 1,295 US dollars to rectify the error and, with the victim starting to cry on the phone, comforting him that "everything will be okay", even as some of his colleagues snigger in the background.

# Law and order, peace crucial for investors, says Khattar

SAKSHI DAYAL  
GURGAON, MARCH 6

ON THE heels of violence and rioting in Northeast Delhi, where the role of police came under scanner, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar Friday emphasised the need for police personnel to be "friendly" and "increase dialogue" with the public. He also said a robust law and order situation is crucial to boost investor sentiment.

Urging police to focus on turning people into "law makers" rather than "law breakers" by changing their own attitude towards those they serve, Khattar said, "Until now, we are caught in this exercise that how do we fix criminals with sticks; from this a law enforcing public cannot be created. If we want to motivate the public to become law enforcers... we have to in-



Khattar speaking at the event, Friday. Express

crease our dialogue with the people. To increase this, we have to do community mobilisation programmes." Khattar was speaking at the Young Superintendent of Police Conference and Expo-2020 in Gurgaon on its second day.

Khattar also said that "if the behaviour of police is good, people say the government is good". "To make... progress, our in-

dustrial, commercial world is critical, and if this has to progress, we have to ensure a peaceful atmosphere, maintain law and order... there are other administrative arrangements that have to be made... but even after all this, they (investors) have a concern, that is law and order okay in your area, is there a peaceful atmosphere? If there is a peaceful atmosphere, only then will people from the economic world move forward," said Khattar.

"The Prime Minister has said that we want to enter the 5 trillion dollar club very soon... For this, we have to prepare a better business environment by making a better law and order preparation, so that the industrial universe from not only our own country, but also from outside, comes because of a lucrative atmosphere... we have to ensure the progress of our policing system," he said.

# SC transfers to itself all petitions against Central Vista revamp

APURVA VISHWANATH  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

THE SUPREME Court Friday transferred to itself all writ petitions filed before the Delhi High Court challenging the Central Vista redevelopment project, a week after the HC allowed DDA to notify the proposed land-use changes in the city for the project.

A bench comprising Justice A M Khanwilkar and Justice Dinesh Maheshwari directed that the writ petitions will now be heard by the top court.

On February 28, a division bench of the Delhi HC comprising Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice Ch Hari Shankar had passed an ex-parte order allowing DDA to issue the notification. In doing so, the bench stayed a single-judge bench order passed by Justice Rajiv Shukler on February 11, in which the court had directed DDA to make changes in the Delhi Master Plan 2020-2021 only after approaching the court.

Both the DDA and the Centre appealed against Justice Shukler's order before a division bench. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who appeared for the Centre, argued that since the case has elements of public interest, it must be heard by a division bench. All public interest litigation cases are with the CJ's court as per the roster.

The division bench, passing an

"ex-parte and interim order", issued notice to the petitioners and granted them time till May 6 to file a response. The court said that "in the meanwhile, the operation, implementation and execution" of the February 11 order "shall remain stayed till the next date of hearing."

One of the petitioners before the Delhi High Court, Rajeev Suri, moved the Supreme Court on February 3 against the division bench order, apprehending that the DDA might issue the notification.

On February 3, a three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice of India S A Bobde admitted the plea and directed that it be listed before an appropriate bench. On Friday, when Justices Khanwilkar and Maheshwari heard the case, the court directed that the cases be transferred to the SC itself. A request for transfer was not made for either party but they did not oppose it either.

"Initially the court was not inclined to interfere and instead suggested we go back to the high court and seek a modification or revision of the ex-parte order. However, when the significance of the issue was highlighted, the judges decided to transfer the cases instead," advocate-on-record Shiv Kumar Suri, who appeared for the petitioners, told *The Indian Express*.

The case is likely to be heard next on March 18.

# '1,700 compensation forms received so far after riots'

New Delhi: The Delhi government will launch a two-day verification drive from Saturday to release compensation to victims of Northeast Delhi riots, said Deputy CM Manish Sisodia, adding that the government has received 1,700 compensation requests. "Compensation forms are being given to families and the process of providing monetary compen-

sation to the affected families has started. We have given out Rs 25,000 as an immediate cash relief," he added. The verification drive will be headed by six senior IAS officers. "We want to get verification done at the earliest," said Sisodia. As per the plan, for a burnt house, the government will give Rs 5 lakh and Rs 2.5 lakh for a damaged house. ENS

# SC seeks Mander reply to contempt plea

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Friday asked activist Harsh Mander to reply to Delhi Police's affidavit seeking initiation of contempt proceedings against him for allegedly making statements against the court. A bench of Chief Justice S A Bobde and Justices BR

Gava and Surya Kanta adjourned hearing till April 15. The bench, while hearing a petition filed by riot-hit people on March 4, had sought to know whether Mander had made remarks against SC and Parliament. Though Solicitor General Tushar Mehta referred to

the alleged speech made on December 16, 2019, advocate Karuna Nundy, appearing for Mander, had denied it. On Friday, Senior Advocate Dushyant Dave, appearing for Mander, said his comments were not defamatory or contemptuous. ENS

राजस्थान सरकार  
कार्यालय आबकारी आयुक्त, राजस्थान, उदयपुर  
क्रमांक:-प 32/बी (1)आब/ए/2020-21/5360 दिनांक:- 05.03.2020

देशी मदिरा समूह/दुकानों के अनुज्ञापत्र हेतु आवेदन आमंत्रण एवं लॉटरी की नियत तिथि को बढ़ाई जाने की सूचना

इस कार्यालय द्वारा देशी मदिरा रिटेल समूह/दुकानों के अनुज्ञापत्र हेतु आवेदन आमंत्रण के संबंध में पूर्व जारी विज्ञप्ति क्रमांक 5235 दिनांक 09.02.2019 एवं 5335 दिनांक 27.02.2020 के बिन्दु संख्या 9, 14 एवं 15 में निम्नानुसार संशोधन किया जाता है:-

- 9. विभागीय वेबसाइट <https://www.rajexciselottery.org> एवं <https://rajexcise.gov.in> पर ऑनलाईन आवेदन के लिये अन्तिम तिथि 05.03.2020 को सायं 11.59 बजे से बढ़ाई जाकर दिनांक 07.03.2020 को सायं 11.59 बजे किया जाता है। अर्थात् ऑनलाईन आवेदन विभागीय वेबसाइट पर अब दिनांक 07.03.2020 को सायं 11.59 बजे तक भरे जा सकते हैं। इसके पश्चात ऑनलाईन आवेदन करने का लिंक समाप्त हो जायेगा।
- 14 आवेदन शुल्क का डिमान्ड ड्राफ्ट के माध्यम से जमा कराने वाले आवेदकों को ऑनलाईन आवेदन के पश्चात् उसकी प्रिन्टेड कॉपी एवं डिमान्ड ड्राफ्ट को ऑनलाईन आवेदन करने के तीन दिन के अन्दर अथवा दिनांक 09.03.2020 को 6 पीएम तक, जो भी पहले हो, सम्बन्धित जिला आबकारी अधिकारी कार्यालय में प्रस्तुत करना आवश्यक होगा। लेकिन किसी भी परिस्थिति में ये प्रिन्टेड कॉपी एवं डिमान्ड ड्राफ्ट दिनांक 09.03.2020 को 6 पीएम के बाद स्वीकार्य नहीं होंगे।
- 15 किसी दुकान/दुकान समूह हेतु एकाधिक आवेदन प्राप्त होने पर सफल आवेदक का चयन लॉटरी की प्रक्रिया द्वारा किया जावेगा। लॉटरी राज्य सरकार द्वारा जिला कलेक्टर की अध्यक्षता में गठित समिति के सदस्यों के समक्ष पूर्वानुसार ही दिनांक 12.03.2020 को प्रातः 11.00 ए.एम. बजे से जिला मुख्यालय पर निकाली जायेगी, जो आवश्यकता होने पर आगामी कार्यदिवस को भी जारी रहेगी। लॉटरी निकालने के स्थान की जानकारी/सूचना जिला कलेक्टर एवं सम्बन्धित जिला आबकारी अधिकारी के नोटिस बोर्ड पर उपलब्ध करा दी जावेगी।

अन्य सभी शर्तें यथावत रहेगी।

आबकारी आयुक्त,  
राजस्थान, उदयपुर  
DIPR/C/2221/2020

राजस्थान सरकार  
कार्यालय आबकारी आयुक्त, राजस्थान, उदयपुर  
क्रमांक:-प 32/बी (1)आब/ए/2020-21/5359 दिनांक:- 05.03.2020

विदेशी मदिरा व बीयर की रिटेल ऑफ दुकानों के अनुज्ञापत्र हेतु आवेदन आमंत्रण एवं लॉटरी की नियत तिथि को बढ़ाई जाने की सूचना

इस कार्यालय द्वारा विदेशी मदिरा व बीयर की रिटेल ऑफ दुकानों के अनुज्ञापत्र हेतु आवेदन आमंत्रण के संबंध में पूर्व जारी विज्ञप्ति क्रमांक 5234 दिनांक 09.02.2020 एवं 5334 दिनांक 27.02.2020 के बिन्दु संख्या 10, 15 एवं 16 में निम्नानुसार संशोधन किया जाता है:-

- 10. विभागीय वेबसाइट <https://www.rajexciselottery.org> एवं <https://rajexcise.gov.in> पर ऑनलाईन आवेदन के लिये अन्तिम तिथि 05.03.2020 को सायं 11.59 बजे से बढ़ाई जाकर दिनांक 07.03.2020 को सायं 11.59 बजे किया जाता है। अर्थात् ऑनलाईन आवेदन विभागीय वेबसाइट पर अब दिनांक 07.03.2020 को सायं 11.59 बजे तक भरे जा सकते हैं। इसके पश्चात ऑनलाईन आवेदन करने का लिंक समाप्त हो जायेगा।
- 15. आवेदन शुल्क का डिमान्ड ड्राफ्ट के माध्यम से जमा कराने वाले आवेदकों को ऑनलाईन आवेदन के पश्चात् उसकी प्रिन्टेड कॉपी एवं डिमान्ड ड्राफ्ट को ऑनलाईन आवेदन करने के तीन दिन के अन्दर अथवा दिनांक 09.03.2020 को 6 पीएम तक, जो भी पहले हो, सम्बन्धित जिला आबकारी अधिकारी कार्यालय में प्रस्तुत करना आवश्यक होगा। लेकिन किसी भी परिस्थिति में ये प्रिन्टेड कॉपी एवं डिमान्ड ड्राफ्ट दिनांक 09.03.2020 को 6 पीएम के बाद स्वीकार्य नहीं होंगे।
- 16 किसी नगरपालिका/नगर परिषद/नगर निगम अथवा उसके जोन हेतु दुकानों की निर्धारित संख्या से अधिक आवेदन प्राप्त होने पर सफल आवेदक का चयन लॉटरी की प्रक्रिया द्वारा किया जावेगा। लॉटरी राज्य सरकार द्वारा जिला कलेक्टर की अध्यक्षता में गठित समिति के सदस्यों के समक्ष पूर्वानुसार ही दिनांक 12.03.2020 को प्रातः 11.00 ए.एम. बजे से जिला मुख्यालय पर निकाली जायेगी, जो आवश्यकता होने पर आगामी कार्यदिवस को भी जारी रहेगी। लॉटरी निकालने के स्थान की जानकारी/सूचना जिला कलेक्टर एवं सम्बन्धित जिला आबकारी अधिकारी के नोटिस बोर्ड पर उपलब्ध करा दी जावेगी।

अन्य सभी शर्तें यथावत रहेगी।

आबकारी आयुक्त,  
राजस्थान, उदयपुर  
DIPR/C/2222/2020

INDIAN RAILWAY CATERING AND TOURISM CORPORATION LTD.  
(A Government of India Enterprise - Mini Rates)  
CIN - L74890DL1999O0101787

E-Tenders for provision of onboard catering services in category M-1, M-2 & M-3 Mail Express Superfast Trains having Pantry car / Mini pantries in partial/complete unbundling model.

Last Date for Submission: 18.03.2020 Onwards.

For details visit [www.irctc.com](http://www.irctc.com) and [www.tenderwizard.com/IRCTC](http://www.tenderwizard.com/IRCTC).

Above Tender documents downloading & Participation can only be on website [www.tenderwizard.com/IRCTC](http://www.tenderwizard.com/IRCTC)

Corrigendum/Addendum/Amendment if any, will be published only on [www.irctc.com](http://www.irctc.com) & [www.tenderwizard.com/IRCTC](http://www.tenderwizard.com/IRCTC).

Office Address: IRCTC Ltd. 11th Floor, Statesman House, B-148, Barakhamba Road, Connaught Place, New Delhi - 110 001

UJVN LIMITED  
(An Uttarakhand Govt. Enterprises)  
H.O., 'UJWAL', Maharan Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun - 248001. CIN No. U40101UR2011SG002568  
Tel.: 0135-2763508 Fax: 0135-2763507 Website: [www.uttarakhandjalvdyut.com](http://www.uttarakhandjalvdyut.com)

"e" Procurement Notice  
Bid Identification No. 19/EE(M)/Klg/2019-20

- Name of the Work: Supply of spares of 125/25 Ton EOT cranes of Ramganga Power Station, Kalagarh
- Estimated Cost: Rs. 17,25,019/- (Rs. Seventeen Lakh Twenty Five Thousand Nineteen Only) G.S.T. extra
- Period of Completion: 4 months
- Date & Time of start of availability of bid document in the portal: 06.03.2020, 16:00 Hrs onwards
- Last Date & Time for receipt of bid in the portal: 27.03.2020 upto 16:00 Hrs.
- Last Date & Time for submission of hard copy of documents: 28.03.2020 upto 16:00 Hrs.
- Date of opening of bid on the website: 30.03.2020 11:00 Hrs onwards
- Name & Address of the officer inviting the bid: Executive Engineer (M), Ramganga Power Station, Kalagarh, Pauri Garhwal.
- Details of subsequent addendum/corrigendum/cancellation etc. may be obtained from the website.

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal "<http://uktenders.gov.in>".  
Ref. No.: 123/Dated: 05.03.2020

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

Municipal Corporation Kota  
Rajeev Gandhi Bhawan Dushera Ground Kota  
Tel Ph. No.: 0744-502293, email: [nkota@gmail.com](mailto:nkota@gmail.com), website: [www.kotamc.org](http://www.kotamc.org)

No. :- NNK/NIRMAN/2020/6282-89 Date: 5.3.2020

Notice Inviting Re E-Tender

Municipal Corporation Kota South invites tender from the experienced, qualified companies/firms through E-Tender system as described in the tender document and as under:-

01 Name of work	ARC Tent Annual Arrangement for one year
02 Nodal Agency for bidding process	Municipal Corporation Kota South
03 Project period	One Year from date of work order
04 Cost of Tender	40.00 Lac
05 Processing fees	1000/-
06 Cost of Tender document (no refundable)	Rs. 3500/-
07 Earnest money deposit (EMD)	80000/-
08 Website for downloading tender document	<a href="http://www.kotamc.org">www.kotamc.org</a> , <a href="http://sppp.raj.nic.in">http://sppp.raj.nic.in</a> , <a href="https://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in">https://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in</a>
09 Bid validity period	60 days from the date of submission
10 Date and time of downloading of bid/document	06.03.2020 to 12.03.2020 upto 6:00 PM
11 Date and time of online submission of bid/document	06.03.2020 to 12.03.2020 upto 6:00 PM
12 Last date of submission of DD/Original Documents in the office of S.E. Nagar Nigam, Kota (Room No. 211)	13.03.2020 upto 4:00 PM
13 Pre bid meeting	06.03.2020 upto 4:00 PM
14 Date and time of technical bid opening	13.03.2020 at 5:00 AM
15 Date and time of financial bid opening	Will be intimated.

The DD of bid fee and earnest money shall be made in favour of Commissioner, Nagar Nigam, Kota payable at Kota. The processing fee Rs. 1000/- in favour of "Managing Director" RISL, Jaipur payable at Jaipur.

Details notice inviting tender (NIT) alongwith detailed document can be downloaded from websites [www.kotamc.org](http://www.kotamc.org), <http://sppp.raj.nic.in>, <https://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in>

Sd/-  
Superintending Engineer  
Municipal Corporation, Kota.

Assessment of Carbon Stocks of Forests: Extension of Date for Request for Proposal

Refer our advertisement for RFP No. 2-M&E/2019-20 for Assessment of Carbon Stocks of Forests. The last date for submission of RFP is extended from 5th March, 2020 to 16th March, 2020. Details may be seen at <http://jicauttarakhand.org>.

Chief Project Director  
Uttarakhand Forest Resource Management Project,  
24 I.T. Park, Sahasradhara Road,  
Dehradun. 248001

DELHI TRANSCO LIMITED  
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS/e-TENDERS

Delhi Transco Ltd., a Government of NCT of Delhi Undertaking, invites tenders for the following work:-

- Tender No. T19P131106: Proposed first floor extension of Control Room Building at 220 KV S/Str. Geeta Colony.

Last date for bid submission: 03.04.2020 at 1.00 p.m.

For further details please log on Delhi Govt. website <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in> (Tender ID No. 2020 DTL-189226.1) and DTL website <http://www.dtl.gov.in> (Unique No. DTL-7304-050320). PR/19-20/31

All Corrigendum/Addendum/Amendments/Date of Extension/Clarifications, if any, to the above e-tender would appear only on the above mentioned websites.

UTTARAKHAND POWER CORPORATION LTD.  
Corporate I.D. No. UA40109UP2001SG025867/2358  
V.C.V. Gagar Singh Urja Bhawan, Kanwali Road, Dehradun-248001  
Ph.: 0135-2763672-75, Fax: 0135-2763830

DATE EXTENSION OF e-TENDER NOTICE-III

In reference to this office e-tender specification no. 15/SE(MM)/2019-20 for sale of AI. received from Transformer under EWD Dehradun/Hardwar on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" available to be available in Electricity Workshops Dehradun/ Rishikesh/Roorkee/Haldwani/Kashipur/Rudrapur. Due to unavoidable circumstances the tender will be opened on dated 17.03.2020 at 16:30 hrs. Last Date & time of online request for purchase of tender document & submission of tender in online and offline mode will be on dated 16.03.2020 upto 17.00 hrs.

All other terms and conditions will remain same as per original tender notice. For further details, please visit website [www.uktenders.gov.in](http://www.uktenders.gov.in).

Superintending Engineer (MM)  
No.: 174/EE(CM)/UPCL/A-2 Dated: 05.03.2020

"SAVE ELECTRICITY IN THE INTEREST OF THE NATION (Toll Free No. 1800 419 04065)"  
Pay Electricity Bill Online 24x7 from [www.upcl.org](http://www.upcl.org)  
For information on Electricity theft, informer may report to Toll Free No. 1800 180 41851

THE H.P. STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS' FEDERATION LIMITED  
Totu, Shimla-171011

No: 425/P&I-8/15-XXIII Dated: 07.03.2020

Short Term Tender Notice

H.P. Milkfed invites the online bids on item wise, in electronic tendering system, in 2 cover system for the following item on FOR basis:-

- Plastic Tray for 500gm (Food Grade):- Size of plastic tray 190 mm(L) x 140mm (W) x 38mm (H) and Weight- 12 gm & Frozen white clear. Approx Qty:- 39-40 lakh tray annually.
- Inner Trays sealing films (Food Grade):- Size 190 mm(L) x 140mm (W) x 38mm (H), in Rolls 12 micron poly and 80 micron Ld. Approx Qty:- 15000-16000 Kg annually.

OR

- Plastic Tray for 500gm along with inner trays sealing films (Food Grade):- Size of plastic tray 190 mm(L) x 140mm (W) x 38mm (H) and Weight- 12 gm & Frozen white clear. Film:- in Rolls 12 micron poly and 80 micron Ld. Approx Qty:- 39-40 lakh tray annually.
- Master carton of 5 ply Virgin:- Size of carton 610mm (L) x 400mm (W) x 210mm (H) and containing 40 tray in one carton. Approx Qty:- 1,00,000 carton annually.
- Stickers:- Multi Color Fassion Adhesive stickers 6" x 4" Approx Qty:- 39-40 lakh stickers annually.

The Bid document is available/published online on dt. 07.03.2020 upto 03.00 PM. Bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission on bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized certifying Authorities (CA). Aspiring bidders should visit websites in <https://hptenders.gov.in> & <https://hpmilkfed.org> for complete details. Bidders should visit the website from time to time to note the corrigendum, if any.

Sd/-  
Managing Director



At the relief camp for riot victims in Mustafabad on Friday. Praveen Khanna

AT MUSTAFABAD'S EIDGAH

# Rainy day challenges at a relief camp

JIGNASA SINHA  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

"I WAS scared for my children last night — it was raining heavily, the weather was chilly and we don't have enough winter wear. I held my three daughters in my arms the entire night. The mattresses and other bedding were soaked, so I held them and sat until sunrise," said Mehrunisa, a 30-year-old woman staying with her family of 10 at the Eidgah relief camp in Mustafabad.

The Eidgah was converted into a relief camp earlier this

week. Over the past 48 hours, incessant rain has left some areas in and around the tents waterlogged. And while government officials and volunteers are working overtime to seal the tents, residents say the rain couldn't have come at a worse time.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia visited the Eidgah around 2 pm on Friday and spoke to the families and volunteers.

Drying mattresses and blankets under the sun, 55-year-old Sabira said, "It wasn't easy leaving our homes and it's definitely not easy staying here. I haven't

slept in the last two days. It usually rains in the evening and at night. And then the whole area is flooded. I was trying to sleep last night when, around 9 pm, I found that the mattress was wet and the water had reached inside the tent and till my feet. I held my grandchildren close to me. Our blankets were soaked too. Volunteers helped us cover the tent with foam sheets. After that, we sat inside with the children and waited for the rain to stop. Now, we have to dry the bedding to sleep at night."

Sabira is a resident of Shiv Vihar who has been living at the

camp for the last three days. Her house was burnt by a mob, and she has no place to stay.

Inside a different tent, called T3, Mehrunisa (30) and her family of 10 sat on the ground. While most tents are waterproof, heavy rain meant the water still found a way inside. Mehrunisa's daughter Anyana (4) picked up a sweater from a pile of clothes and showed it to her sisters. The mother said she's thankful none of them have fallen sick.

"We weren't initially prepared for the rain, but we are now. Last night, we put foam sheets around the tents to pre-

vent the water from getting in. Also, a few families were shifted to a madrasa nearby. We are still trying to make the tents more water-resistant," said a government official.

Meanwhile, several volunteers helped people lay down new wooden stands they can sleep on. Md Imran, a volunteer, said, "The mattresses will be kept on these so water can't reach them."

Volunteers Ruby and Rifat swept the floors to drain out the water as women sat with their children to soak whatever little sunlight there was on Friday, and

dry their bedding and clothes.

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai visited riot-hit areas and noted that people are facing difficulties due to the rain. "Compensation forms for about 90% of the riot-affected people have been filled up. For this, we had also formed 20 teams of AAP volunteers. The 10% riot-affected people, whose compensation forms have not been filled up, have either gone home or are living elsewhere and are unable to come in contact with officials. We will expedite the process of giving compensation to them," he said.

## GTB: 13 died of gunshots, 24 of burns

ASTHA SAXENA  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

AMONG THE 44 dead at GTB hospital, 13 people received gunshot injuries while 24 died due to burn injuries and assault in the riots.

The Delhi government-run hospital received the maximum number of injured and deceased patients during the clashes. Among the remaining victims, five bodies fished out of drains earlier this week were taken to RML hospital, three deaths were reported from Lok Nayak and one at Jag Praveesh Chandra Hospital.

According to sources, most of the dead are in the 20-35 age group. Nine each are in the 20-24 and 25-29 age brackets; eight between 30-34 years; two in the age group of 15-19; and one victim was 90 years old. Three bodies are yet to be identified.

As many as 298 injured visited the hospital over the last two weeks. Of the total, 170 sustained assault and burn injuries, 67 suffered gunshot and firearm injuries and 30 suffered minor injuries. Among the injured are 291 men, six women and a person whose sex is not yet known.

"Most of the injured are in the age group of 20-34 years... Four of the total injured are in 10-14 years bracket," said a doctor.

# Riot and coronavirus hit country's largest readymade garment hub: 'Fear... sales ruined'

SANDEEP SINGH & SUNNY VERMA  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

ONCE BUZZING, the narrow lanes of Gandhi Nagar market in East Delhi — the largest readymade garment hub in the country — have become lifeless. Wholesalers sit idle, waiting for retailers who flocked here till two weeks ago to replenish their stock.

Traders say riots in Northeast Delhi, adjoining the market, have taken a toll on business. And given the recent spurt in cases of coronavirus in NCR, they don't see the market getting back on its feet for the next couple of months.

At least 53 people died in the riots late last month, and 31 cases of coronavirus have been confirmed nationwide so far, including four in NCR.

"Readymade garment retailers from across the country come here for their monthly and seasonal stock. But activity has been dull over the last 2-3 weeks, which was also the peak season for Holi. Our Holi sales have been ruined and if this sense of fear does not go away, Eid season will also get impacted. There is a lot of fear," says Mohammad Jameel, a wholesale jeans trader in Durga

Gali.

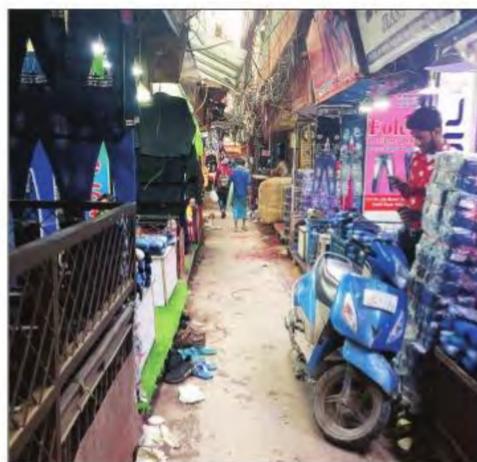
"People are scared of even coming to the market. Our entire Holi sales was a washout. My sales are down 80 per cent and it is similar for other traders. This will have an impact for some time," says TS Sachdeva of Singh Garments in Guru Nanak Lane.

"I don't know why such things happen in our society, and I am seeing this for the second time in my lifetime," says Sachdeva, referring to the 1984 anti-Sikh riots.

According to K K Balli, president of the Association of Wholesale Readymade Garments Dealers, there are around 15,000 shops in the market, with a combined daily turnover of at least Rs 50 crore — this works out to a monthly turnover of at least Rs 1,500 crore, or close to Rs 20,000 crore a year.

"Almost 5 lakh people are linked to the market — businessmen, employees, workers and accessory manufacturers among others. People of all communities operate in the market," he says.

Balli says the adjoining areas, including Jafrabad which was among the hardest-hit areas in the riots, play a key role in the market's operation. "Tailoring and other related work are done there, and a lot of workers and employ-



Inside Gandhi Market. Sandeep Singh

ees of the market live there. The economics of the market is closely linked to the riot-affected areas," he says.

Balli says while businessmen are feeling the heat, among the worst-affected are the daily wage earners. "Work has gone down and it is hurting their livelihood. As for salaried employees, there is not

much impact," he says.

Apart from the riots, the market has been impacted over the last couple of months on account of the coronavirus epidemic that was first reported from China. Manufacturers import textiles and chemicals used for dyes from China and they say that their input cost has gone up because sup-

ply has been hit and margins are under pressure.

"We had a good season during winter, it was a long one. Normally, there is a gap of one month between the purchase cycle of wholesale and retail because buyers come from across India. We had started preparations after December 15 for the summer but the anti-CAA protests started, and then the riots happened. It has hit us badly. We may have to write off sales for most of this year now, as I don't see any growth in business happening," says Balli.

"While riots will have an impact, the coronavirus scare can already be seen... raw material, such as dye, colours, chemicals and machine parts, are in short supply. The impact will travel from large companies, which supply bulk cloth to wholesalers, down to small retailers who are unable to source garments," he says.

A father-son duo of a big wholesale trading firm dealing in women clothes, who did not wish to be named, says the business is over, for now. "Even our family members ask us to not go to the shops in these uncertain times. They say business can happen later, it is time to stay safe," the father says.

## BODIES OF RIOT VICTIMS

# Videotape autopsies: HC to hospitals

PRITAM PAL SINGH  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

THE DELHI High Court Friday directed all hospitals under the central and Delhi governments to videograph post-mortem of all persons killed in Northeast Delhi. The death toll from the riots stands at 53, with over 300 injured.

A bench of Justice Siddharth Mridul and Justice I S Mehta also directed all hospitals to collect and preserve DNA samples of the dead. The bench further directed government hospitals not to dispose of any unidentified bodies till the next date of hearing, March 11.

"In the meantime, government hospitals in Delhi under the aegis of both the central government as well as the state government are directed to collect DNA samples from all bodies lying in their mortuaries and preserve the same... further to conduct videographed post-mortem of all the dead bodies lying in their respective mortuaries," the bench said.

The court's direction to the Delhi Police came after a man moved a habeas corpus petition seeking direction to produce his brother-in-law, Hamza (25), missing since February 26.

Following the petition in the High Court Thursday, Standing Counsel (Criminal) Rahul Mehra and advocate Chaitanya Gosain, appearing for the Delhi Police, Friday informed the court that the body of Hamza was recovered by the Delhi Police from a drain at Bhagirathi Vihar, within the jurisdiction of Gokulpuri police station on March 2.

Mehra also told court that the post-mortem was conducted at RML hospital Friday.

Mehra further submitted that "upon the conduct of the said post-mortem, the body will be released forthwith to the family members, for the performance of his last rites."

While listing the matter for

## Plea seeks to disclose details of riot accused

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court Friday sought the stance of the Delhi government and police on a plea by CPI(M) leader Brinda Karat, seeking to disclose the names and numbers of persons detained or arrested in connection with the riots at Northeast Delhi. A bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice C Hari Shankar issued notice in this regard to authorities on the plea by Karat, who sought "listing" of names of arrested persons outside the "district police control room/police station, to be updated on a case-by-case basis". Karat further sought direction to Delhi Police to send the information to the executive magistrate. **ENS**

further consideration, the bench recorded in its order, "Before we part with this order, we express our appreciation for the alacrity with which the concerned DCP and SHO of the concerned police station have responded in these proceedings."

DCP (Northeast) Ved Prakash Surya submitted in the court: "As per the direction issued by the court, the details of all the unidentified bodies, which are lying in the various hospitals mortuaries, along with their photographs and other details are being published."

"Details of all unidentified bodies have already been uploaded on the ZIPNet. Further during post-mortem, if required, DNA samples will be preserved," the DCP said through the status report filed in the High Court.

# 25-yr-old fished out of drain, family identifies body through ring

ASHNA BUTANI  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

HAMZA GHYASUDDIN Ansari (25) had been missing since the evening of February 26. On Friday, his body was identified at Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital by his family — after eight days of visiting various hospitals and police stations.

The post-mortem was conducted during the day and the body was released around 4 pm, following which his family took it to their hometown in Meerut.

"The last time I saw Hamza was when we went to a mosque in Mustafabad during *maghrib* (around 7 pm). He usually goes down the street to have tea after praying. I started searching for him after that, but couldn't locate him. That is when the riots had broken out. I tried to call him at 9 pm but in vain," said Hamza's brother-in-law Arif (30).

Hailing from Meerut, Hamza shifted to Mustafabad just over a month ago. He had three brothers and three sisters. "He was staying with his sister and brother-in-law, and was working at an eatery in Mustafabad,"



Javed shows a photograph of his nephew, Hamza

said Javed, Hamza's uncle.

Hamza's body was found in the Bhagirathi drain, said an inspector from Gokulpuri police station. In fact, all five bodies at RML hospital were pulled out from drains over the past week. "Three have been identified so far," said a police inspector.

A sub-inspector said: "The body starts to decompose after a few days so his family could not identify him from the photo we showed them."

Arif said: "I could not recognise his face. But I remembered he was wearing a maroon kurta and black jacket that day. He wears a black ring on his finger, which I was able to recognise."

## Tahir sent to 7-day police custody

New Delhi: A Delhi court Friday sent suspended AAP councillor Tahir Hussain to seven-day police custody in connection with the alleged killing of Intelligence Bureau (IB) official Ankit Sharma.

Duty Magistrate Rakesh Kumar passed the order after Hussain was produced before him by Delhi Police, which claimed that his custodial interrogation was required to unearth a larger conspiracy, Hussain's advocate Mukesh Kalia said.

Hussain was produced before the duty magistrate amid tight security in the evening. **PTI**

## FAMILY HOME RANSACKED, PARENTS WONDER WHERE TO GO

# In the rough and tumble of Northeast Delhi, a baby boy is born

SOMYA LAKHANI  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

MOHD ARSHAD (29), a hairstylist, returned to the relief camp empty-handed Thursday afternoon after a brief visit to his house in Shiv Vihar. He didn't bring back the cracked mirror, the empty vessels, the broken cupboard, or the two onesies the couple had recently bought for their unborn child.

"Though we had decided

that when the baby is born, he or she will wear our one-year-old boy's hand-me-downs, we still bought two new pairs out of happiness. On February 25, when the mob entered our lane, there was no time to pack anything, we had a short window of time in order to survive," said Arshad.

Early March 4 morning, his wife Shabya Bano (24) went into labour at the Eidgah relief camp in Mustafabad, and was rushed to a nearby hospital

where she delivered a healthy baby boy.

"She cried when the baby was born, and said '*humaari qismat hi kharaab hai*'. We were so excited about our second child but never imagined he would be born at a time like this, when his parents would be living in a relief camp instead of their own house," said Arshad. The couple have named their newborn Mohd Uzair.

Arshad said he was relieved that Shabya and Uzair have not



been discharged from the hospital yet — as it buys him some time to figure out where to take them.

"It's raining, the camp is drenched, the mattresses are wet and it is definitely not ideal for a newborn child or his mother. We can't go back home, we don't want to because we are scared. I fear they will have

Shabya Bano with her baby boy, Mohd Uzair

to spend a few days at the camp only," said Arshad.

On Thursday, Arshad, who works at a salon in Vaishali, went home to lock it up. "I saw the damage, I didn't bring back anything because I have applied for compensation and what if they want to verify my claims," said Arshad.

He recalled the night of February 25, when he saw a mob approaching Gali No. 10 of Shiv Vihar with lathis and sticks. He immediately swung into

action — first he dropped off his sister at Chand Bagh on his bike, then his pregnant wife and their one-year-old child Uvais, and then his parents.

"Over a year ago, I insisted that we move to Shiv Vihar, a mixed locality, from our house in Chand Bagh, a Muslim majority area, as there is more cleanliness in Shiv Vihar and the lanes are wider too. I never anticipated we would be at risk. I can only return if we are provided security," said Arshad.

# 6 IN PARLIAMENT BUDGET SESSION

FROM THE GALLERY

## Committee chaired by Speaker to look into instances of indiscipline in LS

Opposition protests suspension of seven Congress MPs, seeks withdrawal

**HARIKISHAN SHARMA**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

A DAY after seven Congress MPs were suspended on grounds of "gross misconduct" in Lok Sabha, the House was informed on Friday that a committee chaired by Speaker Om Birla will look into all instances of indiscipline in the House from March 2 to 5. The committee, which will have representatives from all parties, will submit its report to the House.

The announcement was made by BJP member Kirit P Solanki, who was in the Chair, as Speaker Birla, reportedly upset over the conduct of members inside the House, stayed away from the proceedings for the third consecutive day.

On Thursday, Congress MPs Gaurav Gogoi, T N Prathapan, Dean Kuriakose, Benny Behanan, B. Manickam Tagore, Rajmohan Unnithan and Gurjeet Singh Aujla were suspended under Rule 374 (2) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business for the remainder of the Budget Session.

Members of Opposition parties, particularly the Congress, protested against the suspension on Friday both inside and outside the House. Soon after Lok Sabha assembled at 11 am, Congress MPs rushed into the Well and demanded withdrawal of the suspension order and resignation of Home Minister Amit Shah over the Delhi violence. Solanki, who was in the Chair, appealed them to return to their seats but they continued to raise slogans, leading to an adjournment.

When Lok Sabha met again at noon, Congress leader in the House Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury raised the suspension of the MPs. "We always regard the Chair as the Pope of the House. We have never entertained any kind of gags and gumpions to dishonour the Chair. Yesterday, our seven members were suspended for the rest of the session. This has set an extraordinary precedent in the House... We just demanded that a discussion should take place in the House over Delhi riots. If you don't want a discussion, then it's a different story, but as far as the suspension of seven MPs is concerned, I



Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury in Lok Sabha on Friday. PTI

don't know on what basis it has been done," Chowdhury said. "Jebkatue ko fansi ke takhte par nahi chadhaya ja sakta hai. (A pickpocket cannot be hanged)," he added.

"It is true that Opposition Members protested, but what was the trigger," asked Chowdhury, referring to comments made by BJP ally Rashtriya Loktantrik Party's leader and Nagaur MP Hanuman Beniwal on Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi.

Requesting the Speaker to recall the decision to suspend the MPs, the DMK's Dayanidhi Maran said, "We are demanding a discussion. Fifty people have died in the city of Delhi because of communal violence. The Home Minister has not even come to the House to respond. The Prime Minister has not come to the House. Naturally, the members will get agitated."

Describing the decision to suspend the MPs as "very harsh" and "unwanted", TMC member Sudip Bandyopadhyay requested the Speaker to withdraw it.

NCP's Supriya Sule said, "What is happening in the House is not a pleasurable experience and we are not setting a good example for the country either. We would have never reached this logjam provided the discussion was allowed on all the issues that the mem-

bers of the Opposition are raising because the Delhi riots issue is exceptionally a critical issue."

"I think the suspension is totally disproportionate. I even went and met the honorable Speaker yesterday requesting him about this...I would like to request him to consider his decision and give them a chance," she added.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said, "Whatever happened yesterday never happened in the last 70 years. They were throwing papers at the Speaker. It is most unfortunate. I do not agree with it, comparing those people with pocketnaar (pickpocket)."

"Whatever decision Speaker takes, we will accept it but I would like to request you that such misconduct should not happen in the House," he added.

Following this, Solanki announced that the panel headed by the Speaker will look into the instances of indiscipline. As disruptions continued, the House was adjourned for a short duration.

When the House met again, The Mineral Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020 and The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Second Amendment) Bill, 2019 were passed amid sloganeering by the Opposition members.

## RS adjourned amid Oppn protests over Delhi violence

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

RAJYA SABHA proceedings were adjourned on Friday as Opposition MPs continued to protest in the House over the riots in the Capital.

Although the government has agreed to a discussion on the issue after Holi next week, the Opposition has dug its heels in on the demand that the House should discuss Delhi riots before taking up any other business.

On Thursday, the Upper House was adjourned after Health Minister Harsh Vardhan's statement on the situation of the novel coronavirus outbreak in the country.

On Friday, Naidu made a brief statement on the contribution of women to mark the approaching Women's Day and then called for laying of papers. The Opposition members were on their feet when the Chairman called on Union Minister Anurag Thakur to lay papers.

As Naidu tried to take up the Zero Hour, MPs from Opposition parties raised slogans against Home Minister Amit Shah. MPs from the AAP, TMC, Congress entered the Well and started protesting. Naidu then adjourned the House till March 11.



Opposition members protest in the Rajya Sabha on Friday. PTI

5 QUESTIONS



**DR A CHELLAKUMAR**, CONGRESS MP FROM KRISHNAGIRI IN TAMIL NADU, SPEAKS TO HARIKISHAN SHARMA ABOUT THE HOUSE PROTEST.

### What issue did you want to raise?

We want the government to take up Delhi violence for discussion because 53 valuable lives have been lost... We want to know, what is the need of postponing the debate on this issue to after Holi? If the government is transparent, then the Home Minister should present the status report... Discussing Delhi violence was our main demand.

### What were your other demands?

Our second demand was revocation of the suspension of our party MPs. Whatever happened on Thursday was due to the unwanted statement by one of the BJP allies about Congress president Sonia Gandhi. Clearly, it was a provocation... When you are discussing coronavirus, what was need to take the name of Sonia Gandhi?...

### The Speaker has formed a committee to look into all the incidents in the House between March 2 and 5. Comments?

Naturally, they (government) want to make a big hue and cry. It's like the Delhi incident. You are chasing the victims...

### Have you met the Speaker and demanded the revocation of the suspension of your party MPs?

I think the leader of the party in the House has met him.

### If the Speaker does not revoke the suspension, will you still take part in the discussion on Delhi violence next week?

We will chalk out our strategy... Discussion on Delhi violence is a priority for us.

RS chairman Venkaiah Naidu

### FROM THE CHAIR

**RAJYA SABHA**

"Please discuss amongst yourselves and come to some sort of a meaningful solution to see to it that the House functions very effectively because the country is watching what is happening in Parliament."

**M VENKAIHAH NAIDU**, Chairman, on the stalemate between government and opposition over discussion on Delhi riots.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

"In a democratic system, we have been trying to get the attention of the Chair for all these days but with due respect to the Chair, why is he not allowing us to voice our opinion?"

**DAYANIDHI MARAN**, DMK member while demanding the revocation of suspension of 7 Congress MPs.

### ROLL CALL

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

**Uttar Pradesh Livestock Development Board**  
Gokaran Nath Road, Badshahbag, Lucknow - 226007, U.P., India  
Contact # - 0522-2741899, 0522-4099753  
http://animalhusb.upsc.gov.in E-mail ID : upldb@rediffmail.com

**GLOBAL EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)**  
EOI No. 1349(1525)-10/BC-SS/IRGM/UP/DB/2019-20 Dated: March 06, 2020

The Uttar Pradesh Livestock Development Board (UPLDB), Department of Animal Husbandry, Government of Uttar Pradesh has invited a GLOBAL EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) via EOI No. - 1349(3)-10/BC-SS/IRGM/UP/DB/2019-20 Dated: 30 January, 2020 (Tender ID:2020\_UPLDB\_430108\_2 Di. 03.02.2020) to engage a Service Provider to create and run facilities to produce Sex Sorted/Sorted Semen from raw semen ejaculate harvested from indigenous Bulls of Cattle and Buffaloes to produce a minimum of 0.3 million gender specified sexed semen doses (either X or Y bearing chromosome) per year, from all eligible service providers/agencies for execution of the project.

The updated EOI has been uploaded on the <http://etenders.up.nic.in>.  
Extended last date for submission of EOI on e-tender portal of Uttar Pradesh <http://etenders.up.nic.in> is 13.03.2020, at 11:00 AM, and accordingly the opening of EOI (downloading from e-tender portal) is extended to 13.03.2020 at 01:00 PM.

**Chief Executive Officer**  
Uttar Pradesh Livestock Development Board, Lucknow

**Khadi and Village Industries Commission**  
Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, (Govt. of India)  
Ch. Charan Singh, Multi Disciplinary Training Centre  
PANJOKHERA, DISTT. SHAMLI-247775 (U.P.)  
Ph.No. 01392-225356, E-mail: mdtpcpanjokhera.kvic@gov.in

No. MDTC/SBEC/KVIC/Tender Notice/2019-20 Date: 06.03.2020

**SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE**  
Ch. Charan Singh MDTC, KVIC, Panjokhera invites sealed tenders from registered firm engaged in manufacturer/ supplier of Fruits & Vegetable Processing Machines and Equipments.

The tender documents can be purchased in cash from our office on any working day between 11.00 A.M TO 4.00 P.M (except Saturday, Sunday National holidays & Lunch Hrs. 1.30 PM to 2.00 PM) or tender form can also be downloaded from KVIC website i.e. [www.kvic.org.in](http://www.kvic.org.in), however, the cost of tender form will have to be deposited along with the tender in the shape of demand draft/pay order drawn in favour of "Ch. Charan Singh M.D.T.C., KVIC", Payable at Kandhala, Distt. Shamli.

The Principal will be empowered to cancel one or all the tenders without assigning any reason.

All the details are mentioned in tender documents.

Cost of tender form : Rs. 1000/-  
Date of tender form issue : 07.03.2020  
Last date of tender form issue : 21.03.2020 before 1.00 PM  
Last date of tender submission : 21.03.2020 by 3.00 PM  
Opening of Bids : 23.03.2020 at 1.00 Pm Principal  
Mob.No.: 989110509

**KASHMIR POWER DISTRIBUTION CORPORATION LIMITED (KPDC)**  
(Fully Owned Government of J&K Undertaking)

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (Planning) PLANNING & PROCUREMENT WING, KASHMIR**  
E-mail: epndcs@gmail.com

**EXTENSION NOTICE-II**

In view of the requests from the prospective Bidders and to ensure fair participation, extension in critical dates is given to e-NIT NO: SE/EPL/e-NIT-03 of 2019-20 Dated 30.01.2020, "Purchase of 500 MVA, 1250 A, 11 KV, VCB Switchgear Panels INDOOR TYPE" detailed as under.

1. Submission of e-Bid (end) Date and Time	14.03.2020 15.00 Hrs.
2. Submission of Hard Copy (end) Date and Time	16.03.2020 16.00 Hrs in the office of the Chief Engineer P&P wing, PDD Complex, Bemina, Srinagar.
3. Commercial/Technical Bid Opening Date and Time	17.03.2020 at 14.00 Hrs.

All other terms and conditions as stipulated in the original NIT and corrigendum-I dated 20.02.2020 shall remain same.

**Sd/-**  
**Superintending Engineer**  
**Planning (KPDC)**

**कार्यालय जिला खाद्य नागरिक आपूर्ति एवं उपभोक्ता मामले निबंधक, नारनौल**  
ई-निविदा सूचना

रबी व खरीफ सीजन 2020-21 के लिए नारनौल (महेन्द्रगढ़) जिले की सभी मंडियों में स्टाक एवं स्टाक आर्टिकलज के श्रम एवं दुलाई कार्य हेतु सभी राजकीय खरीद संस्थारों खाद्य एवं पुरति विभाग, हेफेड एवं हरियाणा वेयर हाउस के लिए श्रम व दुलाई ठेकेदारों से ई-टेंडरिंग प्रक्रिया के माध्यम से ई-टेंडर आमंत्रित किए जाते हैं तथा ई टेंडर की नियम व शर्तें विभाग की वेबसाईट <https://etenders.hry.nic.in> से डाउनलोड किए जा सकते हैं। उपरोक्त ई टेंडर निम्न अनुसार उपयुक्त महोदय नारनौल की अध्यक्षता में खोले जायेंगे।

कार्य	ऑनलाईन टेंडर डालने की तिथि	ऑनलाईन टेंडर डालने की समाप्ति तिथि	तकनीकी बोली खोलने का समय	स्थान
श्रम एवं दुलाई	03.03.2020 सायं 5.00 बजे से	16.03.2020 प्रातः 9.00 बजे तक	16.03.2020 प्रातः 10.00 बजे	कमरा नं. 320 तीसरी मंजिल लघु सचिवालय नारनौल

हस्ता./- (कप्तान सिंह)  
जिला खाद्य एवं पुरति निबंधक, नारनौल  
दूरभाष नं. 01282-251249

80249/HRY

**SEARCH FOR MISSING**

General public is hereby informed that a female namely **Budi W/o Sukhdev, R/o S-601, Nehru Enclave, Shakarpur, Delhi, Age : 26 yrs., Height : 5'3", Complexion : Fair, Face : Round, Built : Fat, Wearing : Dark Yellow Colour Suit-Salwar and Sleeper in Feet, has been missing / kidnapped since 03.02.2020 at 09:00 pm** from her house. In this regard a case DD No. 18-A dated 14.02.2020 has been lodged at PS. Shakarpur, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local Police to trace out the missing / kidnapped female but no clue has come to light so far.

If anyone have any information about this missing / kidnapped female please inform undersigned Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>, Email: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in), Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641, Fax: 011-24368639

**SHO DP/12/ED/2020.** **PS. Shakarpur, Delhi**  
Ph.: 011-22542992, 8750870627

**TAMILNADU WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD**  
INVITATION OF BIDS - ITEM WAR (TWO COVER SYSTEM) (TURNKEY BASIS)

IFB No.	IFB No. 27/USSS to Added areas - Villupuram Mpy/DO/CEVLR/2020 Dated: 05.03.2020
Name of Work	Providing UGSS to Added Areas of Villupuram Municipality in Villupuram District for implementation of Collector system and allied works - Execution period - 36 months, Trial run period - 6 months and maintenance of the scheme - 12 months.
Approximate value of work	Rs.150.00 Crore.
Bid security	Rs.75.00 Lakhs.
Eligible class	Class-I.
Tender invitee	The Chief Engineer, TWAD Board, Vellore - 632006.
Sale of Bid & place of sale	09.03.2020 to 07.04.2020. Bid document may be purchased by remitting an amount of Rs. 1000 + GST from the Executive Engineer, TWAD Board, RWS Division, Water tank compound, e mapper, Kallakurichi - 605 202. If bid documents are required by post an amount of Rs.500/- to be paid additionally.
web site downloading	<a href="http://www.tenders.in.gov.in">www.tenders.in.gov.in</a> and <a href="http://www.twadboard.gov.in">www.twadboard.gov.in</a> . (free of cost)
1. Date and time of Pre bid meeting	27.03.2020 at 11.00 AM
2. Last date and time of downloading bid documents	07.04.2020 up to 5.45 PM
3. Last date and time for receipt of bid document	09.04.2020 up to 3.00 PM
4. Date and time for opening of Technical bid	09.04.2020 at 3.30 PM

**Chief Engineer, TWAD Board, Vellore-6.**  
DIPR/1246/ TENDER / 2020  
SAVE WATER. CONSERVE WATER. EVERY DROP COUNTS

**WESTERN RAILWAY-BHAVNAGAR DIVISION**  
Notice Inviting E-Tender DESIGN, SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, PROGRAMMING, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF ELECTRONIC INTERLOCKING (E.I) SYSTEM

No. W/18/NITE-tender/2019-20/S&T/22/WA Date: 03.03.2020. The Divisional Railway Manager (S&T), Western Railway, Bhavnagar invites e-tenders on behalf of President of India for the following work: (I) Tender No. 47/2019: Name of Work: Design, Supply, Installation, Programming, Testing and commissioning of Electronic Interlocking (E.I) system at Porbandar station along with outdoor S&T work in connection with Replacement of Mechanical signaling with existing yard at Porbandar in Bhavnagar Division of Western Railway. Estimated cost : Rs. 7141299.10. The bidders have to apply on line through link i.e. [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) only. For further detail please visit website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) Last date for on line apply 02.04.2020 up to 15.00 hrs. 178

Like us on: [facebook.com/WesternRly](https://www.facebook.com/WesternRly)

**SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED**

General Public is hereby informed that one girl namely: **Shahin Parveen, D/o: Kamre Aalam, R/o: A-13, Bheem Nagar, Camp No. 1, Nangloi, Delhi, Age: 20 Years, Height: 5'1", Face: Round, Complexion: Shallow, Wearing: Green Frock Suit and Shoes in feet has been missing/kidnapped since 17.01.2020 from the area of PS. Paschim Vihar West, Delhi. In this regard DD No. 26A, Dated 18.01.2020 has been lodged at PS. Paschim Vihar West, Delhi.**

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing/kidnapped girl but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone have any information about this missing/kidnapped girl please inform the undersigned.

**Web-site : <http://cbi.nic.in>**  
**E-Mail ID: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)**  
**Fax: 011-24368639**

**SHO DP/48/OD/2020** **PS. Paschim Vihar West, Delhi**  
Ph.: 011-25268394, 25280980

**SEARCH FOR MISSING**

General public is hereby informed that a girl namely **Pooja, D/o Shaili Devi, R/o Village Bhatandipur, District Vaishali, Bihar** is missing from the area of Police Station Hauz Khas, New Delhi. In this regard, FIR No. 285/2019 dated 19.10.2019 u/s 363 IPC has been registered at P.S. Huaz Khas, New Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing girl but no clue has come to light so far. The description of the missing girl is as under:

**Name:** Pooja, **Gender:** Female, **Age:** 16 years, **Height:** 5', **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Face:** Round, **Built:** Medium, **Hair:** Long Black, **Wearing:** Black colour frock, red colour pajama and rubber slippers in her feet.

If anyone has any information regarding this missing girl, kindly inform SHO/Huaz Khas, New Delhi.  
**E-mail : [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)**  
**Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641**  
**Fax : 011-24368639**

**SHO DP/21/SD/2020** **PS. Huaz Khas, New Delhi**  
Ph. No. 011-26867878, 26510077

**J&K PROJECTS CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION LTD.**  
(A J&K State Govt. undertaking)

**NIT No:32 of 2019-20 Dt. 02.03.2020**

On behalf of Managing Director, Jammu & Kashmir Projects Construction Corporation Ltd., the Deputy General Manager, Unit Electrical JKPCCL Ltd., Jammu invites e-tenders from approved and eligible electric contractors registered with JKPCCL Ltd./J&K Govt./ CPWD/Railways and other State/Central Govt. undertaking for the following work:

S. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of document	Earnest Money (Rs. in Lacs)	Time of completion	Class of Contractor
1.	Electrification of Mini Secretariat Bhandarwah.	Rs 38.00 Lacs	Rs. 1,000/-	Rs. 0.76 Lacs	In tandem with civil works	"A"

Qualification criteria, scope of work, tender documents, BOQ and all other terms & conditions can be seen and downloaded from [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in).

**Critical Dates:**

1. Period of downloading of NIT	04.03.2020. to 25.03.2020 upto 1400 Hrs.
2. Pre-Bid Meeting	09.03.2020 at 1230 Hrs. in Office of General Manager, JKPCCL Ltd., Rail Head Complex, Jammu
3. Bid submission dates along with proof of cost of Tender Document and EMD	10.03.2020. to 25.03.2019 upto 1400 Hrs.
4. Date of opening of technical Bid	27.03.2020 at 1230 Hrs. in Office of General Manager, JKPCCL Ltd., Rail Head Complex, Jammu
5. Hard Copies of Technical Bid will be invited from L1 only	

Any other information regarding e-tendering process can be had from the office of undersigned or e-tendering Cell, Jammu.

**Sd/-**  
**Deputy General Manager,**  
**Unit-Electrical, JKPCCL Ltd.**  
Jammu.

No. DGM/E/J/675-79  
Dated: 02.03.2020  
DIPJ-5178

**U.P. Projects Corporation Ltd.**  
(ISO 9001 : 2015 Certified Company)  
Gomti Barrage, Left Bank, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow

Notice No. : 17/GM-4/UPPCL/2019-20 Dated : 06.03.2020

**Short Term e-Tender Notice**

U.P. Projects Corporation Limited (A U.P. Government undertaking) invites percentage rate Tenders (two envelope system) from eligible contractors/ firms registered with U.P. Projects Corporation Ltd. (category specified in column 9) under e-Tendering Procurement Rule for following work:

Lot No.	Name of Work	Estimated cost Approx (in lacs)	Bid Earnest Money (Rs. in Lacs)	Tender Processing Fee (in Rs.)	Time of Completion	Address of Unit	Address of tender Receiving Officer	Category of Registered Contractor
1	Landscape Lighting & External Electrification, Landscape & Horticulture work, Childrens Play Apparatus for Park in Tourist Complex in Nagla Chandra Shan Dham Al-Farah, Distt. Mathura- Uttar Pradesh.	Rs. 46.72	Rs.0.94	3000.00+ 18% GST	6 Months (including rainy season)	Project Manager (Unit-32) U.P. Projects Corporation Ltd. Behind Mahanadi Vidya Mandir, Kishanpur, Aligarh	General Manager (Zone-4) U.P. Projects Corporation Ltd. 28/108, Sector 2, Awas Vihar Colony, Sakinaka, Agra	"D" & above

The tender documents can be downloaded from the website [www.http://etender.up.nic.in](http://etender.up.nic.in) during the period 06.03.2020 to 12.03.2020. The tender should be submitted upto 12.00 Noon, on 12.03.2020. The technical bid shall be opened on 12.03.2020 at 02.00 P.M. Pre bid meeting will be held at 07.03.2020 on 04.00 P.M. at the office of General Manager, U.P. Projects Corporation Ltd., Zone-4, Agra.

Prospective bidders are advised to regularly check through U.P. Projects Corporation Ltd. web site [www.upprojects.org](http://www.upprojects.org) and e-tendering website [www.http://etender.up.nic.in](http://www.http://etender.up.nic.in) for all other terms and conditions, qualifying criteria, corrigendum/amendments etc., if any, and separate advertisement will not be made for the same for any clarifications/queries the prospective bidders may contact office of the person given in col. No. 7 & 8. Undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason.

**GENERAL MANAGER - U.P. Projects Corporation Ltd., Zone-4, Agra**

**NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY**

**E-Tender Notice**  
DRM (S&T) North Western Railway/ Jaipur, for and on behalf of the President of India, invite E-Tenders from registered tenderers/bidders for the following work. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids on-line up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender documents cost and earnest money only through only payment modes available ON IREPS portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Bankers cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed. E-Tender Notice No. SNT-JP-22-3R-2019-20, Name of work with its location : Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract for IP based CCTV surveillance system of integrated Security system installed at Jaipur Rly station for three (03) years., Tender Value (Rs.) : 1645350.00, Earnest Money to be deposited (EMD) (Rs.) : 32900.00, Tender submission & closing Date & Time on website : 31.03.2020 Upto 15.00 hrs., Website Particulars & Notice board location : [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in), DRM office / NWR/Jaipur.

256-SP/20  
Please join us on [NWRRailways](https://www.facebook.com/NWRRailways)

# 7 GOVT & POLITICS

## Groups supporting stirs can't be barred from foreign funding: SC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

THE SUPREME Court on Friday ruled that bandhs and hartals are a "legitimate means of dissent", and an organisation which is not directly related to a political party but supports such activities cannot be deprived of "its legitimate right of receiving foreign contribution".

The court was hearing an appeal by Indian Social Action Forum (INSAF), a "registered society involved in resisting globalisation, combating communalism and defending democracy", against the Delhi High Court judgment which dismissed its petition challenging Sections 5 (1) and 5 (4) of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 and Rules 3 (i), 3 (v) and 3 (vi) of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Rules, as violative

of Articles 14, 19 and 21 of the Constitution.

A bench of Justices L. Nageswara Rao and Deepak Gupta read down Rule 3 (vi) of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Rules, 2011, and said that "any organisation which supports the cause of a group of citizens agitating for their rights without a political goal or objective cannot be penalised by being declared as an organisation of a political nature".

However, the top court rejected the contention that the provisions were unconstitutional. It said, "To save this provision from being declared as unconstitutional, we hold that it is only those organisations which have connection with active politics or take part in party politics, that are covered by Rule 3 (vi). To make it clear, such of those organisations which are

not involved in active politics or party politics do not fall within the purview of Rule 3 (vi)."

The court also read down Rule 3 (v) and said, "A balance has to be drawn between the object that is sought to be achieved by the legislation and the rights of the voluntary organisations to have access to foreign funds. The purpose for which the statute prevents organisations of a political nature from receiving foreign funds is to ensure that the administration is not influenced by foreign funds... On the other hand, such of those voluntary organisations which have absolutely no connection with either party politics or active politics cannot be denied access to foreign contributions. Therefore, such of those organisations which are working for the social and economic welfare of the society cannot be brought within the purview of the Act or

the Rules by enlarging the scope of the term 'political interests'. We are of the opinion that the expression 'political interests' in Rule 3 (v) has to be construed to be in connection with active politics or party politics."

The bench clarified that "organisations used for channeling foreign funds by political parties cannot escape the rigour of the Act provided there is concrete material" and added that in such event, "the Central Government shall follow the procedure prescribed in the Act and Rules strictly before depriving such organisation the right to receive foreign contributions".

The court agreed that the words "political interests" in the Act and Rules "are vague and are susceptible to misuse".

However, it added that possible abuse of power is not a ground to declare a provision unconstitutional.

## Law ministry notifies panel for delimitation in J&K, 4 N-E states

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

THE LAW Ministry on Friday notified the delimitation commission for Jammu and Kashmir, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland. The three-member commission will be headed by former Supreme Court Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai.

Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora has nominated Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra as his representative on the commission. The third member will be the election commissioner of the state or Union Territory concerned.

Delimitation is the act of re-drawing boundaries of Lok Sabha and Assembly seats to represent changes in population and is done on the basis of the last Census. Home Minister Amit Shah, while announcing reorganisation of the state of Jammu and Kashmir into the Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh, 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 Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir shall be increased from 107 to 114, and delimitation of the constituencies may be determined by the Election Commission in the manner hereinafter provided."

Notably, 24 of the total seats in J&K remain perennially vacant as they are allotted to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. The reorganisation Act also says Lok Sabha will have five seats from the Union Territory of J&K and Ladakh will have one seat.

Last week, President Ram Nath Kovind also cleared the decks for the resumption of the delimitation exercise in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland.

The delimitation in 2002, in which only boundaries of constituencies were readjusted, was completed in all states, except Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur and Nagaland. When the exercise began in these states

### EXPLAINED Focus on J&K Assembly

THE DELIMITATION of Assembly constituencies in J&K has been a pet project of both the RSS and the BJP. The party believes that even though the population in Jammu increased over the years, Kashmir continues to have a disproportionately larger share of Assembly constituencies. This has effectively meant that only a party strong in the Valley is able to lead the state government. Out of the 87 seats in the J&K Assembly, 46 are in Kashmir, 37 in Jammu and four in Ladakh — now a separate Union Territory.

in 2002, the use of 2001 Census was challenged by several organisations before the Gauhati High Court on the ground that it was riddled with defects.

There was also a fear among the tribal community in Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland that the delimitation exercise would change the composition of their seats and eventually hurt their electoral interests. Soon, violence erupted and the Delimitation Act of 2002 was, consequently, amended on January 14, 2008, to empower the President to postpone exercise in these states. On February 8, 2008, Presidential orders were issued to defer delimitation in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur and Nagaland, while it went on in the rest of the country.

The order issued by the Legislative Department of the Law Ministry last week said, "It appears that the circumstances that led to the deferring of the delimitation exercise" in Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland "have ceased to exist and that the delimitation of the constituencies as envisaged under the Delimitation Act, 2002 could be carried out now."

The delimitation commission is expected to wind up the exercise in a year's time.

### DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



### CORRIDOR SPEECH

THE FIRST week of Rajya Sabha after the recess was a washout as the Opposition demanded a discussion on the Delhi riots before any business could be taken up. With the discussion pushed to after Holi now, TMC leader Derek O'Brien came up with a novel way to make a speech on the subject. O'Brien has recorded a video of him speaking on the issue from a corridor in Parliament and uploaded it on YouTube, claiming that the government is not letting the House function. Tweeting the video, he wrote on Friday, "A FIRST! As the government keeps running away from a discussion on #DelhiGenocide and healing in the LS & RS, #Trinamool decided to make its speech from the corridors #InsideParliament".

### HOUSES ON ALERT

THE CORONAVIRUS scare seems to have reached Parliament House too. This would impact the people who have got their passes for a visit to Parliament. A health advisory sent to every department in Parliament House has recommended that large gathering within the precincts of Parliament House Estate should be avoided. Sources in Lok Sabha secretariat said they cannot take a risk as ministers, including the Prime Minister, would be moving in the same corridors as the general public.

### ON THE CARDS

THE MINISTRY of External Affairs is likely to get a new spokesperson soon. A 1999-batch IFS officer, Anurag Srivastava, who is currently India's ambassador to Ethiopia, is likely to become the next spokesperson. He headed the political wing at the Indian High Commission in Colombo, has served at the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations in Geneva, the Pakistan-Afghanistan-Iran division, in the Official Spokesperson's Office and as Director of the Finance Division in the MEA. Current spokesperson Raveesh Kumar is likely to move out to an embassy in Europe.

### ASSAM BUDGET

27 lakh families to get monthly fund as medical help

ABHISHEK SAHA  
GUWAHATI, MARCH 6

FREE RICE for around 57 lakh families (all beneficiaries of the National Food Security Act) and Rs 830 per month in medical and nutritional help to about 27 lakh poor and economically backward families in Assam were among the important welfare schemes announced by Finance Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday in this government's final Budget before Assembly elections next year.

"The medical and nutritional support will have a consolidated inflow of Rs 830 per month to each family, effectively meaning, an additional income of Rs 10,000 per annum. We intend to cover about 27 lakh of our poor and EBC families and I propose that a fresh selection of the beneficiaries be made by the gram sabha..." Sarma said.

He also announced 18 flagship schemes for welfare measures in various sectors including food, electricity, support to youth towards entrepreneurial activities, among others.

Sarma said those who win medals in the Olympics, the Asian Games and the Commonwealth Games will be accommodated as Grade-I officers of the state government.



Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray and Finance Minister Ajit Pawar in Mumbai on Friday. Ganesh Shirsekar

### UDDHAV GOVT PRESENTS FIRST BUDGET

Maharashtra debt burden set to cross Rs 5.20 lakh cr

SANDEEP ASHAR  
MUMBAI, MARCH 6

IN A fresh warning that Maharashtra's fiscal outlook is worsening, its Budget for 2020-21 has projected that the state's total debt will cross Rs 5.20 lakh crore by March 2021, forcing the state to spend a staggering Rs 35,531 crore in 2020-21 on servicing this debt.

Presenting its first Budget 100 days after it took charge, the Shiv Sena-NCP-Congress alliance government on Friday spent out a Rs 4.35 lakh crore spend plan with enhanced allocations for capital investments in the farm-intensive sectors and road infrastructure headlining the Budget.

In nominal terms, the annual Gross State Domestic Product at current prices for 2020-21 is pro-

jected to be Rs 32,24,013 crore, up 12 per cent over Rs 28,78,583 crore recorded this year.

The government also announced a 1 per cent cut on stamp duty for property transactions in Mumbai Metropolitan Region, Pune, Pimpri Chinchwad, and Nagpur, while raising VAT on petrol and diesel by Re 1 per litre across the state.

But it was the worsening outlook of the state's economy that stood out more prominently than the new announcements.

Finance Minister Ajit Pawar said, "The present period is complicated and challenging from the economic point of view. The country is facing serious consequences of economic slowdown... The impact of this slow down is also being felt at the state level."

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

### HIMACHAL BUDGET

Thakur focuses on education, connectivity

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
SHIMLA, MARCH 6

INTRODUCING 25 new schemes, with focus on road and air connectivity, housing for poor and scheduled castes and quality education, the Himachal Pradesh government Friday presented a Rs 49,131 crore Budget for 2020-21.

No new taxes have been introduced in the Budget, which saw an increase of 10.7 per cent or Rs 4,743 crore as compared to Rs 44,388 crore Budget 2019-20.

Presenting his third budget, Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur, who also holds the finance portfolio, said that the fiscal deficit is estimated at Rs 7,272 crore for 2020-21, which is 4 per cent of the gross state domestic (GSDP).

In his nearly three-hour address in the Assembly while tabling the 75-page proposed Budget, Thakur said a target has been set to provide 10,000 houses to poor families in the next fiscal.

The CM announced that the highest spending — Rs 8,016 crore or 17 per cent of the Budget — would be spent in the education sector for upgrading educational institutions. For plan expenditure, the transport sector has been allotted Rs 1,395 crore. Thakur proposed to provide road connectivity to all panchayats in the state, and to prioritise connectivity to hamlets with a population of 100 to 249.



### BIMAL JULKA NEW CIC

President Ram Nath Kovind greets newly sworn-in Chief Information Commissioner Bimal Julka at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on Friday. Later, Julka administered the oath of office to Amita Pandove as Information Commissioner. PTI

## Patidar stir case: SC to hear Hardik plea on March 20

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

THE SUPREME Court Friday said it would hear on March 20 the appeal filed by Congress leader Hardik Patel challenging the Gujarat High Court order which had rejected his anticipatory bail plea in a case related to violence during the Patidar quota stir in 2015.

The matter came up for hearing before a bench of Justices U U Lalit and Vineet Saran.

The apex court had on February 28 granted interim protection from arrest to Patel in the case lodged in August 2015 and had rapped Gujarat Police, saying it cannot sit over a case for five years. The Patidar Anamat Andolan Samiti under Patel had organised a mega rally in Ahmedabad as part of the stir, demanding quota for the community in government jobs. An FIR was lodged for "unlawful assembly" as the police had claimed that the organiser did not have permission.

## MP: Independent MLA set to return, 3 Cong MLAs still out of bounds

MILIND GHATWAI  
BHOPAL, MARCH 6

THE RULING Congress in Madhya Pradesh claimed on Friday that Independent MLA Surendra Singh Shera was set to return to Bhopal and meet Chief Minister Kamal Nath, but the three Congress legislators who are in Bengaluru for the last few days continue to remain out of bounds.

Shera, MLA from Burhanpur, contested state polls as an Independent after the Congress denied him a ticket. He subsequently supported the government.

Shera claimed he went to Bengaluru in connection with his daughter's treatment. On Friday, he said there was a threat to his life. He missed an afternoon flight to Bhopal on Friday and is likely to reach the state capital late in the night. Shera is likely to meet the

Chief Minister on Saturday.

Meanwhile, the three Congress MLAs — Hardeep Singh Dang, who purportedly resigned on Thursday, Bisahul Singh and Raghuraj Kansana — remain out of bounds though the ruling party has claimed that it was hopeful of their return soon. Former CM Digvijaya Singh had alleged that the four were taken to Bengaluru by the BJP in a chartered flight. In a purported resignation letter cir-

culated through WhatsApp, Suwasara MLA Dang stated that he was hurt after being repeatedly ignored by Nath and the other minister. On Friday, Digvijaya claimed that Dang's letter was a statement, not a resignation letter.

Claiming that the government is not in danger, Digvijaya said neither Congress members nor allies should be ignored.

Digvijaya also took potshots at mining baron and BJP MLA Sanjay

Pathak, saying he had lost his way after earning "too much money". He has accused Pathak of involvement in horse-trading. Meanwhile, Pathak denied reports that he met the Chief Minister on Thursday night and asserted that he will remain with the BJP.

Labour Minister Mahendra Sisodiya, known to be close to former Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, has said the state government "will face crisis only if

Scindia is ignored or given the short shrift". Scindia is a contender for a Rajya Sabha berth and the post of state Congress chief, currently held by Chief Minister Nath.

Cancelling several engagements outside Bhopal, Nath met many Congress and non-BJP legislators on Friday. Addressing an event, he said his party MLAs were not up for sale. "Our leaders believe in politics of principles and service," he said.

## FROM PAGE ONE

# Govt bans 2 TV channels: 'Critical of RSS, siding with one community'

decision to bar TV channels is a warning to all media houses in the country that they should not criticise the government," he said.

Media One is owned by Madhyamam Broadcasting Limited which is backed by Jamaat-e-Islami.

Asianet News is indirectly owned by BJP Rajya Sabha MP Rajeev Chandrasekhar. Chandrasekhar owns RC Stocks and Securities Pvt Ltd, Jupiter Global Infrastructure and Minsk Developers Pvt Ltd, which together own Jupiter Capital, which owns Asianet News Network Pvt Ltd that runs Asianet News.

Chandrasekhar was not available for comment. Asianet News Editor M G Radhakrishnan said: "We don't want to react at this moment. We will take a col-

lective look at the issue and come out with our view later."

Incidentally, the I&B Ministry had banned NDTV India in 2016 for a day for its reporting of the terror attack on the Pathankot air base while accusing it of sharing sensitive details. NDTV moved the Supreme Court against the order, and was granted a stay.

In its order against Media One News, the I&B Ministry stated: "Channel's reporting on Delhi violence seems to be biased as it is deliberately focusing on the vandalism of CAA (Citizenship Amendment Act) supporters."

It stated: "...such telecast could incite violence and pose danger to maintenance of law and order situation, particularly when the situation is already highly volatile and charged up and riots are taking place in the

area with reports of killings and bloodbath; and it could also stoke the feelings of anger, hatred and animosity among the communities and hurt their religious sentiments which could ultimately result into escalation of violence."

The Ministry stated that the channels appeared to have contravened rules 6(1)(C) and 6(1)(a) of the Cable Television Networks Rules.

These rules prohibit channels from showing any programme "which contains attack on religions or communities or visuals or words contemptuous of religious groups or which promote communal attitudes" and "is likely to encourage or incite violence or contains anything against maintenance of law and order or which promote anti-national attitudes".

The Ministry said it had issued show-cause notices to both channels on February 28, and took the decision to impose the ban after receiving their responses on March 3.

The parts that the Ministry said it found could have "enhanced communal disharmony" for Media One News include the "anchor/correspondent" saying that "it seems the vandals and police are hand in glove" and "Union Home Ministry has stated that the situation is under control but in reality the situation is getting out of hand".

It also refers to a report that the "government has not taken initiative for any talks with anti-CAA protesters and only courts have given ear to the anti-CAA protesters" and the government's "cold shouldered approach towards anti-CAA pro-

testers is the main reason behind ongoing protests in the national capital".

It refers to the report as saying: "Provocative speech of BJP leader in Jafrabad has led to the violence and it seems vandals were prepared to target anti-CAA protesters... Delhi Police has failed to register an FIR for hate speech. But most significant thing is the inefficiency of Delhi Police in containing the violence. In many areas Police paved the way for vandals to roam free with weapons and carry out attacks and arson."

In its order on Asianet News, the Ministry cited the "anchor/correspondent" as reporting that "the Union Ministry claimed that 33 company central forces were deployed but still violence continues in the area and also the Centre gave silent consent for the

violence".

It also points to a report that the "violence of the previous day had continued from morning" and "turned into communal violence after a group of Hindu people chanted Jai Sri Ram and the Muslims chanted Azadi slogans. The commuters on the roads are forced to chant Jai Sri Ram. Muslims are brutally attacked... The Centre can control the violence within hours, but no action has been taken till now... the Centre give silent consent for the violence".

In both the orders, the Ministry said: "While reporting such critical incident, the channel should have taken utmost care and should have reported it in a balanced way. Such reporting could enhance the communal disharmony across the country when the situation is highly

volatile..."

It said "it is abundantly clear that the channel has not adhered to the Programme codes and has shown irresponsibility by not fully complying to them".

Defending itself in its response to the show-cause notice, Media One said that "that the news reports telecast by Media One about the incident, which happened in north east Delhi do not constitute any breach of Rule".

It said "it is the lawfully accepted duty of the media under Article 19(1)(a) read with Article 15(2) of the Constitution of India to bonafide investigate and report news truly and correctly... As a recognized news channel, the news in question telecast by Media One is in exercise of the fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution of India".

It said the channel spoke to residents and witnesses mentioned in its report, which was "similar to other reports" and "did not incite violence which took place and the situations getting out of hands, it is necessary to emphasize that there is no incitement on the part of their channel which is dedicated to inform the public".

Asianet News said it had published the stories "with due care and caution and with utmost restraint after verifying the factual situation from the official authorities". And that these were "impartial and true reports of the untoward incidents that took place in the particular area wherein their reporters and crew were physically present" and "never intended to cause publication of report siding towards a particular community".



# 9 EXPRESS NETWORK

## VIRUS WATCH

TELANGANA



Students hold placards during an awareness rally for coronavirus in Hyderabad. AP

PUNJAB

## Parade at Wagah border to be held sans spectators

**New Delhi:** In wake of the coronavirus outbreak in the country, the BSF has barred visitors from coming to the Wagah border for the parade ceremony. BSF sources said the parade would continue to be held but spectators would not be allowed. The precautionary measure will be effective from Saturday. The BSF will continue performing the ceremonial duty of lowering the flag and other drills, a spokesperson said. "As per government guidelines, congregations are to be avoided. Hence visitors and spectators to the ceremony will not be entertained..." the spokesperson was quoted by PTI as saying. The event is held every evening and national flags of India and Pakistan are lowered by the respective border forces in presence of visitors on both sides of the border. **ENS**

TAMIL NADU



Passengers and CISF personnel wear protective masks at Chennai airport. PTI

UTTARAKHAND

## State govt postpones two major events

**Dehradun:** The Uttarakhand government has postponed two major events — the Adventure Summit and the Wellness Summit — scheduled for March and April, respectively. Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat said, "It has been discussed to postpone both Adventure Summit and Wellness Summit." He said that as a precaution, measures suggested by the WHO will be implemented in the state. For the Adventure Summit,

slated to be held in Ramnagar from March 20 to 22, investors related to the adventure tourism field at the national and international levels had been invited. The Wellness Summit was slated to be held in Dehradun on April 17 and 18.

An official said that the two-day Wellness Summit was being organised for the first time in the state, and those interested in making investments in the wellness sector had been invited. **ENS**

UTTAR PRADESH



Special prayers held for people affected by coronavirus at the Aishbagh Eidgah in Lucknow. Vishal Srivastava

## Japan issues demarche to India over cancellation of e-visas to its citizens

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

JAPAN HAS lodged a strong protest with India over its decision to cancel all e-visas to Japanese nationals in view of coronavirus cases.

Japan issued a demarche to India, seeking review of its decision to cancel e-visas to Japanese nationals along with citizens from several other countries like South Korea, Iran and Italy, sources said.

In its demarche, Japan took strong note of India's decision to

club Japanese nationals along with people from other countries ignoring strong bilateral ties between the two nations.

Sources in the government said India's decision to cancel e-visas of people from several countries was taken with the sole purpose of containing potential risks of the virus spreading in India.

India on Tuesday suspended all regular visas/e-visas granted on or before March 3 to nationals of Italy, Iran, South Korea and Japan as part of measures to check spread of coronavirus in the country.

## CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

# One more tests positive for Covid-19, count climbs to 31

Universal screening at 9 more airports; PM to review situation today

ABANTIKA GHOSH & PRANAV MUKUL NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

THE TOTAL number of confirmed Novel Coronavirus (Covid-19) cases in India climbed to 31 on Friday with one more person in Delhi testing positive for the infection. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, it is learnt, has convened a meeting on Saturday to take stock of the situation.

In a statement, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said, "One more suspect has tested positive for Covid-19. The Covid-19 confirmed case has a travel history of Thailand and Malaysia. The patient is in hospital quarantine and stable. There are now 31 confirmed cases in the country. This includes 16 Italian nationals. As per the latest advisory, all international passengers irrespective of nationality are mandated to undergo universal medical screening. Adequate screening measures have been set up and nine more airports have been added to the existing 21, bringing the total to 30 airports."

Meanwhile, a flight is set to come from Iran with swabs of 300-odd Indians suspected to have been infected. The flight will then fly to Iran with Iranian nationals stranded in India. The Indians who have not been infected will be brought back in subsequent flights. About 1500-



A nursing staff at an isolation ward for possible coronavirus patients at a hospital in Ahmedabad. AP

odd Indian students and pilgrims are currently stranded in Iran, which is among the countries worst-hit by the outbreak with 2,922 reported cases.

Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri told reporters that a flight operated by Mahan Air from Iran will carry swabs of 300 Indians suspected to be infected. Those who test positive will not be evacuated, as was the case with Indians in Wuhan.

"We sent special Air India flights for evacuation from Wuhan, but the situation with Iran is different as two airlines fly between Tehran and India. We will temporarily allow some flights to operate to fly Indians from Iran back home and Iranians here to Tehran," Civil Aviation Secretary Pradeep Singh Kharola told reporters.

Around 70,000 passengers coming to India on a daily basis through airports from different parts of the world are being screened for the infection. A total of 6,49,452 passengers from 6,550 flights have been screened so far. On Friday, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation issued an order, saying that medical professionals conducting breath alcohol test of flight crews prior to their duties will also check these pilots and cabin crew members for basic symptoms of Covid-19.

In view of the situation, the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions has announced an exemption for employees from biometric attendance. Pointing out that the most common method of transmission of the virus is through infected surfaces, the Ministry

of Personnel has said in its circular, "...all ministries and departments are requested to exempt their employees to mark biometric attendance in Aadhaar-based biometric attendance system (AEBAS) till 31 March 2020. However, all the employees are required to mark their attendance in attendance register, (as done prior to launch of biometric system), during this period."

Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan on Friday chaired a meeting with states and Union Territories to review preparedness. He also reviewed availability of beds, isolation wards and laboratory readiness for high test volumes and reiterated the importance of protecting health-care workers.

Two days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi cited "expert advice" to declare his intention to skip Holi Milan programmes, the Health Ministry has written to the states, "Experts across the world have advised to reduce mass gatherings to avoid the spread of Covid-19 Novel Coronavirus disease. In view of the above it is advised that mass gatherings may be avoided or possibly be postponed till the disease spread is contained."

WINGS India 2020, a major event of the civil aviation sector scheduled from March 12 and 15, will be now held in a truncated format, with foreign delegates participating through video conference.



Police personnel wear masks at a hotel in Amritsar where the Italian tourists were staying. Rana Simranjit Singh

## 2 suspected cases in Punjab's Hoshiarpur

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE CHANDIGARH, MARCH 6

SAMPLES OF two of three Hoshiarpur residents with travel history to Italy have tested positive for coronavirus infection in the preliminary report of AIIMS, Delhi, a Punjab government spokesperson said on Friday. However, the final (confirmation) reports were awaited from NIV-Pune, the spokesperson said.

The government also clarified that Covid-19 has not been declared an "epidemic" in the state and that the health department had merely issued a precautionary advisory under The Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897.

According to the spokesman, under The Epidemic Diseases Act, the government has taken a series of preventive initiatives, including screening of suspected cases, recording of travel history in case of travel to country/area where Covid-19 has been

## Tourists refuse isolation, told to leave Amritsar

**Amritsar:** The Amritsar district administration Friday asked a group of 13 Italian tourists to leave the city after they refused to remain in quarantine and under observation for 14 days for possible coronavirus infection, a senior official said.

However, they showed no symptoms in the medical check-up done Friday. **ENS**

reported.

If the person with such a travel history, in the past 14 days, is, however, found to be symptomatic as per case definition of Covid-19, he/she must be isolated in a hospital as per protocol and will be tested for Covid-19, according to the advisory.

## Put response measures in place, Sonia tells Cong CMs

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

CONGRESS PRESIDENT Sonia Gandhi on Friday directed her party's Chief Ministers in four states and a Union Territory (UT) to put in place effective response and preparedness measures for tackling the spread of coronavirus. She asked them to set up quarantine facilities urgently, activate protocols for contact identification and isolation, launch awareness campaigns and helplines and issue advisories to people to avoid public gatherings.

In a letter to the Chief Ministers of Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and Puducherry, Gandhi said there is an urgent need for an effective domestic response to contain the spread of the epidemic.

"The capacity of public healthcare facilities must be augmented to respond to any potential outbreak. Increased disease surveillance, and strengthening testing facilities could help early detection and containment. The state government must lend all possible support to public healthcare responders to carry out their duty effectively," she wrote.

Pointing out that the WHO has warned of a severe shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE), Gandhi asked state governments to ensure an adequate supply, especially in public healthcare facilities.

## 19-year-old among two held by NIA in Pulwama attack case

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

THE NATIONAL Investigation Agency (NIA) on Friday arrested two more people in connection with the Pulwama attack case. Those arrested include a 19-year-old who allegedly used his Amazon account to order material for making the explosive used in the attack.

The two arrested have been identified as Waiz-ul-Islam (19) from Bagh-e-Mehrab in Srinagar and Mohammed Abbas Rather (32) from Hakripora in Pulwama. Rather, it is alleged, provided shelter to planners and executors of the attack last year that killed 40 CRPF personnel.

"During initial interrogation, accused Waiz ul Islam has disclosed that he used his Amazon online shopping account to procure chemicals for making IEDs, batteries and other accessories on the directions of the Pakistani JeM terrorists. He also personally delivered the items to the JeM terrorists after procuring the incriminating material online as a part of the conspiracy to carry out the Pulwama attack," the NIA said in a statement.

According to the agency,

Rather is an old OverGround Worker (OGW) of JeM. "He has disclosed that he gave shelter at his home to Jaish terrorist Mohd Umar (IED expert) after Umar came to Kashmir in April-May 2018. Further, he also harboured JeM terrorists namely Adil Ahmed Dar, Sameer Ahmed Dar and Kamran (Pakistani) at his house a number of times in the run up to the Pulwama attack," the NIA said.

According to the NIA, Mohammed Umar Farooq, a Pakistani JeM terrorist, was key conspirator in the Pulwama attack. He was killed in an encounter in Kashmir later. Adil Ahmed Dar was the suicide bomber who drove the bomb-laden car and exploded it near the CRPF convoy.

The agency claimed that Rather also facilitated safe shelter for the JeM terrorists, including Dar, and others at the house of the accused Tariq Ahmed Shah and his daughter Insha Jan of Hakripora in Pulwama. The two were arrested by NIA on March 3 for allegedly providing shelter to the accused.

Sources said the two arrested on Friday will be produced before the NIA Special Court at Jammu on Saturday.

## Two civilians killed in Kashmir attacks: Police

ADIL AKHZER SRINAGAR, MARCH 6

A CIVILIAN was shot dead by suspected militants in South Kashmir's Pulwama district while another was killed in a grenade attack in Srinagar on Friday evening, officials said. The police identified the victim of the first incident as Shabir Ahmad Bhat, a resident of Tral Payeen area.

"He was driving alone in his SUV on Tral Gamraz road and was shot in the head," said a police officer in Tral.

"Doctors at the sub-district hospital declared him brought dead," said Dr Bashir Malik, Block Medical Officer at Tral.

In Srinagar, a grenade was lobbed at the security personnel deployed near the Maharaja Gunj police station, injuring Gulam Nabi, aged around 60, CRPF IGP (Srinagar sector) Ravideep Singh Sahi told *The Indian Express*. Nabi, a former power development department employee, was taken to a hospital, where he died.

A senior police officer said another civilian was injured in the attack, but is stable.

## Ex-PDP minister to launch political party

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE SRINAGAR, MARCH 6

ALTAF BUKHARI, a former minister in the Mehbooba Mufti government in Jammu & Kashmir, will launch a new political outfit Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party on Sunday. Bukhari told *The Indian Express* that while he does not see elections happening in Kashmir for at least another year, "people's issues cannot wait to be addressed any longer".

"This will be a party for the common people of Kashmir, no blue bloods. We will launch on Women's Day. The issues of the common people of Jammu and Kashmir need to be highlighted," he said.

Bukhari, a businessman, held the education and finance portfolios in the erstwhile state's PDP-BJP coalition government.

"We will foremost, fight for the release of all political workers and leaders of the state. Our second urgent concern is the state of J&K's economy," Bukhari said. He added that while the

Supreme Court "will decide on the future of the state", it is up to the civil society to raise their concerns. "It was only after we and the civil society raised our voice that internet was restored. Likewise, we have to come together to take up other issues."

The former minister was expelled from the PDP in January 2019 following allegations that he "inspired and led dissent in the party". While he did not elaborate on who will be part of the new party, sources said that several of his former PDP colleagues are expected to join.

Bukhari said that while he and his colleagues had been mulling the formal launch of a party for more than three months, they were waiting for the release of "at least a majority" of state's political leaders.

Three former chief ministers — Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti — continue to be detained since the scrapping of special status to J&K on August 5, while a number of other political leaders are under house arrest.

## CAA PROTESTS

# HC keeps in abeyance order to police to act against protesters

ARUN JANARDHANAN CHENNAI, MARCH 6

ADAY after it directed Tirupur police to ensure that no more agitations in support of or against CAA are allowed without police permission, the Madras High Court on Friday decided to keep the order in abeyance till March 11.

A division bench of Justice M M Sundresh and Justice Krishnan Ramaswamy had passed Thursday's order on a petition filed by K Gopinath, a lawyer and president of a Hindu outfit. The same bench on Friday

ruled that the interim order be kept in abeyance after submissions by senior lawyers raised questions on Gopinath's credentials. They also argued that Thursday's interim order should not have been issued without hearing arguments of the peaceful anti-CAA protesters.

In his petition, Gopinath had sought a direction from the court to police to prevent demonstrations in Tirupur or elsewhere to "promote peace and harmony within the religions in national interest". Issuing the interim order on Thursday, the court said, "There is a subtle difference be-

tween the right to protest and upsetting the public road causing hindrance to the scores of people. Nobody has the right to indulge in such agitations in a place choose by them."

Keeping the order in abeyance on Friday, the court said they are considering opinions from senior counsels and for the fact that, "unfortunately", the antecedents of the writ petitioner have not been brought to the notice of the court.

The court, however, added that nothing prevents police from proceeding in accordance with law.

## NEW V-C FOR MADRAS UNIVERSITY

# Stalin, Ramadoss slam move to name JNU V-C on search panel

JANARDHAN KOUSHIK CHENNAI, MARCH 6

TAMIL NADU opposition party DMK and ruling AIADMK's ally Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) have criticised the nomination of JNU vice-chancellor M Jagadeesh Kumar as head of the vice-chancellor search panel for the University of Madras.

Governor Banwarilal Purohit, the Chancellor of the University of Madras, has nominated Kumar to the search panel as incumbent vice-chancellor P Duraisamy's tenure is ending in May.

In a statement on Thursday, DMK leader M K Stalin said nominating Kumar to lead the vice-chancellor search panel sets a wrong precedent.

"I condemn Governor's decision to nominate JNU vice-chancellor M Jagadeesh Kumar as the head of the vice-chancellor search panel... This is a wrong precedent as the post is seen almost as a reward to the vice-chancellor, who displayed negligence during the brutal attack on the JNU students," Stalin said.

"I appeal to the Governor to nominate a qualified academician from Tamil Nadu to head

the vice-chancellor search panel of Madras University," he said.

PMK founder S Ramadoss too criticised Kumar's nomination, saying that the practice of handing over Tamil Nadu's higher education institutions to personnel from other states is "dangerous".

"It looks like Jagadeesh Kumar has been nominated as the head of the Madras University vice-chancellor search panel with an intention of appointing someone from other states... Are there no qualified academicians in the state to nominate the vice-chancellor?" he said.

CBI files case in UP EPF scam

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

The CBI has registered a case in connection with the alleged Rs 2,267-crore Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) scam in Uttar Pradesh.

The case, where savings of power sector employees had been invested in the beleaguered Dewan Housing Finance Corporation (DHFL), had been first registered by UP Police. It was later referred to the CBI by the state government.

secretary of the UP State Power Sector Employees' Trust, and Sudhanshu Dwivedi, former director, finance, of the Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited (UPPCL), have been named as accused for criminal breach of trust, cheating and forgery. Both were arrested by the Hazratganj police last November, CBI sources said.

DHFL came in the eye of the storm after a report suggested that the firm, through a maze of shell companies, had siphoned off Rs 31,000 crore out of total bank loans of Rs 97,000 crore.

Provident funds of UPPCL

employees were being invested in FDs of nationalised banks till October 2016. On a proposal by Gupta and former UPPCL managing director A P Mishra, the investment of funds started in PNB Housing since December 2016, according to the officials.

From March 2017 to December 2018, Gupta, after getting an endorsement from Dwivedi, violated Central government guidelines and invested over 50 per cent of funds in DHFL, the FIR stated.

A total of Rs 4,122.70 crore was invested in DHFL, of which Rs 2,267.90 crore is outstanding.

Chhattisgarh: Probe finds gram sabha that cleared iron ore mine illegal

GARGI VERMA RAIPUR, MARCH 6

THE CHHATTISGARH government has found in a probe that the gram sabha held in Dantewada's Hiroli village in 2014 to get clearance for an iron ore mine in the area was declared void after an investigation.

On the basis of a report filed by Dantewada collector on March 5 this year, the government has issued a showcause notice to NCL, a joint venture of National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) and Chhattisgarh Mineral Development Corporation (CMDC) chaired by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel.

The state government has asked NCL about the iron ore deposit number 13, for which the gram sabha was held. Deposit number 13 was handed over to Adani

Enterprises in 2018 and was the first iron ore mine acquired by Adani as Mine Developer and Operator.

After over 2,000 villagers from Dantewada, Bijapur and Sukma protested against the move, claiming that the mining site was a place of worship and denying that they gave consent, Chief Minister Baghel directed that work be stopped and ordered an inquiry in June 2019.

In an official letter in July 2019, the forest department asked Dantewada collector to enquire about the gram sabha. In the report to the forest department on March 5, 2020, the collector said the gram sabha was declared ab initio void.

The collector submitted that he found that no gram sabha was held on July 4, 2014 as claimed by then panchayat secretary Prasant Kumar Nayak. "Only 109 people including the sarpanch were shown to attend the gramsabha out of 806 reg-

istered residents of the village, which is against the rule of having at least one-third of the villagers at the sabha," the report stated.

The report also claimed that out of those shown to have attended the gram sabha, eight attendees had died before July 4, 2014. The report also denied Nayak's claim that there was an attempt to hold a gram sabha on July 1 before the sabha on July 4. "Based on the statements of the villagers and the sarpanch, it is clear that neither rules were followed, nor were the sabhas held," the report said.

Based on this report, the upper secretary of Chhattisgarh government's mining department issued a notice on March 5 to the NCL, asking them to come for a hearing on March 13. "The said mine was supposed to fulfil the iron ore needs of the local businesses in the state. But no production has

taken place since 2017, when the mine was handed over to you," the notice read.

According to sources in the government, after the gram sabha was declared void, the entire process would be marked null and void. "The mining permits will be lapsed since the rules were not followed. The entire process of acquiring iron ore deposit number 13 will have to be restarted," a senior officer said.

While work at the site was stopped after the villagers' protest in June 2019, Sanyukt Panchayat Jan Sangharsh Samiti members claim that they have been kept in the dark. "We were told at the time of protests that the enquiry report will be given to us too. However, as of now, no reports have been given to us. We have submitted an application in this matter," activist Soni Sori said.

The NMDC officials could not be reached for comment.

Security focus lacking in tech development: NTR0 chief

KARISHMA MEHROTRA PANAJI, MARCH 6

ALTHOUGH INDIA is the fifth most important target of cyber threats, the country does not focus enough on security during the technology development process, National Technical Research Organisation (NTR0) chairman Satish Chandra Jha told an audience of cyber security experts at the cyber security Nulcon conference at Dona Paula in Goa.

"What is the difference between Israel and the rest of the world?... Any product they develop they do consider the security of the product... Unfortunately, in our country, whenever we plan something, a majority of our industries have never kept security as a very, very important factor," said the IPS officer.

NTR0, established in 2004, is housed under the National Security Advisor in the Prime Minister's Office and focuses on intelligence gathering. Under the agency is the National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC) which focuses on threats to information infrastructure.

The NTR0 chairman, also a former Special Director in the Intelligence Bureau, said India needs to be more proactive to common cyber threats, such as data breaches, supply chain contamination and "malicious actors using social media for violent extremist ideologies".

"There is hardly any coordination among nations on how to police cyber space. And messaging applications complicate the problem even more," Jha said.

Another NTR0 official, Major General Sandeep Sharma, said cyber tactics have become more state-sponsored but executed by non-state actors in locations outside their home countries, making attribution difficult.

(The correspondent was in Goa at the invitation of Nulcon Conference)

कार्यालय निदेशक, मानसिक स्वास्थ्य संस्थान एवं चिकित्सालय, आगरा. Tender Ref. No. JMC/NIT-20/DRUGS/02 Date: 07.03.2020. TENDER FOR RATE CONTRACT FOR MEDICINES.

JHARKHAND MEDICAL & HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT & PROCUREMENT CORPORATION LTD. TENDER FOR RATE CONTRACT FOR MEDICINES. The Managing Director, JMHIDPCL, Namkum, Ranchi hereby invites separate Technical and Commercial Bids (Two Envelope System) through e-tender from eligible manufacturers for RATE CONTRACT FOR MEDICINES.

Haryana Waqf Board. Notice Inviting Bids. The Haryana Waqf Board invites bids from the prospective lessees under Rule (6) of the Waqf Properties Lease Rules, 2014 as amended by the Waqf Properties Lease (Amendment) Rules, 2015.

Table with 10 columns: Sl. No., Name of Work, Particulars, Details. Includes information about lease contracts for various properties in Haryana.

Table with 4 columns: Sr. No., Name of the Waqf Office, Name of the Estate Officer, Address & Tel. No. Lists various waqf offices and their details.

The interested persons may enquire the terms & conditions of the bids from the concerned Estate Officers and may quote their rates for lease of waqf properties under Sealed Cover superscribing 'Application for Bid of Waqf Property (Sr. No. of property mentioned in the advertisement)' shall be drop by 18.03.2020 at 1.00 PM.

Reports of dozens of hunger deaths wrong: JMM govt

ABHISHEK ANGAD RANCHI, MARCH 6

THE HEMANT SOREN-LED JMM government, which made hunger deaths in Jharkhand a key plank of its poll campaign, Friday told the Assembly that reports of a dozen people dying in the state due to hunger were incorrect.

This position was taken by Minister of Food, Public Distribution and Consumer Affairs Rameshwar Oraon in reply to a question by the CPI(ML).

Before coming to power, Soren had criticised the then BJP government multiple times, especially on social media, over "hunger deaths".

After being elected, his government had said no one would die of hunger in the state. The issue of these deaths had also been taken up by several Congress leaders, including Jharkhand Congress In-Charge RPN Singh and then JPCC President Ajoy Kumar.

On Friday, CPI(ML) MLA Vinod Singh asked in the Assembly if it was correct that in the last five years more than a dozen people "died due to hunger and malnutrition" as they did not receive ration through the Public Distribution System. In his reply, Oraon denied it, saying "Aswikaratmak (not correct/not accepted)".

If the deaths did take place, Singh's question continued, then does the government intend to give ration and compensation to the families of the deceased? If not, then why?, it concluded.

To this, the reply did not answer on the compensation to the deceased, but went on to explain that the government had achieved 99.6% of the total target of providing ration cards in the state.

In the reply documents of the Jharkhand Assembly, the responses given are: 'Swikaratmak (correct/accepted)', 'Anshik Swikaratmak (partially unacceptable)' and 'Aswikaratmak'.

When contacted, MLA Vinod Singh said: "The government's answer was opposite of what they had been saying all along. I

will raise the issue again." Oraon's phone remained switched off.

On Friday's development, Congress Spokesperson Alok Dubey said he was not aware of the reply in the Assembly. "Hunger deaths happened in the state and we have protested over it," he added.

Rights body Jharkhand Janadhikar Mahasabha, which carried out a fact-finding mission in several deaths, said: "The Jharkhand food minister denied starvation deaths in the last five years. What happened to all the starvation cases that were repeatedly raised by Hemant Soren?"

BJP spokesperson Pratul Shahdeo said that Congress and JMM came to power lying to the people. "They repeatedly accused BJP government over hunger deaths and politicised the issue. Now they themselves admitted it (that there was no hunger death), Were they lying then," he said.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER TRIPURA LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT AGENCY ASTABAL: AGARTALA. Notice Inviting e-tender (e-NIT).

e-tender is hereby invited on behalf of the Governor of Tripura from the reported, bonafide, resourceful, registered suppliers or their local authorized distributors from outside of states to be supplied of 3,12,000 doses of sex sorted semen in phase manner during the year 2020-21.

The details of the tender, quantity, specification and tender documents are made available in the website (http://tripuratenders.gov.in and arddtripura.nic.in) also in the news portal of Tripura www.tripurainfo.com. The last date/time of submission of the tender documents by online is on 16.03.2020.

All future modification/ corrigendum shall be made in the e-procurement portal. So bidders are requested to get update themselves from the e-procurement web portal only.

(D.K. Chakma) Chief Executive Officer Tripura Livestock Development Agency Astabal, Agartala

IN THE HIGH COURT OF BOMBAY NOTICE NO. A.5504/2020 ADVERTISEMENT FOR INVITING ONLINE APPLICATIONS FOR THE POST OF DISTRICT JUDGE IN THE STATE OF MAHARASHTRA.

THE High Court of Judicature at Bombay has invited online applications in the prescribed format for filling up 07 posts of the District Judge, in the State of Maharashtra. The details regarding scale of pay, qualifications, experience, age etc. are given in the advertisement which can be downloaded from the Official website of the High Court i.e. https://bombayhighcourt.nic.in from 7th March, 2020 after 11.00 a.m. The application should be submitted online through the above mentioned website only till 27th March, 2020 upto 5.00 p.m., after which web link will be disabled.

Mumbai (S. B. Agrawal) Registrar General, High Court, Mumbai. DGIPR 2019/2020/5325

TAMIL NADU STATE AGRICULTURAL MARKETING BOARD Short Tender Notice No. T.33/DO/F.1157/2019/Dated.06.03.2020. Lumpsum Contract (Two Cover system).

TAMIL NADU SLUM CLEARANCE BOARD CHENNAI CIRCLE-II NOTICE INVITING SHORT-TENDER. For and on behalf of the Government of Tamil Nadu, sealed short-tender consisting of two separate sealed covers one for Pre-qualification and another for Price Bid.

Table with 5 columns: Sr. No., NAME OF WORK (ESTIMATE NO), Approximate Total Contracting (Rs. in Lakhs), EMD (Rs. in Lakhs), To whom EMD / Schedule cost to be drawn. Lists construction work estimates.

JHARKHAND MEDICAL & HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT & PROCUREMENT CORPORATION LTD. TENDER FOR RATE CONTRACT FOR MEDICINES.

HARYANA GOVERNMENT TENDER NOTICE. Table with 6 columns: Sr. No., NAME OF BOARD/CORP/AUTH, NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER, OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME), AMOUNT/EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES, WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP/AUTH, NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL.

# RBU V-C resigns after uproar over distortion of Tagore songs

**SANTANU CHOWDHURY**  
KOLKATA, MARCH 6

THE VICE-CHANCELLOR of Kolkata-based Rabindra Bharati University (RBU) resigned on Friday night after photographs of some youngsters purportedly posing on campus with distorted lyrics of Rabindranath Tagore's songs written on their bodies triggered an uproar, according to sources. One of the photographs doing the rounds on social media shows four women posing with their backs to the camera. Written on their backs using *abir* (coloured powder) is a combination of cuss words and lyrics from a Rabindra Sangeet—songs written and composed by Tagore.

This and several similar photographs were reportedly clicked during the Basanto Utsav organised on the university campus on Thursday.

Sources said vice-chancellor Sabyasachi Basu Roychowdhury has taken moral responsibility for the incident and sent his resignation to state Education Minister Partha Chatterjee, West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar, who is also RBU's chancellor, and Higher Education Department secretary R S Shukla. Despite repeated attempts, the vice-chancellor was not available for comments.

Chatterjee, however, said he will not accept the resignation. "I want to know why he has tendered his resignation. I have not received the resignation yet. If I receive it, I will not accept it," he said.

Earlier in the day, RBU vice-chancellor Roychowdhury said, "It is very unfortunate that some students made efforts to degrade the culture of the university... We have lodged a complaint with the police who will now verify the pictures, identify the persons involved and take action accordingly. We will discuss this issue in our internal meeting and take a decision on whether to hold the spring festival in the future... However, none of these men and women are university students. They are outsiders."

Following the police complaint, five of the six accused persons went to the university and apologised to the authorities and the student council.

# Two teens convicted in Pehlu Khan lynching case

**DEEP MUKHERJEE**  
JAIPUR, MARCH 6

TWO TEENAGERS accused in the Pehlu Khan lynching case, who were minors at the time of the crime, were convicted by the Juvenile Justice Board in Rajasthan's Alwar district on Thursday.

Inspector General of Police, Jaipur Range, S Sengathir told *The Indian Express* on Friday that while the two juvenile accused were found guilty by the board on Thursday, their sentencing is likely to be pronounced on Saturday.

The development is significant as these are the first convictions in the case. In August last year, the court of the additional district judge number 1 in Alwar had acquitted all the six men who were accused of assaulting and murdering Khan and had given them the benefit of doubt. Back then the court had observed that the Rajasthan Police probe had "serious shortcomings".

Since then the Ashok Gehlot-led Congress government has filed an appeal against the Alwar court's verdict in the Rajasthan High Court.

Before these two accused were found guilty on Thursday, no person has been convicted for the murder of Khan.

The case against another minor accused is currently under trial in a juvenile court in Alwar. "This conviction will bolster the arguments of the government in the appeal which is currently in the High Court," said Major R P Singh, additional advocate general, Rajasthan.

Khan, 55, his two sons and two companions were assaulted by self-styled cow vigilantes in Behror while transporting cattle on April 1, 2017, with a video of the assault going viral on the social media.

Khan had succumbed to his injuries two days later, with the event resulting in nationwide outrage and drawing sharp criticism for the then BJP government in Rajasthan led by Vasundhara Raje.



**Pehlu Khan was assaulted by self-styled cow vigilantes in Behror on April 1, 2017.**

the murder of Khan.

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# Bhima Koregaon: SC extends protection from arrest to Navlakha, Teltumbde

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Friday extended till March 16 the interim protection from arrest granted to civil rights activists Gautam Navlakha and Anand Teltumbde in connection with the Bhima Koregaon violence case.

A bench of Justices Arun Mishra and Indira Banerjee said it would hear on March 16 the appeals filed by Navlakha and Teltumbde against a Bombay High Court order rejecting their anticipatory bail pleas.

The high court, while refusing to grant anticipatory bail to Navlakha and Teltumbde on February 14, had extended their interim protection from arrest for a period of four weeks to enable them to approach the apex court. Senior advocates Kapil Sibal and AM Singhvi, appearing for the activists, told the apex court that the protection granted to them by the high court would expire on March 14 and the top court should extend it.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta informed the bench that probe in the Bhima Koregaon violence case has been transferred to the NIA. "We have not received any such notice," Singhvi said. To this, the bench told Sibal and Singhvi that they can implead the NIA as a party in the case. **PTI**

**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH, TIRUPATI**  
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IISER Tirupati invites online applications from Indian nationals having excellent academic record and relevant work experience for the post of "Private Secretary" on contractual basis.

For detailed advertisement, please visit [www.iisertirupati.ac.in](http://www.iisertirupati.ac.in) and click on the link "Opportunities-Technical/Administration".

The last date for submission of online applications is **April 22, 2020**.

Advt. No. 09/2020/IISER-T/Rect./06.03.2020 Sd/- Registrar

**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH, TIRUPATI**  
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For detailed advertisement, please visit [www.iisertirupati.ac.in](http://www.iisertirupati.ac.in) and click on the link "Opportunities-Technical/Administration".

The last date for submission of online applications is **April 22, 2020**.

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Note - Regarding the advertisement published in newspapers by this school on 2 February 2020, the candidates who have applied for the above posts need not apply again.

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हद्विहार  
चिन कोड - 249404

पत्रांक : 298/03(05)/डीआर/डिजी/सोवा-02/2017-18  
दिनांक : 06 मार्च, 2020

**विज्ञापित**

एतद्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि उत्तराखण्ड लोक सेवा आयोग द्वारा प्रकाशित विज्ञापन संख्या: 01/03/डीआर/सोवा-2/2017-18 दिनांक 04 अगस्त, 2017 से विज्ञापित अधिसूचित प्रोफेसर (अर्थशास्त्र) को शिफ्ट 04 एवं 03 अप्रैल, 2020 निर्धारित की गयी है। अर्ह अर्थशास्त्र अनुकूलकवार साक्षात्कार कार्यक्रम व साक्षात्कार ज्ञाप दिनांक 24 मार्च, 2020 (मंगलवार) से आयोग की वेबसाइट [www.ukpsc.gov.in](http://www.ukpsc.gov.in) से ज्ञानलोक कर सकते है। अर्ह अर्थशास्त्र को सूची व विस्तृत विवरण आयोग की वेबसाइट [www.ukpsc.gov.in](http://www.ukpsc.gov.in) पर उपलब्ध है। (राजेश कुमार) सचिव।

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**Recruitment to the post of Joint Commissioner (Finance) in Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan to be filled through Direct Recruitment**

Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India invites applications for direct recruitment to one post of Joint Commissioner (Finance) in Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (HQ), New Delhi in the Pay Level- 13 (Rs. 123100-215900/-) plus allowances as applicable. For detailed eligibility criteria and application format, refer to KVS website: [kvsangathan.nic.in](http://kvsangathan.nic.in).

**JOINT COMMISSIONER (ADMIN.)**

**एनटीपीसी NTPC Limited**  
(A Govt. of India Enterprise)

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Email: [isd@ntpc.co.in](mailto:isd@ntpc.co.in), Website: [www.ntpc.co.in](http://www.ntpc.co.in)

**ATTENTION VALUED SHAREHOLDERS OF NTPC LTD.**

Pursuant to Section 124(5) of the Companies Act, 2013 and the Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (Accounting, Audit, Transfer and Refund) Rules, 2016, (IEPF Rules 2016), a Company is required to transfer the amounts of unpaid dividend remaining unpaid and unclaimed for a period of seven (7) years from the date of transfer of such amount to Unpaid Dividend Account to the credit of the Investor Education and Protection Fund (Fund) set up by the Central Government.

Further, pursuant to Section 124(8) of the Companies Act, 2013 and IEPF Rules, 2016, all shares in respect of which dividend has not been paid or claimed for seven consecutive years or more, shall also be transferred to IEPF Account.

In respect of shares for which dividend had remained unclaimed or unpaid for seven consecutive years till October 2019 had already been transferred to the IEPF Authority's Demat Account. Details of such holders is available on the website of the Company at [www.ntpc.co.in](http://www.ntpc.co.in).

The interim dividend for the financial year 2012-13 @ Rs. 3.75 per equity share was paid on 12.03.2013. As per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, the unpaid and unclaimed amounts of aforesaid dividend has not been paid or claimed for transfer to Fund on 01.05.2020. The corresponding shares of the holders who have not encashed/claimed their dividend for seven consecutive years are also liable to be transferred to IEPF Authority's Demat Account.

Shareholders may please note that if any amount/shares are transferred to the Fund, then the same has to be claimed from Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority following the procedure as provided under IEPF Rules, 2016. To avoid the inconvenience of claiming the refund/shares from Investor Education and Protection Fund, shareholders who have not received/claimed dividend under 'Investors' Section of relating to the interim dividend for financial year 2012-13 paid in March 2013 may lodge their claims with the RTA i.e. Alankit Assignments Ltd. (Unit: NTPC Ltd.), Alankit Heights, 1E/13, Jhandewalan Extension, New Delhi - 110055 Tel.: (011)-4254 1956, 4254 1966, Fax: (011) - 4154 3474 and Email: [alankit\\_ntpc@alankit.com](mailto:alankit_ntpc@alankit.com) or with the Dy. Nodal Officer, Investor Services Department, NTPC Ltd. at the address indicated above. Shareholders may kindly ensure that claim, if any, is received by the RTA/NTPC Ltd. on or before 31.03.2020 to ensure that unclaimed/unpaid dividend amount and shares are not transferred to the Fund.

Shareholder(s) may refer to 'IEPF Details' under 'Investors' Section of the website: [www.ntpc.co.in](http://www.ntpc.co.in) for further information with respect to unclaimed/unpaid dividend/shares due to be transferred to IEPF Account.

Subsequent last dates for lodging claims for unpaid/unclaimed dividend and shares to IEPF are as under:-

Financial Year	Nature of Dividend	Dividend%	Last dates of lodging claims
2012-13	Final	20.00%	16.10.2020
2013-14	Interim	40.00%	05.03.2021
2013-14	Final	17.50%	01.10.2021

NTPC Ltd. had also issued Tax-Free Bonds - 2013, Tax-Free Bonds - 2015 and Bonus Debentures. As on date, refund of application money for Tax Free Bonds and Bonus Debentures are lying unclaimed. Investors are also requested to check the details of such shareholders/unclaimed Debentures/claimed 'Investors' Section of the website: [www.ntpc.co.in](http://www.ntpc.co.in) and lodge the claim with KFin Technologies Private Limited (RTA for Tax Free Bonds and Bonus Debentures) at Karvy's Selenium Tower B, Plot No. 31 & 32, Gachibowli Financial District, Nanakramguda, Serilingampally, Hyderabad-500008 Phone No. 040-67161518; Fax: (+91 40) 2343 1551 and Email: [ainward.ris@karvy.com](mailto:ainward.ris@karvy.com) or with the Dy. Nodal Officer, Investor Services Department, NTPC Ltd.

Shareholder(s) are requested to keep their email ID and other relevant details updated with their Depository Participant (DP), in case of shares held in dematerialized form and with the Company/ RTA, in case of shares held in physical form.

For and on behalf of NTPC Ltd. Sd/- (Nandini Sarkar) Company Secretary

Date: 06.03.2020  
Place: New Delhi

**Leading the Power Sector**

**NEW DELHI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**  
**PALIKA KENDRA, SANSAD MARG, NEW DELHI-110001**  
Website: [www.ndmc.gov.in](http://www.ndmc.gov.in)

## PUBLIC NOTICE REQUEST FOR PUBLIC RESPONSE

### Petition for Approval of True Up for FY 2018-19, Revised ARR for 2019-20 along with ARR and Determination of Tariff for FY 2020-21

- New Delhi Municipal Council (hereinafter referred to as "NDMC") has filed petition before the Hon'ble Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (hereinafter referred to as "Commission") for True-up of ARR of FY 2018-19, revised Aggregate Revenue Requirement for 2019-20 and Aggregate Revenue Requirement & Determination of Tariff for FY 2020-21 on January 13, 2020 under the provisions of the Electricity Act, 2003, and the provisions of the DERC (Terms and Conditions for Determination of Tariff) Regulations, 2017 vide notification dated 31st January, 2017.
- The salient features of Petition are provided below:

**Table 1: Summary of ARR and Revenues for NDMC at existing Retail Supply Tariff (RST)**

S. No.	Particulars	Units	FY 2018-19	FY 2020-21
A.	Energy Input for sale to consumers	MU	1446.18	1500.13
B.	Energy Billed	MU	1357.05	1357.22
C.	AT&C losses for the year	%	6.87%	10.43%
E.	Power Purchase (includes Transmission) Cost	Rs. Crore	964.18	956.90
F.	O&M Expenses	Rs. Crore	236.86	264.18
G.	Depreciation	Rs. Crore	33.13	35.50
H.	RoCE (Return + Interest)	Rs. Crore	53.73	53.79
I.	Administrative Dept. & Civil Engg. Dept Expenses	Rs. Crore	45.17	45.17
J.	Income Tax	Rs. Crore	0	0
K.	Less: Non-Tariff Income	Rs. Crore	0	2.93
L.	Aggregate Revenue Requirement	Rs. Crore	1333.07	1352.61
M.	Revenue available at existing tariff	Rs. Crore	1325.08	1296.09
N.	Revenue Gap/ Surplus at Existing Tariff	Rs. Crore	-7.90	-56.52

\* At Discom Periphery

- Recovery of Revenue Gap: As per the ARR and revenue at the existing tariff, NDMC has a revenue gap of Rs 7.90 crore for FY 2018-19 and Rs. 56.52 Crores for FY 2020-21. The above revenue gap is planned to be bridged by proposing revised tariff rates. NDMC proposes to adopt a tariff revision plan wherein, for FY 2020-21, a set of tariff rates for each category of the consumer are proposed so as to bridge the entire revenue gap. NDMC has proposed an average tariff hike of 5.00%. The proposed tariff structure is as follows:

**Table 2: Proposed Revision in Tariff for FY 2020-21**

S. No.	Category	Energy Sales	Revenue at Existing Tariff	Average Rate at Existing Tariff	Hike in Existing Tariff	Revised Revenue Proposed	Average Billing Rate as per Proposed Tariff
		MU	Rs.	Rs. /kWh	%	Rs. Crore	Rs. /kWh
1	Domestic	224.50	171.05	7.62	5.00%	179.60	8.00
2	Non-Domestic Low Tension	335.97	331.69	9.87	5.00%	348.27	10.37
3	NDHT	734.08	746.88	10.17	5.00%	784.22	10.68
4	Small Industrial Power	0.03	0.03	10.50	5.00%	0.03	11.02
5	Public Lighting	7.07	4.92	6.96	5.00%	5.17	7.31
6	Others	14.59	13.52	9.27	5.00%	14.19	9.73
7	DMRC	40.97	28.01	6.84	5.00%	29.41	7.18
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,357.21</b>	<b>1,296.09</b>	<b>9.55</b>	<b>5.00%</b>	<b>1,360.90</b>	<b>10.03</b>

- Performance of NDMC during FY 2018-19: The AT&C loss level in 2018-19 were 6.87% with a collection efficiency of 99.24%. Going forward, NDMC has proposed AT & C losses of 10.43% for 2020-21.

- In accordance with the provisions of the Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission Comprehensive (Conduct of Business) Regulations, 2001 notified by the Commission, the consumers and stakeholders are requested to submit the response on the above Petition. The response may be sent to the Secretary of the Commission at the following address by 20.03.2020. The response may be submitted personally or by post to the Commission at the address given below. The response can also be e-mailed to the Secretary of the Commission at the e-mail address mentioned below.

**DELHI ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION**  
**Viniyamak Bhawan, C-Block, Shivalik, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi - 110 017.**  
**Email id: [secydcrc@nic.in](mailto:secydcrc@nic.in) Telefax: 011-26673608**

- The Commission would hold public hearings with the responding stakeholders subsequently. The details of the public hearings is submitted as under:

Date	Venue	Time
18/03/2020	NDMC Conventional Centre, Jai Singh Road, New Delhi - 110001	10.30 AM to 01.30 PM 02.30 PM to 05.00 PM

- The complete petition can be downloaded from the website of the commission ([www.derc.gov.in](http://www.derc.gov.in)) and the website of NDMC ([www.ndmc.gov.in](http://www.ndmc.gov.in)). Soft copy of the petition may be obtained in CD on payment of Rs.25/- per CD or hard copy of the petition may be purchased from the Registration Office of NDMC located Palika Kendra, Sansad Marg, New Delhi on working day till 20.03.2020 between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. on payment of Rs. 100/- per Hard Copy either by cash or by Demand Draft/Pay Order in favour of "Secretary, NDMC" payable at New Delhi.

For NDMC  
Sd/-  
Secretary

**PFC CONSULTING LIMITED**  
(A wholly owned subsidiary of PFC Limited)  
Regd. Office: First Floor, 'Urjandhi', 1, Barakhamba Lane, Connaught Place, New Delhi - 110001. Fax: 011-23443990

**GLOBAL INVITATION (THROUGH E-BIDDING ONLY)**  
**FOR SELECTION OF TRANSMISSION SERVICE PROVIDER ON BUILD, OWN, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN (BOOM) BASIS FOR FIVE (5) INTER-STATE TRANSMISSION PROJECTS**

PFC Consulting Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Power Finance Corporation Limited (A Government of India Undertaking), invites proposals for setting up of five (5) transmission projects on Build, Own, Operate and Maintain (BOOM) basis following single stage two envelope process of "Request for Proposal" (RFP).

Interested Bidders may refer to the RFP notifications and RFP documents available on the website <https://www.mstccommerce.com> and [www.pfcindia.com](http://www.pfcindia.com)

The Bidders may obtain RFP documents on all working days between 10:30 hrs. (IST) and 16:00 hrs. (IST) from 06.03.2020 to one working day prior to bid submission for each project on payment of a non-refundable fee of ₹ 5,00,000/- or USD 7,000 plus applicable GST @ 18% in the form of demand draft in favour of "PFC Consulting Limited" payable at New Delhi, from 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Wing - A, Statesman House, Barakhamba Road, Connaught Place, New Delhi - 110001. Tel.: 91-11-23443923/25; Fax: 91-11-23443990; e-mail: [pfccl@pfcindia.com](mailto:pfccl@pfcindia.com). The RFP documents can also be downloaded from <https://www.mstccommerce.com> and [www.pfcindia.com](http://www.pfcindia.com), however, in such case, interested party can submit Responses to RFP only on submission of non-refundable fee of ₹ 5,00,000/- or USD 7,000 plus applicable GST @ 18% as mentioned above separately. The survey report & clarifications to RFP documents shall be issued to those bidders, who have obtained/purchased RFP document by paying requisite fee atleast one working day prior to bid submission date. Bidders should regularly visit website to keep themselves updated regarding clarifications / amendments / time extensions, etc., if any. The important timelines in this regard are as follows:

S. No.	Name of Transmission Scheme	Last Date for seeking clarifications (dd/mm/yyyy)	Last Date for submission of Response to RFP (dd/mm/yyyy)	Date of opening of Response to RFP (dd/mm/yyyy)
1.	Transmission system for Solar Energy Zone in Ananthapuram (Ananthapur) (2500 MW) and Kurnool (1000 MW), Andhra Pradesh	26/03/2020	08/05/2020 upto 1100 hrs. (IST)	1130 hrs. (IST)
2.	Transmission system strengthening scheme for evacuation of power from solar energy zones in Rajasthan (8.1 GW) under Phase-II-Part D	26/03/2020	08/05/2020 upto 1200 hrs. (IST)	08/05/2020 upto 1230 hrs. (IST)
3.	Transmission system strengthening scheme for evacuation of power from solar energy zones in Rajasthan (8.1 GW) under Phase-II-Part E	26/03/2020	08/05/2020 upto 1400 hrs. (IST)	08/05/2020 upto 1430 hrs. (IST)
4.	Transmission system strengthening scheme for evacuation of power from solar energy zones in Rajasthan (8.1 GW) under Phase-II-Part F	26/03/2020	08/05/2020 upto 1500 hrs. (IST)	08/05/2020 upto 1530 hrs. (IST)
5.	Transmission system strengthening scheme for evacuation of power from solar energy zones in Rajasthan (8.1 GW) under Phase-II-Part G	26/03/2020	08/05/2020 upto 1600 hrs. (IST)	08/05/2020 upto 1630 hrs. (IST)

Note: PFC Consulting Limited reserves the right to cancel or modify the process without assigning any reason and without any liability. This is not an offer.

**PFC Consulting Limited**  
(A Wholly owned Subsidiary of Power Finance Corporation Ltd. - A Govt. of India Undertaking)  
Registered Office: First Floor 'Urjandhi', 1, Barakhamba Lane, Connaught Place, New Delhi 110001, India

Bid Process Coordinator: PFC CONSULTING LTD. (A wholly owned subsidiary of PFC Ltd.) (A Govt. of India Undertaking)

An Initiative of: Ministry of Power, Government of India

Initiative Partner: Central Electricity Authority



**CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK**  
 YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED DAILY

**If you have planned a holiday abroad, should you cancel?**

**ABANTIKA GHOSH**

THE ANSWER is obviously "Yes" if your vacation destination happens to be China, Italy, Japan, South Korea, or Iran. The government has advised citizens to refrain from travelling to these countries. China is the epicentre of the outbreak — and the other four countries are among the worst affected.

As of Friday, more than 1,00,600 individuals have been sickened, and at least 3,404 have died, according to official counts. All but 362 of these deaths have occurred in mainland China. Italy, Iran, South Korea, and Japan have seen 148, 124, 42, and 8 deaths respectively.

The government advisory has also asked citizens to avoid non-essential travel to all COVID-19 affected countries. That would mean at least 83 countries as of now, on every continent barring Antarctica. In the United States, 231 cases have been detected and 12 deaths have occurred so far.

What about countries other than these 80-odd?

If your plans are for the summer holidays, that's still more than two months away — and it is not clear how the situation will change from now to then. If you need to soon take a call on reservations and bookings, the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) helpline will leave the decision to you; however, officials advise



At Haneda airport, Tokyo. Reuters

off the record that it might be a good idea to avoid non-essential travel anywhere outside the country.

"You will be in an aircraft with people from multiple countries, whose travel and contact histories you will not know. Since there is no screening before boarding a flight, there is no way to tell if a passenger is already unwell," a senior NCDC official said.

Dr Randeep Guleria, respiratory medicine specialist and Director, AIIMS, said: "As of now some countries are relatively safe, but as we have seen over the last two-three weeks, the disease has spread rapidly and the infection has dramatically increased in countries like Italy and South Korea. Unless one is willing to take the risk, I would say wait and watch for at least another 10 days."

Travelling inside the country is safe as of now, Dr Guleria said. "There have been no clusters of infection, nor any evidence of sustained human to human spread within the country," he said.

**Are biometric attendance machines, in use at many workplaces, safe?**

NO, they are not. The virus is currently spreading the most and fastest through infected surfaces — and in workplaces that employ a large number of individuals, biometric attendance machines are among the most touched surfaces, along with door handles, tabletops, etc.

The Delhi government on Thursday issued an advisory asking for the suspension of biometric atten-

dance for some days. Doctors said organisations should consider going back temporarily to traditional attendance registers; where that is not possible, employers should put a bottle of hand sanitiser — one containing at least 60% alcohol — next to the biometric machine and advise all their employees to disinfect their hands before and after punching in or punching out.



After Wednesday, when 23 cases were reported, the last two days have not seen any spurt in infections. This is good news — even though it may be only a temporary lull. Wednesday's figure was due to 16 infections in a single group.

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

**SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER**

**Putting a cost to coronavirus**

The outbreak has affected travel to and from many countries, industrial activity and global supply chains. How do economists estimate the cost of an outbreak of this kind for national and global economies?

**NUSHAIBA IQBAL**  
 NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

NITROGEN DIOXIDE levels fell dramatically in China as a result of industrial activity and travel coming to a standstill after the coronavirus outbreak. Airline fares have fallen as people avoid travel for fear of infection. With new cases being reported from Eastern Europe and Palestine, the disease has now reached every inhabited continent.

While it may be difficult to arrive at an agreed upon number for the cost of the outbreak — given the issues around a "statistical value of human life" and the uncertainty associated with viral diseases — the mildest global pandemic can be expected to wipe out at least 1% of the world's GDP, experts say. How do economists arrive at such numbers, and why are there inconsistencies?

**In what way does the outbreak of disease affect the economy?**

To prevent the spread of a disease, the authorities in an affected country can ask people to remain home, as they did in China. Along with industrial activity, retail outlets and restaurants also see a reduction in their business. Foreign governments may issue advisories asking people to avoid unnecessary travel to an affected country, such as those issued by the US, UK, and India to their citizens. Thus, the affected country sees a reduction in economic activity. The World Bank's 2008 report (published after the SARS outbreak of 2004) said that about 60% of all economic loss during a flu outbreak will be as a consequence of "panicky efforts of individuals to avoid being affected".

Globalisation has ensured that supply chains worldwide are interconnected significantly. Thus, as production has slowed in China, Indian manufacturers that source intermediate goods like components of electrical and electronic equipment have had to stop producing, or to find other suppliers. Even if alternative supply channels can be established in time to prevent a disruption, manufacturers have to invest considerable resources, for which they may have to increase prices to cover their additional costs.



At the tourist hotspot of St Mark's Square, Venice, on Thursday, which used to be full of visitors from all over the world until the outbreak hit Italy. Reuters

The cost of providing treatment to the sick, and preventing the spread of a disease imposes additional costs on the economy. In poor countries where healthcare systems are weak to begin with, the cost of treatment during an outbreak is even higher — and the little that they can afford to spend may not be enough. The Global Preparedness Monitoring Board — an independent body that works to ensure preparedness in health crises — noted in its 2019 report that "communities that cannot care for a pregnant woman and her newborn child cannot protect against a disease outbreak". Poor countries with little state capacity report higher mortality and higher GDP losses even if they step up spending during outbreaks.

**How do economists calculate the cost of an epidemic?**

Most often, historical data on deaths and losses to production during epidemics are used to predict the cost of present and future epidemics. Models are prepared using past data, and are then fed information about the

present to arrive at the cost. Estimates of the exact cost can differ depending on the characterisation of the risk level or the assessment of the improvements in the healthcare infrastructure.

In one model, economists draw from actuarial sciences to determine the cost of an epidemic. These models are "stochastic", which means that they consider the random nature of the virus outbreak. To put it simply, since the severity (in terms of mortality) and duration of the outbreak are not known with certainty, probabilities associated with different levels of severity and durations are used to arrive at a monetary value of the outbreak.

Others adopt more sophisticated techniques, making use of dynamic macroeconomic and microeconomic models to capture the interlinked supply chains that are the norm today. They incorporate information on the output of various sectors of production in multiple countries, labour market conditions (restrictions on movement and wages) in the countries, fiscal responses to outbreaks, taxes, etc. Behavioural changes

of consumers — avoiding sectors such as travel and tourism — are also modelled.

**What are the differences between the two models?**

The most obvious difference is in their "unit" of observation — the risk-return models developed by actuaries aggregate the loss of income from individuals affected by the disease, whereas the dynamic models assess losses incurred by each sector and then calculate the impact felt by each country.

In addition, dynamic models require more data — and consequently more computation power.

In 2016, Lawrence Summers, a former World Bank chief economist, and other economists demonstrated a risk-return model in a paper to calculate the "inclusive" cost of a pandemic. They used records of excess deaths and income loss in each age group to determine the cost of the pandemic. This cost included the intrinsic cost of premature mortality and illness, and was estimated to be around \$490 billion (about 0.62% of global GDP in 2013).

Using the dynamic model, two Australian National University researchers estimated that the mildest flu outbreak could reduce global GDP by 0.8% (\$330 billion in 2006). More severe epidemics will result in higher losses — an epidemic of the scale and intensity of the 1918 Spanish Influenza outbreak will cause a global GDP loss of \$4.4 trillion.

**Are there any projections for what an outbreak can cost India?**

The Australian National University researchers projected that in the event of a pandemic, India's economic growth will suffer a considerable setback.

India relies on imports for a variety of raw materials for industries ranging from pharmaceuticals to telecommunications, making it vulnerable to supply shocks anywhere in the world. In addition, the report notes that India has not conducted the voluntary Joint External Examination that the WHO recommends to improve a country's response to a public health emergency. Individual states may differ, however — as seen in Kerala's timely response to the outbreak of the nipah virus.

**How information can be an epidemic too**

**KARISHMA MEHROTRA**  
 NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

THE CORONAVIRUS outbreak has been accompanied by a spurt of information across social media, a lot of it false or misguided. While the World Health Organisation (WHO) is yet to label the outbreak a "pandemic", it has labelled the spread of information a "massive 'infodemic' — an overabundance of information — some accurate and some not — that makes it hard for people to find trustworthy sources and reliable guidance when they need it".

This is not the first time that a global outbreak has been accompanied by misinformed claims on social media. But while this happened mostly on Facebook during previous outbreaks, the emergence of WhatsApp and the growth of Twitter have amplified such forwards and posts.

During the SARS outbreak in 2003, Twitter, WhatsApp and Facebook were all non-existent. Between the swine flu epidemic of 2009 and the current coronavirus outbreak, Facebook's base has grown seven times globally, Twitter has grown 11 times, and WhatsApp, which was just starting in 2009, has 1.5 billion users today.

**Efforts to bust the myths**

For the first time at such a scale, organisa-

**SOCIAL MEDIA, THEN & NOW**

Year	Outbreak	Facebook	WhatsApp	Twitter
2003	SARS	Did not exist	Did not exist	Did not exist
2009	Swine flu	360 million	Just founded	30 million*
2014	Ebola	1,393 million	600 million	288 million
2019	Coronavirus	2,498 million	1,500 million	330 million

\*At beginning of 2010  
 Source: Statista

tions such as the WHO have had to not only establish their own social media monitoring units and helplines to track the most rampant myths to debunk, but also coordinate with the social media companies to elevate authoritative information on those platforms. Even on the Pinterest platform, searches for coronavirus lead to a WHO mythbusters link; and on WeChat, WHO has a newsfeed in Chinese.

In an explanation on the topic in its March 5 "situation report", WHO announced its "innovative communication initiative called the WHO Network for Information in Epidemics (EPI-WIN)." Through the project, WHO aims to amplify accurate information via "trust chains", or channels through which people seek information.

One example of a chain WHO has lever-

aged is the employer-employee relationship, in which EPI-WIN has partnered with the International Labour Organisation's Bureau of Workers Activities and the International Trade Union Council to disseminate trustworthy information.

**Platforms have pitched in**

Social media platforms have been adding to their lists of efforts to fight the spread of misinformation. Twitter has set up a "dedicated search prompt" in India with a link to the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. The prompt reads "Know the facts". The company also says it will stop any advertisers trying to exploit the outbreak with "inappropriate ads". It has launched similar initiatives in other countries, too.

Google has an "SOS Alert" for those

searching about the virus. Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg wrote in a March 4 post about the efforts that the company was making, including free advertising for WHO and removal of conspiracy theories. Amazon has banned more than one million products that claimed to prevent or cure infection with the virus.

Andrew Pattison, digital solutions manager at WHO, told *The New York Times* that he was visiting and pitching to major companies about collaborative solutions, and gave the example of Airbnb offering advice about the coronavirus outbreak to travellers. The initiatives mark a distinct recognition that the tide of renegade misinformation can no longer be ignored.

**Govts and leaders, too**

It is not just user-generated content that causes the spread of misleading information. In the first days of January, the Wuhan Public Security Bureau dismissed the outbreak as "rumour mongering". On the other side of the world, US President Donald Trump claimed on February 25 that "we're very close to a vaccine" and the WHO mortality rate of 3.4 per cent was a "false number."

A Facebook spokesperson confirmed to *Recode* that the company would remove false claims even if they are shared by politicians or elected officials, if international health organisations flag them.

**When lawyers refuse to defend accused: what is the law, what SC has said**

**SADAF MODAK**  
 MUMBAI, MARCH 6

LAST MONTH, the Karnataka High Court observed that it is unethical and illegal for lawyers to pass resolutions against representing accused in court. This was after local bar associations had objected to four students arrested for sedition being defended in court. The Hubli Bar Association submitted that it would take back a resolution it had passed on February 15; on Friday, the High Court asked the association to place on record a resolution withdrawing the earlier one.

This is not the first time that bar associations have passed such resolutions, despite a Supreme Court ruling that these are "against all norms of the Constitution, the statute and professional ethics".

**What does the Constitution say about the right of an accused to be defended?**

Article 22(1) gives the fundamental

right to every person not to be denied the right to be defended by a legal practitioner of his or her choice. Article 14 provides for equality before the law and equal protection of the laws within the territory of India. Article 39A, part of the Directive Principles of state policy, states that equal opportunity to secure justice must not be denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities, and provides for free legal aid.

**What has the Supreme Court said about such resolutions by bar associations?**

In 2010, a Supreme Court Bench of Justices Markandey Katju and Gyan Sudha Mishra dealt with the illegality of such resolutions (A *Mohammed Rafi vs State of Tamil Nadu*, also referred to by the Karnataka High Court last month).

The 2010 case arose from a confrontation between a lawyer and policemen in Coimbatore in 2006, after which lawyers passed a resolution to not allow any lawyer to represent the police personnel. The

Madras High Court ruled this "unprofessional", after which lawyers appealed in the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court referred to writer Thomas Paine, who had been tried for treason in England in 1792. Thomas Erskine, Attorney General for the Prince of Wales, was warned of dismissal if he defended Paine, but still took up the brief, saying: "...If the advocate refuses to defend from what he may think of the charge or of the defence, he assumes the character of the Judge..." The Supreme Court cited other historical examples of accused being defended — revolutionaries against British rule; alleged assassins of Mahatma Gandhi and Indira Gandhi; Nazi war criminals at the Nuremberg trials.

The Supreme Court ruled: "In our opinion, such resolutions are wholly illegal, against all traditions of the bar and against professional ethics. Every person, however wicked, depraved, vile, degenerate, perverted, loathsome, execrable, vicious or re-

pulsive he may be regarded by society has a right to be defended in a court of law and correspondingly, it is the duty of the lawyer to defend him." It said such resolutions were "against all norms of the Constitution, the statute and professional ethics", called these "a disgrace to the legal community", and declared them null and void.

**How are professional ethics of lawyers defined?**

The Bar Council of India has Rules on Professional Standards, part of the Standards of Professional Conduct and Etiquette to be followed by lawyers under the Advocates Act. An advocate is bound to accept any brief in the courts or tribunals, at a fee consistent with his standing at the Bar and the nature of the case.

The Rules provide for a lawyer refusing to accept a particular brief in "special circumstances". Last year, The Uttarakhand High Court clarified that these special circumstances refer to an individual advocate who

may choose not to appear in a particular case, but who cannot be prohibited from defending an accused by any threat of removal of his membership of the bar association.

**How frequent are resolutions not to defend an accused?**

Various bar associations across the country have passed such resolutions over the years. Among the prominent cases:

■ After the 2008 terror attack in Mumbai, a resolution was passed against representing Ajmal Kasab. A Legal Aid lawyer was assigned the brief but he refused, while another who agreed to defend Kasab faced threats. Subsequently, a lawyer was appointed and given police security.

■ After the 2012 gangrape in Delhi, lawyers in Saket court passed a resolution not to defend the accused.

■ In Hyderabad last year, the Bar Association passed a resolution against representing four men who had been arrested for the rape and murder of a veterinary doc-

tor, and who were later killed in an alleged encounter.

■ In 2017, the Supreme Court directed lawyers of the Gurgaon District Bar Association not to obstruct any lawyer defending the accused in the murder of a seven-year-old schoolboy.

**Have lawyers faced action for such resolutions?**

A writ petition was filed in the Uttarakhand High Court after the Kotdwara Bar Association passed a resolution stating that anyone who represented the accused in the murder case of an advocate would have their membership of the Bar terminated. The court held the resolution null and void. It directed the State Bar Council to initiate action against office-bearers of the Bar Association if such resolutions were passed in the future. It also said that action under Section 15(2) of the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, can be considered against advocates who interrupt court proceedings.



# ‘Growth is important for jobs... If we reach 8-9%, automatically there’ll be employment creation’

What is the nature of India’s current economic slowdown? How did it start, and where is it headed? What did the Union Budget do to address it? PRACHI MISHRA, Goldman Sachs Chief India Economist, explained these and related issues to readers of *The Indian Express* in the course of a conversation with P VAIDYANATHAN IYER in New Delhi last month



## On Budget expectations of growth rate

Typically financial market participants ask three questions on the slowdown: when did it start, how big it is, and why did it happen. In our view, and looking at a host of indicators, this episode of slowdown started around January 2018, much before the NBFC crisis or the ILFS default. The ILFS default and the funding constraints etc. aggravated the slowdown. In our view, the slowdown is about 2-2.5 percentage points relative to the early 2018 phase — that’s the magnitude of the slowdown.

On how it happened — as I said, clearly funding constraints or what happened with the NBFCs was important, but it was definitely not the only cause and the trigger of the slowdown. What most of my research suggests is a combination of factors — global factors and domestic factors such as a sharp decline in consumer confidence and a negative central government fiscal impulse... If you look at the start of the slowdown, early 2018, and now, the central government spending to GDP, that went down and, in addition, there were funding constraints, which contributed to the slowdown. So I think a combination of factors...

And if the economy is growing slower, it trickles down. If the pie is smaller relative to what it would have been if the economy had grown at 8 per cent or 9 per cent, no matter how it is distributed, it does affect our lives.

## On the growth outlook going forward

I have to say that I am relatively positive, and I say this because of five reasons, but I also highlight what the risks are.

Number one, our forecast is that generally, the global economy should do moderately better in 2020 and 2021 than in 2019. Of course it has got watered down a bit following the global novel coronavirus outbreak, but even then... and this is a positive for the Indian economy.

Number two, domestic financial conditions: this is a simple weighted average of short term interest rates, long term interest rates, equity prices, and exchange rates. That has eased by about 100 basis points since January 2018. That should feed into growth going forward. The risk to this view is what is happening in the shadow banking sector, or the non-bank financial sector, in general.

Number three, I think there is a fiscal impulse and when we talk about the Budget, I do think that there is a moderate fiscal impulse which should also be supportive of growth going forward.

Number four, I think the government has taken a series of measures to address the slowdown, so you have to build some effect of those in the forecasts.

And finally, number five, I think there are some early signs of recovery... There’s a slight



(Above) Economist Dr Prachi Mishra in conversation with P Vaidyanathan Iyer at the event in New Delhi; a section of the audience. Amit Mehra

uptick in the India current activity indicator. Generally the data are still weak but improving sequentially. It is still early to say but there are some signs of economic stabilisation, but we have to watch it for some more time.

## On the RBI’s stance on inflation

Core inflation is about 30-40 per cent of the basket, which is low compared to other countries. But that’s a standard macroeconomic indicator of what stage of the cycle you are at. And that has been increasing, which is a sign of some pick-up as well... Of course, inflation going up and some comfort on growth as well, might restrict the RBI going forward. I think our published forecast is that they are going to be on hold, unless there is a renewed bout of weakness in economic activity or, you know, inflation. We do think that this recent spike in inflation should peak in the first quarter of 2020 and then begin to come down. Our next month’s (March) forecast is lower than what we had this month... So it should peak, and then come down. But clearly, if inflation turns out to be higher than what we are expecting, or there is a renewed bout of weakness in economic activity, I think the chances of further accommodation by the central bank does increase.

## On whether the government could have intervened to arrest the slowdown

About two years ago, we had built three scenarios around economic growth. One was the *status quo*, one was a regression scenario, and the third was an accelerated reform scenario. Right now, I think we are more in a regression... for FY20, a reasonable [growth] estimate would be around 5 [per cent], and for FY21, we are forecasting that we are going to move from a regression to a *status quo* scenario.

The accelerated reform scenario that we had built basically had four pillars: land, labour, privatisation, and export promotion. I think there has been some progress on each, but not to the extent that can take us to the accelerated reform scenario that we had envisioned two years ago... This is not only about this slowdown... compared to say, the average of 2004-2011 and 2012-18.

On privatisation... in the broader sense, in areas like agriculture, banking etc, we’ve not seen much of it even being initiated. The second, in the narrower sense, was envisaged in the Budget... In FY20, the budgeted target for privatisation was 0.5 per cent of GDP, they ended up at 0.3 per cent, and for FY21 there is an ambitious target of increasing 0.3 per cent of GDP to 0.9 per cent, and clearly what the markets are looking for is a more credible plan, concrete timelines, specific steps on how this would go ahead. On why it didn’t happen, I think it definitely depends on market sentiment — it’s a combination of everything, which might explain why it did not happen... but I think more important is, let’s look forward and see how it can be. Basically, market participants are saying, how do we expect that you are going to do 0.9 per cent of GDP? I think that it can happen (if) even one big privatisation happens... I think that can change market sentiment and that can have a positive effect other privatisations planned in the future.

## On the credibility of data and problems with its collection in India

Measuring economic activity in any country, especially in a country with a large services sector and a large informal economy, is very challenging. In one of our reports, we had compared India with some of



**PRACHI MISHRA**

Dr Mishra is India Chief Economist at Goldman Sachs. She has had policy experience at the International Monetary Fund, the Reserve Bank of India, and the Indian government’s Ministry of Finance.

WATCH VIDEO  
<https://youtu.be/dhfoC5kMJII>

the other economies for similarities and differences in terms of data collection. India is quite similar, if you look at measurement of GDP, to several other economies in terms of the base year, including informal sector activity, but India does stand out as an outlier in a number of other aspects, which includes high frequency of revisions [of data]. We have six or seven revisions in GDP before the final number comes out; in most other countries, it is one or two or three. India is also an outlier in not having actual data collection in a quarterly series. A lot of our GDP estimation is based on not even quarterly or annual surveys, but quinquennial surveys... in fact, estimates of the informal economy, which is half our GDP, is probably based on a 2010-11 survey. My hope is that the new committee that has been set up will look into some of these issues, but my broader point is that it has to be a statistical discourse, rather than a political one.

## On the jobs outlook in the coming years

Though not much, there are some nascent signs of revival in private investment. The broader question is, given that ‘x’ number of people are being added to the labour force every year, given that we are a young population and dependency ratios are declining, are we really up for seizing the demographic dividend?

I would think that growth picking up is important for more jobs to be created. I think, growth, if we can actually go to the accelerated reform scenario with 8-9 per cent growth, then automatically, there will be employment creation for seizing the demographic dividend. At this point, I would think that raising growth using all the structural reforms as well as macroeconomic policies is essential for creating employment, which India needs.

## On what the Finance Minister could have done between January 2018 and now

Let’s first ask ourselves what was there in the Budget? I think if you look at the numbers, there is a growth trigger in the Budget. Our calculations suggest that there is at least a 1 percentage point fiscal impulse, or a moderate fiscal impulse, in the Budget... There is about 20 per cent increase in spending on some of the key outlays; rural infrastructure has picked up... What more could have been there? It’s a good question, but you know, the Budget is not that important an event across the globe... I think reforms have to be a continuous process and on all the aspects that we have discussed, one of the key downside risks to my growth outlook picking up to even 6 per cent, is the domestic financial sector...

Lending by shadow banks has declined dramatically. It was growing at 23-24 per cent, and now we are growing at 3-4 per cent. There are three reasons: if there is a slowdown in the economy, fewer people are asking for loans; second, the central bank has said that you have to have regulatory restrictions which are in line with tighter regulation for non-banks as well; and third, the biggest downside risk to my growth outlook, is a lot of risk aversion and lack of confidence in the domestic financial sector. Whether through the Budget or through the central bank’s measures, this needs to be broken in order to get the economy on track.

## On the way the government handled the non-banking financial sector crisis

NBFCs are intricately linked to the real estate sector, and in the last monetary statement there were some specific measures... for lending to the MSMEs and some other sectors. Then there were other measures like some regulatory forbearance for lending to real estate. I think at this point what is important is to also guard on the risks. The problems that we had three-four years ago when bank balance sheets were stressed — then the asset quality review etc started; we want to make sure at this point that we guard on the risks, which might be building in the non-bank balance sheets...

## On government’s response to slowdown

I think all of us were late to recognise the slowdown. I think, if you look at our data, it started in January 2018. I think the RBI actually increased interest rates in June and August, 2018. I think once the slowdown has been recognised, clearly there have been a series of measures taken by both the central bank and the government. Whether the word slowdown is in the Budget or not, I think, that’s less relevant. I think the challenge is that all these measures are going to take some time to have an effect...

Because, I think monetary transmission takes time to happen. What I am building in the forecast going forward is the effect of some of the measures, which have been taken. These are all facts, and there is so much of discussion and so much of data on the slowdown, that the question of denial [of the slowdown] does not arise, because it is well established, everyone is talking about it... I think a series of measures have been taken, but it’s still going to take time for the economy to revive, because all of these measures would take some time to manifest themselves.

(Edited excerpts from the Conversation Transcribed by Mehr Gill)



BANKING INSTITUTIONS ARE MORE DANGEROUS TO OUR LIBERTIES THAN STANDING ARMIES.  
— THOMAS JEFFERSON

## The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY  
RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

# The diplomatic cost

Modi government's domestic agenda has begun undercutting its secular foreign policy



K C SINGH

## YES BANK, NO BANK

After being tardy in identifying governance failures in players in financial sector, RBI has been too slow to act

WITHIN 24 HOURS of the superseding of the board of Yes Bank by the Reserve Bank of India, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced a reconstruction scheme, which clearly suggests that the State Bank of India would take on the burden of rescuing the country's fifth largest private sector bank. The SBI will invest in Yes Bank, and hold 49 per cent, paying a premium of up to Rs 8 per share with a face value of Rs 2. The government had no choice but to use the instrument of moral suasion on the SBI to acquire the bank. For the RBI, it was imperative to act to save Yes Bank from collapsing, to preserve people's trust in the Indian banking system. It has bailed out banks in the past, but its action this time around is egregious on two counts: The unjustifiable delay, and eroding depositor faith by limiting withdrawals at Rs 50,000.

Having taken an in-principle decision to not let the bank collapse, the most sensible course of action for the RBI would have been to tell depositors their money was safe, and they could withdraw all they wanted the next day. Till Thursday evening, when the RBI superseded the board and capped withdrawals, there were no queues outside Yes Bank branches. Capping withdrawals for depositors for Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative Bank was bad enough. Using the same principle for Yes Bank will only serve to erode the faith of depositors in private banks in general, and the banking regulator, RBI itself, in particular. It will have two adverse impacts: One, people will gravitate towards public sector banks which are credit averse, and two, private banks will be forced to offer higher deposit rates, keeping the cost of credit higher. Both these are highly undesirable at a juncture when the economy is floundering at a 5 per cent growth rate.

This action of capping withdrawals apart, what is more disconcerting is the inaction. After being slothful in identifying governance faultlines among a string of players in the financial sector — IL&FS, DHFL, and now Yes Bank, it was slow to act. Besides access to the books of banks and NBFCs, the RBI also receives intelligence from analysts closely tracking the sector. Its unwillingness to act quickly and decisively even after identification of structural weaknesses is cause for serious concern. The troubles of Yes Bank were known for long. Co-promoter Rana Kapoor was forced to step down by the RBI two years ago. The RBI put its nominee on the Yes Bank board last May, and in November it found a Rs 3,277 crore divergence in bad loan reporting for the year-ended March 2019. Of course, the players are failing their customers. But the RBI is also failing to uphold the people's trust and faith.

## BETTER ALIGNED

EPFO's move to lower interest rates is welcome. A high rate is unsustainable

ON THURSDAY, THE Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) decided to lower the interest rate on provident fund savings to a seven year low of 8.5 per cent for 2019-20, down 15 basis points from 8.65 per cent in the previous year. The decision was ostensibly shaped by two factors: First, lower return on government securities, and second, the desire to withhold a higher surplus because of economic uncertainties. Being one of the largest social security organisations in the world — it has over 60 million active users — any reduction in interest rates is unlikely to be popular with its contributors. However, this is a welcome move. With interest rates falling across the economy — yields on both central and state government debt have been falling over the past year with the monetary policy committee cutting the benchmark repo rate by 135 basis points over the past year — paying a rate that is out of line with that in the broader economy will end up being unsustainable.

According to reports, the calculations shared at the EPFO meeting showed that retaining the interest rate at 8.65 per cent would have left a deficit of around Rs 350 crore. On the other hand, an interest rate of 8.45 per cent would have led to a surplus of Rs 1,000 crore. Considering the uncertain economic environment — EPFO's investments have in the past come under stress, as in the IL&FS case — there is a legitimate argument for not taking excessive risk. By reducing the rate by 15 basis points, the organisation will end up with a surplus of Rs 700 crore. EPFO should be mindful that higher returns, over and above those from government securities, come from investments in corporate debt, and equities (through exchange-traded funds), which are risky in nature. In the current economic environment, there is a risk of such investments turning bad. Being principally a social security provider, it must thus seek to minimise risk. Further, as the formalisation of the economy gathers steam, and its subscriber base ramps up, it must seek to manage its risks more efficiently. This requires greater flexibility in setting the interest rate.

Alongside the lowering of the EPFO rate, the government should also move to bring about greater and speedier alignment of interest rates on voluntary small savings with market rates. While interest on small savings schemes is based on a fixed formula, and is revised quarterly, the actual rate is higher than that based on the formula. Bringing it in line with rates prevailing in the economy will aid in faster transmission of monetary policy.

## CORONA VIRAL

Don't neglect to wash your hands — of things including the grand illusion of invincibility

IF THE WORLD had come loaded with an antivirus package, it would have quarantined the human race as a matter of caution, and the rest of the planet would have heaved a sigh of relief. Fish, fowl and beast, whom COVID-19 does not affect, would now be striding the world with fresh confidence. Even walrus, who keep at flipper's length from humanity following numerous bad experiences, would have frolicked for the first time since the Vikings took an unhealthy interest in them. Only dogs and cats would have been depressed by lack of contact with humans. It would have served them right. They have become hopelessly anthropodependent.

Virality, the Holy Grail of internet media, elicits mixed feelings after the coronavirus outbreak. But what is fame doing to the virus? The coronaviruses have sought attention by infecting humans only twice before, during the SARS and MERS events. Other than these breakout attempts, the coronaviruses have contented themselves with being scourges of farm and field, harrying chickens, turkeys, pigs, cows, rabbits and ferrets. And cats and dogs, of course, to the profit of urban vets.

Now, COVID-19 dominates headlines the world over, and has put the usual newsmakers in the shade. It has brought markets low, excepting the handwash sector, made heads of nations look like the sultans of bumbledom, and turned human relations into a non-contact sport. It is a moral force, causing humans to reflect on mortality, a pastime which used to be as common in the age of plagues as sudoku is today. There is nothing like personal risk to elevate the mind, and while the disease is taking a heavy toll on the lives and fortunes of humans now, it will leave us purged of the illusion of invincibility. We can just wash our hands off it.

PROTESTS OVER THE Narendra Modi government's handling of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) peaked and the capital slipped into widespread arson, looting and murder as US President Donald Trump arrived, on a stand-alone visit, on February 24 in Ahmedabad and then went on to Delhi via Agra. The situation had simmered for weeks as Delhi had an acrimonious election, which the lost BJP badly. Happenings in the city distracted from the visit, even as glasses were raised at Rashtrapati Bhavan at the Indian President's banquet on February 25.

President Trump, known for his uninhibited tweets, read his carefully-crafted public address at Motera stadium. He referred to India as a democracy which was peaceful and tolerant. He lauded freedom, rule of law, liberty and protection of human dignity, adding graphically that where India had the holy Ganges, it also had the Golden Temple and Jama Masjid. He thereby cleverly reassured critics at home, especially in the US Congress, that he was not ignoring the values the two great democracies shared. However, as the situation in Delhi spun into violence the next day, in an untutored media interaction at the US ambassador's residence, he ducked questions about the CAA or Delhi riots, nonchalantly remarking it was "up to India" to deal with it. This may have brought comfort to the Indian government but the world at large differed.

Delhi had already exchanged angry words with Malaysia, Turkey and even Indonesia over their varied critique of India's handling of its Muslim minority when Iran joined the issue. First, Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif condemned the "wave of organised violence against Indian Muslims", adding that "Iran has been a friend of India". India's foreign ministry summoned the Iranian ambassador to protest the inappropriateness of the minister's remark. Soon after, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei found the time, in the middle of the COVID-19 outbreak, to excoriate the Indian government. Claiming that the "hearts of Muslims all over the world are grieving over the massacre of Muslims in India", he warned that unless the Indian government confronted "extremist Hindus", India stands to be isolated from "the world of Islam". Adding insult to injury, he appended #IndianMuslimsInDanger.

A facile response, ideal for television de-

In the Islamic world, Iran by publicly defending Indian Muslims, embarrasses the silent Saudis. Iran also calculates that India needs access to Afghanistan through Chabahar to assist the Ghani government or influence developments there. The Modi government's majoritarian domestic agenda, now being fine-tuned for the West Bengal election, has begun under-cutting its secular foreign policy, which even Vajpayee espoused.

bates, can be that Iran is being hypocritical as it has not expressed remorse over the Chinese repression of Uyghurs. But China is a veto-wielding member of the UN Security Council, which also sustains the Iranian economy despite US sanctions. On the other hand, India has a Shia population second only to that of Iran. There are two Iranian consulates in India in Hyderabad and Mumbai. Iran seeks a third one in Lucknow. Qom also hosts many Shia students, particularly from the Kargil region. After Humayun's exile in Iran (1530-40) before recovering the Indian throne, the Persian language and culture fired the cultural renaissance at the Mughal court. Thus, India is important for Iran for its religio-cultural heritage, unlike China, which is needed for transactional and strategic reasons. Two interrelated questions flow from this reasoning: What is Iran's importance for India and the trajectory of India-Iran relations over last two decades? And why is Iran adopting this sharp tone over what the Indian government argues is an internal matter?

The closest India-Iran strategic convergence began in the 1990s, particularly after Kabul fell to the Taliban in 1996. These ties blossomed under reformist Iranian President Mohammad Khatami and Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. In 2001, the two signed the Teheran Declaration. Khatami in his opening remarks said that Iran always admired India's secular credentials and Vajpayee had maintained that tradition. Iran thus lay to rest the Islamic world's discomfort over the destruction of Babri Masjid in 1992. In 2003, Khatami was chief guest at India's Republic Day and a New Delhi Declaration was issued. But thereafter, the relationship began to slip as Iran's clandestine nuclear programme and assistance from Pakistan's rogue scientist AQ Khan was uncovered in mid-2003. Concomitantly, India was drawing closer to the US and negotiating a nuclear cooperation agreement. The US used the nuclear issue to cause a cleavage as Indian and Iranian interests began seriously diverging. In any case, the Taliban had been ejected from Afghanistan and US troops literally surrounded Iran, having in 2003 overthrown Saddam Hussein. Geo-strategy trumped diplomacy.

Iran-US relations also went through a cycle, with President Barack Obama recalibrat-

ing US policy towards the Gulf and West Asia. Calculating that without Iran, ISIS could not be countered, the US in 2015 endorsed the nuclear deal that P-5 and Germany negotiated to end the nuclear stand-off. Although India-Iran relations after that returned to near normal as most US sanctions were lifted, the warmth of the 1990s was missing. Iran was now beginning to extend its influence and role across Iraq and West Asia. President Donald Trump in 2016 reversed US policy and since then "maximum pressure" has been applied on Iran via tightened sanctions. PM Modi also moved more forthrightly to engage Saudi Arabia and the UAE. However, a fallout of the US policy reversal has been an exacerbation of not only the Shia-Sunni split but a Sunni-Sunni split as Qatar and Turkey are with Iran.

In Iran's parliamentary election on February 28, extremely conservative members have been elected, the moderates having been vetoed by the Guardians Council earlier. Turnout was a low 43 per cent, due partly to fear of the coronavirus. Iran is even more isolated, though determined to resist US demands, due to communications being curtailed due to the virus. It has good working relations with the Taliban and converging interests to see that US troops exit the region. Iran is battling to ensure a friendly government in Baghdad, despite the killing of Major General Qasem Soleimani, by keeping militias aligned to it in play.

Khamenei's tweet reflects the perception that India is in the US-Saudi-Emirati corner and of little use as long as Trump is president. Hugs in Abu Dhabi, Riyadh and Ahmedabad would have led Iran to this conclusion. In the Islamic world, Iran by publicly defending Indian Muslims, embarrasses the silent Saudis. It also calculates that India needs access to Afghanistan through Chabahar to assist the Ghani government or influence developments there. The Modi government's majoritarian domestic agenda, now being fine-tuned for the West Bengal election, has begun undercutting its secular foreign policy, which even Vajpayee espoused. The coming months will show if the domestic agenda is pared or pursued despite diplomatic costs.

Singh is former secretary, Ministry of External Affairs and ambassador to Iran and UAE



ASHOKE CHATTERJEE

## AUTONOMY AND FREEDOM

Why a speech delivered at NID's first convocation remains relevant 40 years on

THE 40TH CONVOCATION OF THE National Institute of Design is back in the news after its invited chief guest, Mallika Sarabhai, has posted on social media the speech she was to deliver before the event was "postponed" and then rescheduled for March 7, this time without her. These bizarre events recall another NID Convocation, its first, held in 1979 at another time of anxiety and challenge. The speaker was the late Ravi J Matthai, legendary director of the Indian Institute of Management (Ahmedabad).

Matthai, with Mallika's father Vikram Sarabhai, had already made IIM-A a symbol of academic resilience, autonomy and innovation — qualities Matthai invoked to inspire India's first cohort of trained professional designers moving out into a marketplace entirely new to their calling. No examinations, no marks, and instead, a body of work for real-life clients as evidence that each graduating student had been tested in the fire of actual service. The audacity of such "learning by doing" was unacceptable to the then Ministry of Education. Forget the Mahatma's Nai Taleem or Tagore's demonstration through Silpa Sadana at Santiniketan. NID graduates were to receive diplomas which the system of the day refused to recognise.

The tension at that first convocation was palpable, particularly among parents who had made an investment fraught with risk. What would happen when these young men and

women went out for jobs? Would a pioneering experiment be acknowledged by employers? Or would a discipline that demanded thinking out of the box be forced back into rote-learning and exam-terror? NID's founding visionaries, Gautam Sarabhai and his sister Gira, had at great risk positioned the institute outside the orthodoxy of prevailing systems. The Ministry of Commerce offered help, perhaps in the hope that good design might give India a foothold in export markets so essential to the desperate need for foreign exchange. Profoundly welcome, the offer also meant that those who came to teach and study at NID would have to forego UGC security. Instead, they would struggle with shoe-string budgets and salaries.

The NID model had already received its first international recognition and would later that year be acknowledged by the UN as a model for design education, the first of its kind anywhere in the world. Institutional vision and courage of this quality was the badge of a city which prided its culture of trusteeship, inspired by the Mahatma and nurtured by the captains of Ahmedabad's textile industry. The city reflected a confident Nehruvian modernity, nurturing institutional spaces that could bring to India disciplines at the cutting edge of global progress. Among them were IIM-A, PRL, ATIRA, CEPT, CEE, ISRO and NID. Of these, NID represented a stream of learning entirely new and yet deeply rooted in heritage.

The challenge was enormous as a young, embattled institute now gave at its first convocation an opportunity for trained designers to stand up and be recognised by India. Ravi Matthai had been friend and guide through years of struggle, using management know-how to help reinforce design as a force for well-being and development. For him, the NID achievement demonstrated the power of academic freedom as well as Ahmedabad's special understanding of entrepreneurship as duty and as service. In his stirring convocation address, Matthai reminded the graduates of their responsibility as a vanguard of pioneers: "Autonomy like freedom is not just assumed. It is earned and won every week, every month, every year". He quoted poet James Lowell: "Freedom gained yesterday is no more ours, Men gather but dry seeds of last year's flowers".

The writer is former executive director, National Institute of Design

## MARCH 7, 1980, FORTY YEARS AGO

**NEPAL'S PROPOSAL**  
KING BIRENDRA REITERATED his government's plea for making Nepal a zone of peace. The king referred to the proposal in his speech at the banquet President Sanjeeva Reddy gave in his honour. India has on several occasions in the past made clear its opposition to Nepal's move. New Delhi's view is that India has always assured Nepal of its desire to maintain friendly relations with that country and as such it does not see any need for declaring Nepal a zone of peace.

**ASSAM REBELS**  
SOME ASSAMESE BOYS have joined the broad front for the liberation of the whole

Northeast region. Formed and led by T Muivah, the rebel Naga leader, who has repudiated Phizo's leadership, it has representatives from Nagaland, Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura. However, sources in Kohima and Imphal said they had no confirmed report about the 120 Assamese boys reportedly going to China via the Assam-Nagaland-Burma route last year. In Guwahati, government sources were non-committal on the report of Assamese boys crossing the border for training and arms. "We have grave doubts about these reports," Home Secretary Jagen Hazarika said. It is understood that the heat generated by the emergence of Assamese na-

tionism over the "foreigners" issue and the Centre's alleged neglect of the state has given rise to secessionist ideas. There are many Assamese intellectuals who freely air "anti-Indian" sentiments.

**IRAN HOSTAGE CRISIS**  
MUSLIM MILITANTS, WHO have held 50 Americans hostage at the US embassy in Teheran for 124 days, asked the ruling revolutionary council to take over responsibility for the captives. The development came as the UN investigating commission was preparing to leave Teheran without seeing the hostages. After the announcement, the commission decided to stay on at least for one more day.



WHAT THE OTHERS SAY  
 "Paid sick leave could slow the spread of the disease (coronavirus) and its impact on the economy."  
 — NEW YORK TIMES

# A bristling peace

Islamabad is unlikely to benefit from US-Taliban pact. Fissures in Afghanistan's polity could spill into Pakistan, tilting balance in favour of madrasa-based radicalism



KHALED AHMED

THE US-TALIBAN agreement on Afghanistan was signed on February 29 at Doha. America and its allies pledged to withdraw their troops from Afghanistan and begin what is called the Intra-Afghan Dialogue. The year 2020 has seen another disputed election in Afghanistan which returned President Ashraf Ghani to power. If the Taliban talks to the Ghani government, it will be talking to a government divided down the middle. President Ghani's victory has been challenged by his non-Pashtun Tajik prime minister Abdullah Abdullah, who is from northern Afghanistan.

According to the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) — an agency of the US government — in January 2019, 229 districts in the country were under the Afghan government's control. This is about 56.3 per cent of all districts in Afghanistan. The Taliban controlled 59 districts, 14.5 per cent of all. The remaining 119 districts, about 29.2 per cent, remained contested — controlled by neither the Afghan government nor the rebels. The Taliban is scattered in gangs led by semi-autonomous warlords.

In the run-up to the signing of the Afghan accord, the main sticking point was the "intra-Afghan" negotiations in which the Taliban will "negotiate" its acceptance of the 2020 election. These elections have been reluctantly accepted by one half of the Ghani government, completely rejected by Kabul-dwelling warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, and looked at with suspicion by the nationalities occupying northern Afghanistan — the Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazaras.

The social change brought about by two decades of US presence in Afghanistan — human rights, female emancipation, entertainment — could be in peril. Most of the population may have been happy with the change but the minority conservative elements are likely to be empowered once again. Most women are likely to lose their jobs with the Taliban stalking the streets.

Some Indian analysts think Pakistan will be "empowered" in Afghanistan at the cost of their country. It is, however, time to reconsider the idea of Taliban being Pakistan's "proxy" and rethink the "strategic depth" being claimed by some army leaders of Pakistan. Pakistan, in fact, lost its "internal sovereignty" in the tribal areas in North Waziristan after it sheltered the gangs of Taliban as well as in Quetta where it housed the government of the ousted Mullah Umar after 9/11.

After the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union in 1979, Pakistan hosted Afghanistan's resistance leaders in Peshawar and made a clear choice in favour of Pashtun leaders like Hekmatyar against the equally powerful Tajik leader Ahmad Shah Massoud. This divided Afghanistan into pro-Pakistan and pro-India regions — the northern population leaning on India for higher education despite the distance, and thus imbibing secular intellectual values — while the Pashtuns of the south went in great numbers to the madrasas in Pakistan for religious education. Iran also came to the help of the isolated northern region of Pakistan, especially after



CR Sasikumar

9/11. In the Persian language, Iran has common cultural links with the region. Iran also has connections with Central Afghanistan because of the region's Shia population. Looking for revenge after the murder of its military leader Qasem Soleimani by the US, the country is likely to play an anti-Taliban role even though it has had links with the outfit in the past.

Iran's Afghanistan policy, in fact, has not been as black-and-white as that of Pakistan. It established good relations with the Taliban leadership, allowing its Sunni warriors to consolidate their Northern Shura. It also allowed the Taliban to establish a command and control centre in the Iranian city of Mashhad. The Northern Shura is actually controlled by Iran. In the past, the Taliban has been using Iran as its retreat as was revealed when its leader Mullah Akhtar Mansour was killed by a US drone in May 2016 in Balochistan "while traveling back from Iran".

Iran and India will be the "balancing" factors if Pakistan continues to back the Taliban whose ranks will include the Pakistani Taliban driven by the country's army into northeastern Afghanistan. Iran will also look after the interests of the Hazara Shia of

The social change brought about by two decades of US presence in Afghanistan — human rights, female emancipation, entertainment — could be in peril. Most of the population may have been happy with the change but the minority conservative element is likely to be empowered once again. Most women are likely to lose their jobs with the Taliban stalking the streets.

Bamyan, a community also found in Pakistan's Balochistan province, where before 1947 they were part of the local community of Quetta city. Now they are being constantly targeted by the Taliban and Islamic State.

Iran's Al Quds Force has organised the Fatemiyoun militia, drawn from the Afghan Shiite Hazaras and the 1.5 million Iran-based Afghan refugees. The 2,00,000-strong, US-funded Afghan Security Force — dominated by non-Pashtuns — has been subject to desertions. It is managing to hold together because of the subsistence it provides to many families in the country. With the intra-Afghan dialogue likely to break down, this force could be handicapped while fighting the Taliban. Fearing this outcome and the dominance of Iran and India, Pakistan has resorted to wire-fencing the Durand Line to prevent any Indian threat from the west. It also fears the pouring in of millions of Afghan refugees — it already has two million registered and unregistered ones — to upset the population balance in favour of madrasa-based radicalism.

The writer is consulting editor, Newsweek Pakistan

# Two states and a wall

Electoral reverses in Delhi and Jharkhand, and bitter fallout of CAA, are a pointer to tough road ahead for NDA in Bihar and West Bengal



SHARAD YADAV

THE OUTCOME OF the recently held Delhi assembly elections and, before that, of Jharkhand, has clearly indicated that people are going to vote for a party that delivers on its promises, not just harps on Hindutva, nationalism and the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). To bring the CAA and then the NRC/NPR is a trick to polarise communities, but it will also adversely affect large populations, such as Dalits, Adivasis, SC/STs, other backward castes.

For communal harmony and economic stability, the government must find a way out of this CAA imbroglio sooner than later, keeping its own political ambitions aside. After all, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the new BJP under him have always talked of nation first, party later. The government must practise what it preaches.

Though the BJP may say that it is not going to climb down from its poll planks of Hindutva, nationalism and the CAA despite the humiliating defeats in Delhi and Jharkhand, chances are it may have to tweak its poll strategy in the impending Bihar and West Bengal elections. There has been loss of life and property in the clashes over the CAA in Delhi. Although the BJP could get its way in the Lok Sabha elections in Bihar due to other reasons, it will be very difficult to repeat its performance in this assembly election as the people of Bihar and West Bengal believe in the agenda of social justice.

With students protesting in a large number of universities in Delhi and across the country against the CAA and related issues, and a large section of people, mainly women, still on dhama on the streets, as in Shaheen Bagh, things are not easy for the BJP.

After backing the CAA in Parliament, JD(U) chief and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar declared that the NRC would not be implemented in the state, and he also got the resolution passed in the Assembly. The BJP had declared Nitish as the NDA's face only after realising that going solo could be detrimental. State politics is abuzz with speculation over whether Nitish will ditch the BJP. Incidentally, the recent Supreme Court judgment on promotions for Scheduled Castes in government jobs not being a right is also being used by him to attack the BJP — he wants a public assurance that the Centre will get the ruling overturned in Parliament. He knows that after the Delhi assembly results, the BJP's bargaining power has diminished.

During the 2015 assembly elections, the JD(U) won 71 seats, and the BJP won 53. Through the developments after the Maharashtra elections, it is clear that the BJP will not settle for a secondary role in a coalition. Hence, the situation in Bihar is vexing, as both parties will fight for a greater role in the coalition, and none can claim to be at an advantage on the basis of last election's results.

In West Bengal, where the BJP has been desperately trying to increase its strength electorally, the CAA and NRC could damage its poll prospects as a section within the party is of the view that the top brass should focus on development instead of polarisation. The leadership crisis in the BJP's state unit is also an issue, which is worrying the party top brass.

Mamata Banerjee has been a strong critic of the CAA, NRC and NPR. The West Bengal assembly has passed a resolution urging the Centre to repeal the CAA. Banerjee has declared that the NRC will not be implemented in the state. With Shah admitting recently that hate speeches by some BJP leaders in Delhi may have led to the party's defeat, it could well be an indication that the party has belatedly realised that overkill on Hindutva and CAA may not always pay.

Ever since Modi's second innings began, the BJP has pushed forward with its core Hindutva agenda. In perhaps the most visible majoritarian move, the government abrogated Article 370 of the Indian Constitution that conferred special status to Jammu and Kashmir and revoked Article 35A. The Supreme Court ruled that disputed land in Ayodhya be given to Hindu claimants for a temple. Finally, the government passed a polarising CAA.

The amended citizenship legislation and suggestion of a nationwide NRC, like the registry published in Assam in October, have created apprehensions over the country's future as a secular state. These simmering fault lines have led to rising unrest across India. While the protests against the CAA have been widespread, the reasons for opposition have varied.

Across the country, opposition to the CAA is rooted in claims that it threatens the Constitution and secular history by using religion as criterion for citizenship. Others fear the new Act will threaten the citizenship of Muslims in particular by keeping them off the list of religiously persecuted populations.

These protests have drawn in not only the common citizens, irrespective of caste and religion, but also students from universities and educational institutions across the country. Either the government has been unable to dispel doubts on the ground or it does not want to do so for obvious electoral gains. Little wonder, then, that the protests refuse to die down.

In the NDA regime, there is surging unemployment and crores of people have lost jobs due to notebandi. Many small companies have closed down because of the botched implementation of the GST, and centrally sponsored schemes have failed, like the Ujjwala Yojana where the poor are unable to refill their cylinders. Banks are in a critical condition, the country's debt burden has increased and no black money has returned from abroad.

The outcome of the Delhi and Jharkhand elections and the violence due to inaction by the Central government in Delhi will have an adverse impact on Bihar and West Bengal elections for the NDA. Local issues will dominate, on which the NDA has disappointed the people. It has not fulfilled promises and only created unrest due to a divisive politics.

The writer is a senior politician and former Union minister



RAJIV TULI

# More right turns ahead

In the face of Hindu consolidation, AAP, TMC are using the symbols of Hindutva

I REMEMBER ATTENDING a meeting with a group of young social media enthusiasts in South Delhi a few months after the BJP won the general election. The meeting had been organised by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's Art of Living. The invitees had been involved in the election campaign in one way or another. Most of them worked for the BJP without ideological inclination but more for the sake of Hindutva.

Other than the excitement at meeting Sri Sri, I had no agenda. Suddenly, one of Sri Sri's disciples began an informal talk. The agenda was to discuss the ways and means to create a leadership pool in various spheres, including politics.

One of the invitees, who had come from Uttarakhand, sensed that this discussion would ultimately move towards the idea of forming a new political party. He immediately stood up and snubbed any such notion: "Why do you want to dent the Hindu consolidation, which has been happening after such a long time?"

from the stage. Remember, the top leadership of AAP was an integral part of the "India against corruption" movement in 2012-13 in Delhi. The picture of Bharat Mata was removed from the dias at that time and the same leadership refrained from chanting "Bharat mata ki jai" and "vande mataram".

The new avatar of the AAP has its top leader Arvind Kejriwal reciting the Hanuman Chalisa and going to the Hanuman mandir. One of its national spokespersons and a newly elected MLA has announced that there would be reciting of the Ramayana's Sunderkand in temples every Tuesday in his constituency. The same MLA, without knowing the reality of Ayodhya, demanded a grand Hanuman statue to be built along with the Ramjanmabhoomi temple. In Ayodhya, historically, there cannot be a temple higher than Hanuman Garhi. These tricks are clearly part of a strategy to capture a section of Hindu votes. The same AAP government is giving salaries to the maulvis of mosques. Isn't it strange that no political party ever thought of giving salaries to priests and clergy of other religions?

This phenomenon will likely be repeated in other states going to the polls in the coming days. Mamata Banerjee in West Bengal and the RJD in Bihar are next in line.

been at the forefront of Muslim appeasement. She has gone several extra miles to keep Muslims, especially the radical elements, happy by taking steps such as banning the immersion of Durga idols on Muharram, paying salaries to Muslim clergy, allocating funds for construction of prayer halls in Muslim-majority schools. She has done everything over the last few years to appease Muslims, who are around 30 per cent of the population in West Bengal and generally tend to vote on religious lines.

Banerjee believes her Muslim supporters are "dairy cows" and she has gone on record to say she will not punish a cow which provides her milk (gains). Since Muslim appeasement now might have an adverse effect, 50 Muslims have recently written a letter to Banerjee asking her to punish Muslim criminals found involved in two incidents in West Bengal. These people are surely aware of Banerjee's previous resolution to provide monthly stipends of Rs 2,500 to about 30,000 imams. She had also promised land to build houses to imams.

Not once has the West Bengal CM made similar promises to the priests or clergy of other communities. When, despite being a Hindu, Banerjee was praying like a Muslim, no open-minded progressive Muslims tried to stop her. Even her support for the contro-

versal imam of the Tipu Sultan Masjid in Tollygunge, Kolkata, Nurur Rehman Barkati, who has lamentably emerged over the years as the chief political adviser and guru of Mamata Banerjee, was blessed by TMC to the extent that he held a press conference to announce a booty for chopping off the beard and blackening the face of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. And he was being accompanied by a sitting TMC MP during the press conference.

Another important character is Firhad aka Bobby Hakim, mayor of Kolkotta, known for his infamous remark, describing his constituency as "mini Pakistan" in an interview to Dawn. He recently visited a temple offering puja! He reportedly even offered the sacred rudrabhishek at the local temple.

In the long run, these promises have done more harm than good to Muslims. Now, after the results of the last general election and the Delhi election, their might be a shift in her stance. She has already started signalling and following the path of Delhi's AAP.

Given the population of Muslims in West Bengal, it will be interesting to see how she balances both sides. But then, politics is the art of managing the impossible.

The writer is a member of the state executive of the Delhi RSS

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### CORONA CHALLENGE

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Bracing for the virus' (IE, March 6). The US Federal Reserve and other countries slashing interest rates is a knee-jerk reaction that is based on the assumption that it shall mitigate the economic impact of COVID-19. Before the outbreak, the US economy was in the pink of health and now a recession has put a spoke in its wheels. It could also play spoilsport for Donald Trump's prospects in the forthcoming elections. The priority ought not be injecting liquidity into the economy but containing the virus. The role of health agencies are more critical and overarching than that of the central banker.

Deepak Singhal, Chennai

### ABOUT MINDSETS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Like Kiran Passi' (IE, March, 05). The healthcare preferences of the middle class have been influenced by the glitz of private hospitals. Very often consulting private hospitals is a matter of mindset.

Bijay Sinha, Delhi

### DIGITAL WAYS

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Online vs offline' (IE, March 6). The first entrant in any sector in the digital space has a first mover advantage. Successful digital companies mostly work as oligopolies.

Sudip Kumar Dey, Kolkata

### LETTER OF THE WEEK

#### 1984 AND NOW

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'A majoritarian majority' (IE, March 5). In many ways, as pointed out in the article, the Delhi 2020 riots follow the template of 1984 massacre. But there are some dangerous differences. First, in today's India, majoritarian entitlement is much more brazen and has pervaded all levels of society. Second, the regime in Delhi has shed all pretence of even a lip service to the equality of all religions. As the author asks at the end of the article, how shall this be fought and India's soul reclaimed is the question

Rahul Gaur, Gurgaon

### LAW MUST ASSERT

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Why Delhi burned' (IE, March 6). It is painful that the police became mere spectators during last week's episode of violence in Delhi, the courts pleaded helplessness and a section of the media showed its bias. Those who orchestrated the riots must be punished at the earliest and the law of the land must be respected.

SE Narwade, Sangli

# 16 THE WORLD

## SURVEY AN ABSOLUTE LIE: PELOSI

### FACEBOOK DROPS MISLEADING TRUMP ADS

Facebook said on Thursday that it had removed misleading ads run by President Trump's re-election campaign about the 2020 census, in a stand against disinformation ahead of the decennial population count that begins next week. US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi had called the survey sponsored by the Trump re-election campaign 'an absolute lie'

## TOP OF THE WORLD



Bill Clinton

### USA

#### Lewinsky affair was to 'manage anxieties': Clinton

New York: Bill Clinton said he had an affair with Monica Lewinsky to help him deal with the stress of being president as he opened up in a documentary released Friday about the scandal that led to his impeachment. In the series, Clinton describes his sexual relationship in the 1990s with then 22-year-old White House intern as something he did "to manage my anxieties for years". He said it had been motivated by life's "pressure and disappointments and fears, of what-ever" and said he felt "terrible" that the affair had defined Lewinsky's life. "It was awful what I did," the 73-year-old added.

### PAKISTAN

#### Verdict against Musharraf's death penalty challenged

Islamabad: The Pakistan Bar Council has filed a petition in the Supreme Court challenging the Lahore High Court's order to quash the death penalty of Pervez Musharraf in a treason case, a report said Friday. A special court in Islamabad on December 17 last year handed down the death penalty. However, on January 13, Musharraf's trial was declared as "unconstitutional" by the High Court. The Pakistan Bar Council on Thursday filed a petition against the Lahore High Court's order.

### TUNISIA

#### 7 killed in suicide attacks near US embassy

Tunis: Two militants on a motorbike blew themselves up outside the U.S. Embassy in Tunisia on Friday, killing a policeman and injuring several others in the country's most serious attack in months. The explosion took place near the embassy's main gate, where a Reuters journalist saw a scorched, damaged motorbike and a damaged police vehicle lying amid debris as police gathered around and a helicopter whirled overhead. The Interior Ministry said two militants were killed carrying out the attack and five police officers were injured, while a civilian suffered minor injuries. State news agency TAP reported one policeman was killed.

## IRAN WARNS IT COULD USE FORCE TO HALT TRAVEL

# 'This is not a drill': WHO urges action as global coronavirus cases near 1,00,000

AGENCIES  
MARCH 6

THE NUMBER of people infected with the new virus charged toward 1,00,000 Friday, with the global scare upending routines, threatening livelihoods and prompting quarantines in its spread.

The world's leading health official implored international leaders to unleash the full power of their governments to combat the new coronavirus outbreak.

"This is not a drill," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director general of the World Health Organisation. "This is not a time for excuses. This is a time for pulling out all the stops."

The head of the UN's food agency, the World Food Program, warned of the potential of "absolute devastation" as the outbreak's effects ripple through Africa and the Middle East.

Iran on Friday said the new coronavirus has killed 124 people amid 4,747 confirmed cases in the Islamic Republic as authorities warned they may use "force" to limit travel between cities.

Health Ministry spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour offered the figures at a televised news conference. He did not elaborate on the threat to use force, though he



A production line to manufacture masks in Pyeongtaek, South Korea, on Friday. AP

acknowledged the virus now was in all of Iran's 31 provinces.

China reported 143 new cases Friday, the same as a day earlier and about one-third that the country was seeing a week ago. Just a month ago, China was reporting several thousand new cases a day, outnumbering infections elsewhere in the world about 120 to 1.

The second hardest-hit country, South Korea, was also regis-

tering a notable decline in new infections and the WHO's leader said he was seeing "encouraging signs" there. South Korea reported 505 additional cases Friday, down from a high of 851 on Tuesday.

Cases were increasing in Germany and France, but Italy remained the centre of Europe's outbreak, particularly in its north. The country has had 148 fatalities, making it the deadliest

site for the virus outside China.

Australia will spend one billion dollars to fight the spread of the virus, Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced on Friday as cases in the country touched 61 on Friday. Morrison said measures to respond to the outbreak would cost "at least" 1 billion Australian dollars and that it would be spread between federal, state and the territory governments.

## GLOBAL FIGURES

TOTAL DEATHS	CONFIRMED CASES
Mainland China	3,042
Italy	197
Iran	124
South Korea	42
Japan	12
United States	12

## COUNTRIES REPORT FIRST CASES, DEATHS

**SERBIA**  
The first case of coronavirus in Serbia has been diagnosed in a man who had been in Hungary, the country's health minister announced on Friday

## CAMEROON

Cameroon has confirmed its first case of the novel coronavirus, a French national who arrived in the capital Yaounde in February, the government said on Friday

## VATICAN CITY

The Vatican on Friday reported its first coronavirus case, saying it had suspended outpatient services at its health clinic after a patient tested positive for COVID-19

## BHUTAN

The country has reported its first case of the coronavirus after a US tourist tested positive, the prime minister said Friday

## NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands has recorded its first death in the novel coronavirus outbreak, Dutch health officials said on Friday

## 1ST BIG STRIKE SINCE PEACE DEAL

# 27 killed in attack on Afghan rally



Personnel check an ambulance near the site of the attack. AP

## Islamic State claims responsibility; crime against humanity, says Ghani

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
KABUL, MARCH 6

GUNMEN OPENED fire Friday at a ceremony in Afghanistan's capital attended by prominent political leaders, killing at least 32 people and wounding dozens more before the two attackers were slain by police, officials said.

The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement on its website.

Militants from IS have declared war on Afghanistan's Shiites, and many of those at the ceremony were from the minority Shiite sect. The Taliban said they were not involved in the attack, which came less than a week after the US and the group signed an ambitious peace deal that lays out a path for the withdrawal of American forces from the country.

Interior Ministry spokesman Nasrat Rahimi said 32 people were killed and 81 wounded in the attack in the Dasht-e-Barchi neighborhood of Kabul. The Health Ministry gave the same death toll but said 58 were wounded. All of the casualties were civilians, Rahimi said.

Opposition leader Abdullah Abdullah, who is the country's chief executive and was a top contender in last year's presidential election, was among several prominent political officials who attended the ceremony but left before the attack and were unhurt.

Several TV journalists were covering the ceremony inside a walled compound when the gunmen began shooting, and a reporter and a cameraman for a local broadcaster were among the wounded. Karim Khalili, the chief of Afghanistan's high peace council, was delivering a speech when the gunfire interrupted him. He was not hurt and later went on TV to denounce the violence.

Several witnesses said that, amid the panic, members of the security forces at the event had fired on civilians in the crowd.

"Individuals with military uniforms who were there targeted people, there were casualties, dead and wounded," said witness Ghulam Mohammad, according to Associated Press video.

Another survivor, Noor Mohammad, said: "Everyone was running. Three casualties were on the ground in front of me. I ran out of there to save my life."

After opening fire, the two



Opposition leader Abdullah Abdullah, who was at the event, escaped injury. Reuters

## Taliban could possibly seize power after US leaves: Trump

Washington: President Donald Trump on Friday said the Taliban could "possibly" overrun the Afghan government after the United States withdraws from the country, leaving the US-backed authorities to fend for themselves.

"Countries have to take care of themselves," Trump said at the White House. "You can only hold someone's hand for so long."

Asked if the Taliban could seize power, Trump said it's "not supposed to happen that way but it possibly will". "We can't be there for the next 20 years. We've been there for 20 years and we've been protecting the country but we can't be there for the next — eventually they're going to have to protect themselves," he said.

Trump said the Afghan government's ability to defend itself from the guerrillas after US forces pull out was unknown. "I don't know. I can't answer that question," he said. PTI

gunmen holed up in a half-finished apartment building, leading to a five-hour standoff with security forces. They were eventually killed and security forces cleared the building, Rahimi said. The area was cordoned off by dozens of security forces.

# S Korea threatens to retaliate over 'irrational' Japan quarantine move

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
SEOUL, MARCH 6

SEOUL THREATENED to retaliate on Friday over what it called Tokyo's "irrational" plan to quarantine arrivals from South Korea over the coronavirus outbreak, turning the scientific issue into a diplomatic row.

The two countries have close economic ties and are both major US allies, democracies and market economies faced with a rising China and nuclear-armed North Korea. But their relationship continues to be heavily affected by Japan's colonial rule of the Korean peninsula from 1910 to 1945 — a dispute that escalated into a trade and security row last year.

Japanese Prime Minister



Not only unfriendly but also unscientific: Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha

Shinzo Abe on Thursday announced that foreign arrivals who have recently been in China or South Korea would be required to spend 14 days in quarantine.

But it has taken particular issue with Japan's restrictions,

with the presidential office calling the decision "irrational" and contrasting its "scientific and transparent" outbreak control campaign with Tokyo's "opaque and passive" efforts.

The National Security Council agreed to consider "necessary measures based on the principle of reciprocity", the presidential Blue House said in a statement.

Seoul summoned the ambassador to protest, with foreign minister Kang Kyung-wha telling him: "Japan's action this time was not only unfriendly but also unscientific."

Her ministry accused Tokyo of ulterior motives, saying in a statement: "We can't help but question whether Japan has other motives than containing the outbreak."

## Ahead of Modi's Dhaka trip, protests held against CAA

SHUBHAJIT ROY  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi's proposed visit to Bangladesh has come under a cloud over massive protests against Citizenship Amendment Act that were held in Dhaka on Friday. One of the protesting outfits gave a call to form a nationwide human chain on March 12 and urged protesters to take to the streets carrying black flag, shoes, brooms and wearing shrouds.

As per *New Age Bangladesh*, protests were organised by Samamana Islami Dalgulo and Islami Andolan Bangladesh. They staged demonstrations at Baitul Mukarram National Mosque premises and adjacent areas.

Modi is scheduled to visit

Bangladesh on March 17 to join the celebrations marking the country's founder Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's birth centenary.

"The Islami Andolan Bangladesh declared to arrange prayer sessions in mosques on March 13 seeking divine blessings for oppressed Muslims in India and to hold demonstrations in the country," the *New Age*, a media outlet said.

Addressing the rally as the chair, Jamiat Ulama e Islam Bangladesh leader and Hefazate Islam's Dhaka city amir Nur Hossain Kasemi announced to form a countrywide human chain on March 12.

He criticised the government, saying it had come to power by snatching people's votes and was not understanding people's sentiments. He said that they would resist Modi's Bangladesh visit at any cost.

## Distorted, misleading: US judge on A-G's handling of Mueller report

CHARLIE SAVAGE  
WASHINGTON, MARCH 6

A FEDERAL judge on Thursday sharply criticised Attorney General William P Barr's handling of the report by the special counsel, Robert S Mueller III, saying that Barr put forward a "distorted" and "misleading" account of its findings and lacked credibility on the topic.

Barr could not be trusted, Judge Reggie B Walton said, citing "inconsistencies" between the attorney general's statements about the report when it was secret and its actual contents that turned out to be more damaging to President Trump. Barr's "lack of candour" called into question his "credibility and, in turn, the department's" assurances to the court, Judge Walton said.



William Barr

The judge ordered the Justice Department to privately show him the portions of the report that were censored in the publicly released version so he could independently verify the justifications for those redactions. The ruling came in a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit seeking a full-text version of the report.

The differences between the

report and Barr's description of it "cause the court to seriously question whether Attorney General Barr made a calculated attempt to influence public discourse about the Mueller report in favour of President Trump despite certain findings in the redacted version of the Mueller report to the contrary," wrote Judge Walton.

Barr's public rollout of the Mueller report has been widely criticised. Still, it was striking to see a Republican-appointed federal judge scathingly dissect Barr's conduct in a formal judicial ruling and declare that the sitting attorney general had so deceived the American people that he could not trust assertions made by a Justice Department under Barr's control.

A department spokeswoman had no immediate comment. NYT

## 'IT'S IMPORTANT FOR ME TO NOT JUST SAY SOMETHING, BUT TO DO SOMETHING'

# Jewish cemeteries threatened in France, some step up to guard them

ADAM NOSSITER  
WESTHOFFEN, MARCH 6

SOME OF the forgotten tombstones in the old Jewish cemetery look suspiciously whitened. It took vigorous scrubbing to get rid of the swastikas.

The defacing in December of gravestones in the cemetery in Westhoffen, a sleepy village in Alsace, was not isolated. In the absence of actual Jews in the Alsace countryside, their tombs have become easy targets in a region with an uneasy relationship

to a troubled wartime past and a penchant for voting far right.

Last year there were 50 similar incidents targeting Jews in Alsace, a historical cradle of French Judaism, where Jews have lived since the Middle Ages. Cemeteries, schools and village walls were daubed with swastikas or obscure references to the Third Reich.

In Westhoffen's cemetery, 107 tombstones were defaced; in the one in Quatzenheim, a village to the east, 96 were.

Eighty years ago, Alsace was incorporated into Nazi Germany,

and wartime local officials did the Nazis' bidding. The swastika was everywhere. Jews were expelled, deported and killed.

But today's local authorities found intolerable the image of old Jewish graves in contemporary France being defaced with the Nazi symbol.

So they took an unusual step: organising volunteers to patrol Alsace's 67 threatened rural Jewish cemeteries, protecting some of these neglected vestiges of a time when Jews, excluded from the city, were forced to flourish in the Alsatian countryside.



A 200-year-old Jewish cemetery in Wintzenheim. NYT

There are 20 volunteers — retired teachers, farmers, housewives and students. That none are Jewish heightens the interfaith symbolism. Each is equipped with a big badge that reads "Guardians of Memory."

"In the face of these acts, it's important for me to not just say something, but to do something, to act concretely to fight this, to try to stop it, and to pass the message that these acts actually reinforce civil society," said Axel Imhof, a 28-year-old Protestant pastor who has signed up as a Guardian in his village, Lauterbourg.

Even before the official start, some Guardians, a few of them living next to the cemeteries, had already been keeping an eye on them. "I had friends whose parents didn't come back" after the war, said Lise Tornare, 75, on why she and her husband, Robert, are committed to protecting the 200-year-old Jewish cemetery at their doorstep in Wintzenheim.

The patrol is a symbolic effort, flecked with ambiguities. Nobody pretends the volunteers will prevent the next "profanation," as these recurring episodes are referred to by locals. Some of

these vulnerable old cemeteries exist isolated in the middle of the Alsatian forest. The authorities have never found the perpetrators of last year's incidents.

"In some sense, there's a silence in the surrounding population," said Freddy Raphaël of the University of Strasbourg, the dean of historians of Alsace Judaism. "It isn't possible that something like this happens in a village, without somebody knowing."

"It's a silence that I compare, unfortunately, to the silence when the Jews were kicked out in 1940," Raphaël added. NYT

# 17 ECONOMY

<b>GOLD</b>	<b>RUPEE</b>	<b>OIL</b>	<b>SILVER</b>
₹45,343	₹73.87	\$51.03	₹48,180

\*Indian basket as on March 5, 2020

SENSEX: 37,576.62 ▼ 893.99 NIFTY: 10,989.45 ▼ 279.55 NIKKEI: 20,749.75 ▼ 579.37 HANG SENG: 26,146.67 ▼ 621.20 FTSE: 6,501.50 ▼ 203.93 DAX: 11,543.17 ▼ 401.55

\*International market data till 1900 IST

## BANKING WATCH E-PAYMENTS

### RBI restrictions on Yes Bank hit digital transactions, PhonePe among most affected

**PRANAV MUKUL**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

WITH YES Bank being put into moratorium by the Reserve Bank of India, a number of digital platforms that were dependent on Yes Bank's payment service gateways faced outages.

According to the National Payments Corporation of India, 14 of 31 third-party merchants offering UPI as a payment option exclusively use Yes Bank's gateway. The most significant disruption was faced by Flipkart-owned payment app PhonePe, which was down throughout the day on Friday. However, its functionalities were restored partially by evening.

Notably, Yes Bank has been among the leading banks handling transactions on the unified payments interface (UPI). In its annual report for 2018-19 (April-March), Yes Bank noted: "The Bank has consistently been ranked as First since inception for processing UPI based Merchant transactions (market share in merchant payments as on March 19 is 35 per cent) and second in terms of overall Payment Service Provider volumes across the UPI ecosystem in FY 2018-19 (overall market share as on March 19 is 31 per cent). The total number of UPI users for Yes Bank crossed 27.57 crore and the Bank processed around 143 crore transactions amounting to approximately Rs 2.35 lakh crore in FY 2018-19".

Yes Bank was put under moratorium late Thursday evening, with several ceilings, including letting depositors withdraw only Rs 50,000 per account, in addition to and a slew of others including not taking fresh liabilities. This resulted in the bank being unable to render the services as a payment service provider.

In a tweet Friday morning, PhonePe's CEO Sameer Nigam said: "Dear @PhonePe... customers. We sincerely regret the long outage. Our partner bank (Yes Bank) was placed under moratorium by RBI. Entire team's been working all night to get services back up asap". When asked by a Twitter user about lack of redundancies built in to the company's systems, Nigam pointed out that multiple redundancies existed. "Just never imagined the bank itself going totally dark like this. Lesson learnt in the hardest possible way," he added.

#### USERS OF BANK'S UPI PLATFORM

Major third-party merchants using Yes Bank's UPI platform:

- Flipkart
- PhonePe
- Cleartrip
- Angel Broking
- Hungerbox

Source: NPCI

Other than PhonePe, other major merchants using Yes Bank's UPI platform include Flipkart, Myntra, Cleartrip, Angel Broking, Hungerbox, among others.

In a statement, e-commerce firm Myntra said, "Transactions on Myntra have not been impacted, except for payments through PhonePe. Our customers can continue to transact on Myntra using other UPI payment service provider apps in addition to processing UPI based Merchant transactions (market share in merchant payments as on March 19 is 35 per cent) and second in terms of overall Payment Service Provider volumes across the UPI ecosystem in FY 2018-19 (overall market share as on March 19 is 31 per cent). The total number of UPI users for Yes Bank crossed 27.57 crore and the Bank processed around 143 crore transactions amounting to approximately Rs 2.35 lakh crore in FY 2018-19".

In addition to those platforms directly affected by Yes Bank's plight, some payments companies blocked payouts to Yes Bank accounts to prevent the funds of their customers and merchants from getting blocked. Paytm Payments Bank said it was restricting transaction settlements, including UPI, into Yes Bank accounts to safeguard its users' money. "Post the RBI moratorium on withdrawal of money from Yes Bank, Paytm Payments Bank has taken this step to ensure that its users' money doesn't get stuck in their Yes Bank accounts where they are unable to move their money out," the payments bank said in a statement.

Similarly, founder of financial-technology firm Instamojo Sampad Swain took to Twitter to announce: "We will be temporarily withholding payouts to your Yes Bank account until further clarity. This is to ensure your funds don't get blocked. You can change your registered bank in Payout Settings from Yes Bank to another account..."

Payment gateway firm Razorpay said while its core business remained unaffected due to the Yes Bank moratorium, there were minor disruptions in the auxiliary services, forcing the company to work with other banks for business continuity.

**"The current moratorium has been brought into effect keeping the depositors' interest in mind... A solution is being worked upon to revive the bank well before the moratorium period of 30 days ends"**

**PRASHANT KUMAR**  
ADMINISTRATOR, YES BANK

**"This is not a sectoral problem. It is a bank-specific problem... The RBI will take all steps to ensure financial stability... If SBI has to pick up a stake in Yes Bank, we have an in-principle approval for that"**

**RAJNISH KUMAR**  
CHAIRMAN, SBI

#### ENSECONOMIC BUREAU

MUMBAI, MARCH 6

THE RESERVE Bank of India's curbs on Yes Bank and a heavy sell-off in global markets triggered by coronavirus concerns led to a meltdown in Indian markets with the Sensex plunging 894 points and the Nifty crashing below the 11,000-mark on Friday. After diving over 1,459 points during the day, the 30-share BSE Sensex settled 893.99 points, or 2.32 per cent, lower at 37,576.62. The NSE Nifty tanked 279.55 points, or 2.48 per cent, to close at 10,989.45, even as bank stocks fell across the board. The rupee, which plunged below 74 during the day, closed 54 paise lower at 73.87 against the US dollar, amid mounting concerns over coronavirus and the latest woes in the banking sector. Yes Bank shares came under selling pressure, sinking 56 per cent to Rs 16.20 after the bank was

## '30 DAYS WHICH WE HAVE GIVEN IS THE OUTER LIMIT'

# Yes Bank resolution to be done very swiftly, says RBI Governor

**ENSECONOMIC BUREAU**  
MUMBAI, MARCH 6

A DAY after the Reserve Bank of India superseded the board of Yes Bank and appointed an administrator, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das on Friday assured its customers of "swift" action and a scheme "very shortly", in less than 30 days, even as thousands of customers rushed to withdraw funds and queued up at overcrowded branches across the country.

"The resolution (to Yes Bank) will be done very swiftly, it will be done very fast... 30 days which we have given is the outer limit. You will see a very swift action from RBI," Das said. While police was deployed to help control the crowds in many branches, businessmen and depositors remained nervous as the RBI has capped withdrawals at Rs 50,000 per depositor. The payment systems of the bank, including Point of Sale (PoS) terminals and ATMs of the bank went offline following the RBI curbs. Fintech companies like PhonePe which use the Yes Bank platform also faced problems.

Das said the decision on Yes



Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das at Banking Summit 'Structural Reforms In MSME Funding' in Mumbai on Friday. Ganesh Shirsekar

Bank was taken at a larger level, not only to deal with the problem in an individual entity, but also to maintain stability and resilience of the Indian financial and banking sector. "Let me assure you that our banking sector continues to be sound and safe. We stand committed to maintaining stability of financial and banking sector," he said on the sidelines of an event organised by Assocham. Giving reasons for the moratorium on the bank, Das said, "a market-led and bank-led resolution of the problem is always preferable. You have to give time to the bank management to take step and efforts. And the bank did take efforts. When we found that we cannot wait and should not wait any longer, we decided to inter-

## 'RBI takeover of Yes Bank highlights systemic risks'

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) takeover of Yes Bank casts light on governance risks in India's banking sector, as per Fitch Ratings

**RISKS**  
There is a risk that the already poor operating environment for the banking sector could suffer further impairment if the government's efforts to tackle problems in the bank fail to provide reassurance to depositors and investors

**DEPOSITOR CONFIDENCE**  
The central bank's takeover of Yes Bank appears intended to restore depositor confidence

**Negative outlook:** The banking sector has been assigned a negative outlook and the agency has lowered its operating environment rating from 'bbb-' to 'bb+' in 2019



**Move may backfire:** There is a risk that the RBI's move could backfire if it prompts depositors to shift their money to institutions that are perceived to be safer

## Curbs may disrupt India Inc ops: Crisil

**ENSECONOMIC BUREAU**  
MUMBAI, MARCH 6

WITH LARGE-SIZED withdrawals disallowed, a number of companies availing of facilities from Yes Bank could face disruption in their operations, which may constrain their ability to service financial obligations on time, Crisil said.

"There could also be a marginal uptick in delinquencies in retail loans of banks and non-banks, specifically because of customers who have linked their repayments to their deposit accounts in Yes Bank," Crisil said. These challenges, however, are likely to be temporary and more from a liquidity and cash flow

## Bank's ratings downgraded

Mumbai/New Delhi: ICRA has downgraded bonds and fixed deposit programmes amounting to Rs 52,611 crore of Yes Bank to 'D' category. ICRA's 'D' rating indicates that the instruments with this rating are in default or are expected to be in default upon maturity. Meanwhile, Moody's has downgraded Yes Bank's rating. "The ratings remain under review, with the direction uncertain," Moody's said downgrading Yes Bank Ltd's long-term foreign currency issuer rating to Caa3 from B2. **ENS & PTI**

Yes Bank's moratorium are resolved, it said. "The imposition of moratorium has material implications for companies that have been availing of various facilities and services from Yes Bank," it said.

## Sensex swings 1,459 points intra-day, Yes Bank crashes 56%

### Bourses: No F&O contracts for bank from May 29

New Delhi: The BSE and the NSE Friday decided to drop Yes Bank from Futures and Options segment from May 29. The existing F&O contracts across all expiries will expire on May 28. **PTI**

placed under a 30-day moratorium by the RBI. The company's market cap fell Rs 5,266 crore to Rs 4,131 crore on the BSE. "The already weak sentiments have been dented further. The series of accidents in the Indian financial sector sends out a very poor message to the foreign investors. The negative bias is expected to sustain in the near term," said Gaurav Dua, head-capital market strategy, Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

## BJP's ability to govern financial institutions exposed: Chidambaram

### Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said bad loans given during the UPA period had led to the present financial condition of the bank

regulate financial institutions stands exposed. First, it was PMC Bank. Now it is Yes Bank. Is the government concerned at all? Can it shirk its responsibility? Is there a third bank in the line?" he asked. "It is obvious that the crisis has been in the making since 2017 and the government did practically nothing except "talk to the RBI"... The FM has indirectly blamed the UPA for the near collapse of Yes Bank contrary to her own claim that the crisis started in 2017. FM was focused on what happened during the UPA." He questioned SBI's decision of exploring investment opportunities in Yes Bank. "BJP has been in power for six years. Their ability to govern and

## Early warning signals not heeded: Q2FY17 raised red flags, net NPAs doubled

**SANDEEP SINGH & SUNNY VERMA**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

THE GOVERNMENT'S hurriedly organised Reconstruction Scheme for Yes Bank alludes to "the rapidly deteriorating financial position" of the country's fifth-largest bank. But in October 2016, when Yes Bank's second quarter results came out, the deterioration in the asset quality due to the bank's corporate-heavy loan portfolio was more than apparent.

Yes Bank's gross non-performing assets (NPAs) surged 87 per cent from a year ago, with bulk of the jump being in the March and June quarters, following the RBI's asset quality review conducted last year. Its net NPAs more than doubled.

While the company then pointed to growth in lending coming from the less risky retail book, corporates continued to have the major share and the bank's high 9 per cent exposure to the power sector were pointed as big impediments. Apart from corporate governance lapses, heavy exposure to various lower rated corporates led to unravelling at Yes Bank. In the past three years, the RBI assessed divergence in reporting of its NPAs, and did not renew the term of then MD and CEO Rana Kapoor to change leadership, and appointed its nominee director of the bank's board.

Speaking to reporters on Friday, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the Reserve Bank of India stepped up its monitoring of the bank since 2017, when governance lapses starting coming to the surface.

"It's not that the Yes Bank matter has come up just yesterday or today... Since 2017 the Reserve Bank of India has been continuously, closely monitoring," she said. Government together with the RBI has been continuously monitoring this matter. In 2017, RBI noticed that governance issues were of serious concern and there was weak compliance along with wrong asset classification and

## Yes Bank's gross NPAs surged 87 per cent from a year ago, with bulk of the jump being in the March and June quarters, following the RBI's asset quality review

risky credit decisions. "In September 2018, they (RBI) clearly said that the leadership has to change, they did not allow further continuation of the Chief Executive's term (and a new CEO was appointed) ... these steps the RBI has been taking to keep the bank healthy," she said. Existing promoters of the bank were compelled to sell their shares as part of the clean up exercise.

In May 2019, the RBI appointed former deputy governor R Gandhi as an additional director on the board of Yes Bank for two years, from 14 May 2019 to 13 May 2021, under sub-section (1) of Section 36 AB of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949. The RBI can, according to this section, appoint additional directors "if the Reserve Bank is of [opinion that in the interest of banking policy or in the public interest or] in the interests of the banking company or its depositors it is necessary so to do, it may, from time to time by order in writing, appoint, with effect from such date as may be specified in the order, one or more persons to hold office as additional directors of the banking company."

Sitharaman said the new management at Yes Bank then made genuine attempts to raise capital but no money came, forcing the government and the RBI to put in place a reconstruction plan to safeguard interest of depositors, other stakeholders and the entire financial system. The government has also asked the RBI to assess what has caused the difficulties at the Yes Bank and assess the costs imposed on the financial system. The finance minister also asked the RBI to assess the adequacy of the extent of regulatory and supervisory norms.

## Even if EMIs don't go through, they won't attract penalties or affect credit score: Experts

**SANDEEP SINGH & PRANAV MUKUL**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

THE RBI'S decision to take over the board of Yes Bank and put it under moratorium for one month, with a withdrawal cap of Rs 50,000 for the depositor for one month, has created panic among not just the depositors of the bank and salary account holders but also among those who have their loan EMIs and mutual fund SIP auto debit mandate from their Yes Bank accounts as well as those having investment in its shares.

While individuals are looking to safeguard their respective interests, here is a primer to what you can do if you have exposure on one or more aforementioned aspects.

### What happens to your deposit?

While there is anxiety among depositors as to what will happen to their fixed deposits or money in the savings or current accounts, it must be first clarified that all depositors having exposure of up to Rs 5 lakh can breathe easy, as the government has recently raised the deposit insurance cover to Rs 5 lakh per account from Rs 1 lakh per account. In any case, since the government and the RBI have shown their resolve to revive the bank and the RBI has already announced a scheme of reconstruction for Yes Bank, it should give adequate confidence to depositors and account holders. The RBI has also said the bank may allow payment to its depositors an amount in excess of Rs 50,000 to meet unforeseen expenses — medical treatment, higher education of the depositors

### Will the EMI bounce lead to penalty or affect your credit score?

Since the limit for all transactions with Yes Bank stands at Rs 50,000 for the period of moratorium, if an investor has loan EMI debit mandate exceeding Rs 50,000, the transaction will not go through. Yes Bank customers will be required to change their debit mandate to other bank or will have to wait for the situation to normalise (expected within one month) to honour their payment to another bank or financial institution. However, bankers say since the situation has been created because of special moratorium imposed by RBI, banks won't impose any financial liability on Yes Bank customers if their debit mandates do not get honoured. There will be no penalties for late payment. Bankers say they will ensure that the default in payment for the month does not hamper the credit score of the customer.

### What should the Yes Bank investors do?

The shares of Yes bank have been extremely volatile over the last couple of days. While it jumped 27 per cent on Thursday, it traded between Rs 5.55 per share and Rs 33.2 per share on the BSE on Friday. The volatility is likely to continue over the next few days, as the details of the revival plan come out. Experts say since the government and the RBI are working out on a plan to infuse capital in the bank by roping in State Bank of India and other banks, long-term investors should wait for the development to play out before booking losses in a hurry.

### What happens to those having business accounts with Yes Bank?

If you are a merchant who uses payment gateways or a stock investor using services of certain brokerage firms, you may not be able to withdraw funds into your Yes Bank accounts. To protect funds from getting blocked in Yes Bank accounts, some companies are withholding payouts to such accounts. These include Paytm Payments Bank, MSME-focused payments gateway firm Instamojo, stock-brokerage Zerodha, among others. These firms have urged their customers to change their linked accounts to ones that are not with Yes Bank to be able to withdraw their funds.

INCLUDES ₹6,854 CR PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST UP TO FEB 2020

# ₹21,533 cr: Voda Idea AGR estimate less than half of DoT's calculation

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

VODAFONE IDEA on Friday said that total adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues payable by the company between financial year 2006-07 and 2018-19, according to its internal self-assessment, stood at Rs 21,533 crore. This amount includes a principal AGR amount of Rs 6,854 crore, and the interest on AGR up to February 2020, the company said in an update with the exchanges.

The self-assessed AGR dues of the telecom operator are less than half the AGR dues calculated by the government.

The Centre had estimated that the combined entity of Vodafone Idea owed it as much as Rs 53,038 crore. Vodafone Idea has so far deposited Rs 3500 crore with the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) in two tranches of Rs 2,500 crore and Rs 1,000 crore, respectively.

In a written reply, the government had informed the Lok Sabha on March 4 that Vodafone Idea owed it Rs 28,309 crore in licence fees, while the company had to pay nearly Rs 24,729.60 crore in spectrum usage charges.

The telco is under the lens of rating agencies which believe that it does not have the ability to pay the required AGR dues by March 17, 2020. Ind-Ra believes that Vodafone Idea does not have the ability to pay the dues by March 17, given the lack of clarity on promoter equity infusion, severe erosion in refinancing flexibility and insufficient cash balance (Rs 12,500 crore as of December 2019). The ruling has elevated the risk of acceleration in the payment of financial liabilities, the rating agency had said earlier last month.



Vodafone Group CEO Nick Read at meeting with the Finance Minister, in New Delhi. Anil Sharma

STATUS OF TELCOS' DUES			
COMPANY	TOTAL DUES	PAYMENT DONE	BALANCE
Vodafone Idea	₹53,038	₹3,500	₹49,538
Bharti Airtel*	₹35,586	₹13,000	₹22,586
Tata Group	₹13,823	₹2197	₹11,626
BSNL+MTNL	₹8,111	0	₹8,111
Rjio**	₹60.5	₹195.2	₹(-)134.6

All figures in rupees crore \* Does not include Rs 5,000 crore submitted with DoT additionally. \*\* The total AGR liability on Rjio was Rs 60.5 crore. It has paid Rs 195 crore

On Friday, Vodafone Group's chief executive officer Nick Read met Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad over the course of the day in two separate meetings. Both Read and Prasad refused to comment on the discussions between them.

Read's meeting on Friday with government authorities comes close on the heels of hectic meetings by Vodafone Idea chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla, who had also, over the last fortnight, met both Sitharaman and Prasad multiple times.

Following the Supreme

Court's judgment on October 24 last year, Read had — in an earnings conference call of the global telco — said that the situation in India was critical and that the company, which holds 49 per cent stake in Vodafone Idea, would not commit any more equity in India as the “country effectively contributed zero value to the company's share price”.

Read's views were later reiterated by Birla, who said that Vodafone Idea might have to shut shop if there was no relief from the government on the AGR front, as it did not make sense to “put good money after bad”.

argued that the limited capacity of suppliers should be channelled to the best interests of the economy and not just for the health of corporate debtors. Experts said the move to protect successful bidders from prosecution for offences by erstwhile management was an important step for the success of the insolvency regime.

“... the most significant change is the incorporation of Section 32A in the Bankruptcy Code in the current times. The finalised resolution plans were being affected pursuant to the attachments by the Enforcement Directorate,” said Shardul Shroff, managing chairman of law firm Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co.

He added that the decision to protect essential supplies of corporate debtors would benefit “telecom companies, mining companies and all companies which operate under license to continue their businesses (during insolvency)”.

GOVT POLICIES CLEAR, ECONOMIC FUNDAMENTALS STRONG: PM

# 'India and the world have to meet coronavirus challenge together'

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Friday said that coronavirus was a major challenge for the world and the global economy, and that India and the world would have to face the challenge together. He also criticised those who are in opposition to the government's moves — including the passing of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the removal of special status of Jammu & Kashmir under Article 370 — as people who sought to maintain the status quo.

The virus, which originated in Wuhan, China, has infected over 1,00,000 individuals worldwide as well as over 30 individuals in India, and caused major disruptions in trade and production.

“Today, coronavirus is a major challenge that the world is facing. Financial institutions have called it



PM Narendra Modi in New Delhi on Monday. Anil Sharma

a major challenge for the world economy. We have to meet this challenge together,” the Prime Minister said at the ET Global Business Summit here.

He added the global economy was going through a challenging time and that while India had become more integrated with the global economy, the government was taking steps to insulate it from

a slowdown in global growth.

“In the past few years, India has become an important part of the global economic system, but because of many reasons the global economy is going through a weak and tough time. We have been taking action to have this affect the Indian economy as less as possible,” said Modi, adding that the government's policies were

clear and that economic fundamentals were strong.

The Prime Minister also hit out at opposition to the CAA, stating that people who were “messiahs” of refugee rights around the world were opposing the Act aimed at helping refugees and that people who talked about the Constitution “day and night” opposed the implementation of the Constitution in Jammu and Kashmir through the removal of the special status from the “temporary” Article 370.

He said this category of people “supported the status quo and convenience” while the government saw development in the nation as an issue of “conviction.”

The PM also said India had remained neutral among nations in the past by maintaining an equal distance to them, but the country was now being neutral by being equally friendly with nations.

“We are friends with Saudi Arabia and Iran, America and Russia,” said Modi.

ACROSS THE WORLD

## ADB: Global GDP may lose \$77-347 bn

New Delhi: The coronavirus outbreak has the potential to significantly harm the Asian economies, and the global economy may suffer losses of \$77-347 billion, Asian Development Bank (ADB) said Friday. The virus outbreak may impact developing Asian economies through numerous channels, including sharp declines in domestic demand, lower tourism and business travel, trade and production linkages, supply disruptions, and health effects, ADB said, citing a new analysis done by it. “The magnitude of the economic losses will depend on how the outbreak evolves, which remains highly uncertain,” it said. PTI

## US dollars repatriated from Asia quarantined

Washington: The US Federal Reserve has begun quarantining physical dollars that it repatriates from Asia before recirculating them in the US financial system as a precautionary measure against spreading the virus, a Fed spokesperson told Reuters. She said regional Fed banks that help manage the money supply will set aside shipments of dollars from Asia for seven to 10 days before processing and redistributing them to financial institutions. REUTERS

BRENT FUTURES FALL 8.2% TO \$45.91 A BARREL

# Oil falls to lowest since 2017 as Russia rejects OPEC cut

REUTERS  
NEW YORK, MARCH 6

OIL PRICES tanked over 8 per cent on Friday and hit their lowest since mid-2017 after Russia balked at OPEC's proposed steep production cuts to stabilize prices as the coronavirus outbreak slows the global economy and hurts energy demand. Three years of cooperation between the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and Russia ended in acrimony after Moscow refused to support deeper oil cuts to reduce a glut and support prices that have swooned during the coronavirus outbreak. OPEC responded by removing all limits on its own production.

Brent futures fell \$4.08, or 8.2 per cent, to \$45.91 a barrel by 1722 GMT, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude fell \$3.80, or 8.3 per cent, to \$42.10 per barrel. Intra-day, Brent dropped to \$45.28 a barrel, its lowest since June 2017, and WTI to \$41.77, its weakest since August 2016. Both Brent and WTI were on track for their biggest daily percentage declines since 2015, putting both contracts



Personnel check body temperature of persons before a meeting at OPEC headquarters in Vienna, Austria, Friday. AP

down over 30 per cent so far this year. Brent's premium over WTI has fallen over 40 per cent in the past two weeks to just \$3.28 per barrel — lowest since March 2018.

OPEC was pushing for an additional 1.5 million barrels per day (bpd) of cuts until 2020 end. Non-OPEC states were expected to contribute 500,000 bpd to the overall extra cut, OPEC ministers said. The new deal would have meant OPEC+ output curbs amounting to 3.6 million bpd, or about 3.6 per cent of global supply.

Meanwhile, US Treasury prices surged Friday, pushing long-

dated yields to fresh record lows, as worries that the virus outbreak will hammer the world economy sent investors fleeing to assets seen as safe havens. The 10-year Treasury yield fell to a record low of 0.66 per cent and was last down at 0.732 per cent. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 1.5 per cent to 25,729.32. The S&P 500 lost 1.74 per cent to 2,971.25, while Nasdaq Composite fell 1.64 per cent, to 8,595.40. MSCI's gauge of stocks across the globe shed 1.87 per cent and emerging market stocks lost 2.43 per cent. The STOXX 600 index in Europe fell 3.35 per cent.

# RBI seeks IMF-driven currency swaps

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU  
MUMBAI, MARCH 6

RESERVE BANK OF India (RBI) governor Shaktikanta Das on Friday made a case for international multilateral agencies like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) launching currency swaps for countries affected by the

spread of COVID-19, also known as coronavirus. He said a coordinated swap line would act as a second line of defence to bolster national reserves across nations.

“We will be able to respond to the challenges emerging out of the coronavirus epidemic,” Das said at an industry event here. While noting that there are enough resources to fight the cri-

sis, given the robust forex reserves, he also called for the IMF to launch a non-stigmatised currency swap lines to ease the liquidity pressures globally.

“RBI stands ready to intervene in whatever way required to respond to epidemic challenges,” Das said, as he expects global growth to slow down due to coronavirus. FE WITH PTI

# IBC Second Amendment Bill cleared in Lok Sabha; new management not to be prosecuted for predecessor's offences

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

THE LOK Sabha on Friday passed the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) (Second Amendment) Bill 2019, which seeks to ring-fence new management from offences committed by the erstwhile management. The Bill was first tabled in Lok Sabha on December 12, 2019, but was referred to the Standing Committee on Finance before being reintroduced in Parliament on Friday. The Bill is set to replace an ordinance which had brought provisions of the Bill into effect on December 28.

The government moved to protect successful bidders under the IBC after the Enforcement Directorate attached assets of Bhushan Power and Steel Ltd. after a resolution plan for the company by JSW Steel Ltd. had been approved, stalling the implementation of the resolution plan.

The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal has since held JSW Steel immune from prosecution under the new law and allowed implementation of the plan. The new Bill also seeks to create a threshold of a minimum of 10 per cent of allottees or 100 individual allottees to initiate insolvency proceedings for real estate projects. Government officials said that the move was aimed at preventing speculative homebuyers from dragging otherwise viable real estate projects through the IBC. The amendment, officials said, also seeks to protect the “going concern” status of companies undergoing insolvency proceedings by allowing a company's resolution professional to require that suppliers continue providing essential goods and services.

The Standing Committee on Finance had, however, opposed this move in its report equating it to over-regulation of suppliers, particularly MSME suppliers, and

# GST officers meet: SOP to be framed by physically verify risky taxpayers

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

CENTRAL AND state governments will examine further steps to boost tax compliance and revenues under the goods and services tax (GST) regime — including examining a proposal to curb availability of input tax credit (ITC) by new taxpayers and measures to check export valuation including capping of value for calculating export incentives.

GST officers, who met for the third national conference on Friday, will also frame standard operating procedure (SOP) for physical spot verification of risky taxpayers and for blocking and

unblocking of ITC, an official statement said. This follows after the Centre had restricted availability of ITC to 10 per cent of invoices uploaded by the taxpayers' suppliers from 25 per cent earlier. Fake invoices and fraudulent availment of ITC have emerged as one of the biggest sources of tax evasion under the indirect tax regime.

Deliberations regarding streamlining of GST return filing process, enhancing revenue and focussed compliance management were part of the third national GST conference of state and central tax officers, chaired by the Revenue Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey and attended by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

The meeting comes ahead of the GST Council meeting slated for March 14. During the meeting, the Finance Minister “intensively discussed” the status of GST Portal to address grievances of taxpayers, the statement said.

Officials from Rajasthan, West Bengal, Odisha, Gujarat and Punjab made presentations on practices followed by them for compliance management and revenue augmentation and various steps taken to curb tax evasion.

Infosys presented the status on business statistics, trend of filing return, preparedness of the system for facilities proposed to be launched and measures taken to address GST Portal's capacity and to resolve difficulties being faced by taxpayers.

# MCA gets NCLT nod to recast financial statements of CG Power

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

THE MUMBAI bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) Thursday allowed the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) to recast the financial statements of CG Power and Industrial Solutions Ltd for the past five years.

The MCA had submitted before the NCLT that the CG Power group had understated advances to related and unrelated parties of the firm by Rs 1,990 crore and Rs 2,807 crore, respectively, as of March 2018, based on disclosures

by the firm's board of directors. The MCA approached the NCLT last November after CG Power, in regulatory filings, said it had Rs 3,019 crore of receivables from “various promoter-affiliated companies and connected parties”.

“We are of the considered view, after hearing all the parties concerned, that the permission is hereby accorded to the applicant for reopening of the books of accounts and recasting the financial statements of Respondent No. 1 Company (CG Power) and its subsidiary companies for the past five years” ordered a two-member bench of NCLT.

# SC judge cautions against delays in cases under IBC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

A SUPREME Court judge on Friday cautioned that delays had started emerging in processes under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) and urged all stakeholders to come together to avert this.

Speaking at the Colloquium of Members of National Company Law Tribunals and National Company Law Appellate Tribunal

on ‘Judicial Sensitisation on Insolvency Law and Associated Best Practices’, Justice N V Ramana hailed the work of the tribunals and said that according to a recent report, the realisable amount through cases resolved under the IBC as on February 2020 amounted to around Rs 3.57 lakh crore.

He said under the earlier regime, one of the major issues was delay in proceedings, which resulted in largescale reduction in the value of assets of companies.

# Registration of new companies under EPFO, ESIC to be done on MCA portal

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

REGISTRATION OF new public, private limited companies and one person company under the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) and the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) will now be done on the website of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs instead of the Labour Ministry's

Shram Suvidha Portal at present, the Labour Ministry said Friday.

“As part of the ongoing efforts to improve India's ranking in the doing business report 2021, Ministry of Labour and Employment has completed the reform to integrate process of registration for GST, EPFO, ESIC and profession Tax for Maharashtra with company incorporation, in tandem with the MCA,” the Ministry said in a statement. “The reform has been com-

BRIEFLY

## Gold rises ₹773 on safe-haven appeal

New Delhi: Gold on Friday jumped Rs 773 to Rs 45,343 per 10 gram in the national capital as mounting worries over the economic fallout from the fast-spreading coronavirus drove investors towards the safe-haven metal. In the previous trade, the precious metal had closed at Rs 44,570 per 10 gram, as per HDFC Securities. Silver prices also rose by Rs 192 to Rs 48,180 per kg against to the previous close of Rs 47,988 per kg. PTI

## AI divestment: Process going 'extremely well'

New Delhi: Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Friday indicated that the deadline for submission of preliminary bids for Air India could be extended even as he emphasised that the divestment process is going on “extremely well”. Making a second attempt to privatise Air India in as many years, the government on January 27 came out with a Preliminary Information Memorandum (PIM).

## Guarantees by listed cos: Sebi releases paper

New Delhi: To protect the interests of shareholders, Sebi — in a consultation paper — on Friday proposed that a listed entity shall obtain prior approval from the shareholders on a “majority of minority” basis, before extending any loan, guarantee or security for the benefit of promoter entities.

## Maruti cuts production by 5.38% in Feb

New Delhi: Maruti Suzuki India cut production by 5.38 per cent in February at 1,40,933 units, according to a regulatory filing by the company. Maruti had produced a total of 1,48,959 units in the same month last year. Total passenger vehicle production stood at 1,40,370 units last month as against 1,47,550 units in February 2019, a decline of 4.87 per cent, it added.

## VW launches Tiguan Allspace in India

Mumbai: Volkswagen Friday launched India-specific 7-seater Tiguan Allspace premium SUV in the domestic market priced at Rs 33.12 lakh (ex-showroom). The new car, which comes with a 2-litre BS-VI-compliant engine, is an extended version of the 5-seater Tiguan. PTI

## EU trade chief hopeful on US 'mini-deal'

Dublin: The European Union is hopeful of reaching a “mini” trade accord with the US in the coming weeks, but there are still difficult issues to overcome including barriers for farm products, EU Trade Commissioner Phil Hogan said Friday. He was speaking ahead of a visit to Washington on March 16-17 that may be crucial to stave off possible car tariffs from the United States. REUTERS

**संत लॉगोवाल अभियांत्रिकी एवं प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान**  
**SANT LONGOWAL INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY**  
Longowal, Dist. Sangrur, Punjab - 148106  
(Deemed to be University under MHRD)

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

e-Tender in two Bid System, i.e. Technical and Financial Bid are invited for the work Providing Watch & Ward Services at SLIET Longowal for the FY 2020-21.

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**DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER**

**DELHI JAL BOARD GOVT OF NCT OF DELHI**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (EAST)-I**  
**M 16 MAYUR VIHAR PKT E PHASE II NEW DELHI-110091**

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**NIT No. 66/East-I/(2019-20)**

Sl. No.	Name of work	Estimated Contract Value (ECV)/ Amount put to tender	Earnest Money (EMD)	Tender Fees	Date of Release of tender in E-Procurement Solution & Tender ID No.	Last Date/ Time of receipt of tender E-Procurement Solution
1.	Providing and laying peripheral sewer line by trenchless method At connecting to Turck Sewer line 1200 mm dia in D-Block West Vinod Nagar, Narwana road in AC-57 in East-I	30,45,577.00	61,000.00	500.00	05.03.2020 2020_DJB_189252_2	21.03.2020 At 03:15 PM
2.	Replacement of old sewer line network area near Ramu Kachorie in LOP K-Block Laxmi Nagar in East-I (AC-58)	36,12,315.00	72,300.00	500.00	05.03.2020 2020_DJB_189252_4	21.03.2020 At 03:15 PM

Further details in this regard can be seen at <https://govt.procurement.delhi.gov.in>

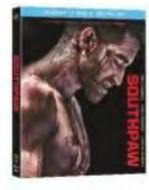
ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)

Adv. No. J.S.V. 901/2019-20

**EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (EAST)-I**

# 19 REVIEWS

CINEMA & MUSIC



DVD & BLU-RAY  
SOUTH PAW  
★★★★  
₹ 148/-

**KAAMYAAB** ★★★★★  
Director: Hardik Mehta Cast: Sanjay Mishra, Deepak Dobriyal, Isha Talvar, Avtar Gill

## Spotlight on the Sides

SHUBHRA GUPTA

A REALISTIC hardscrabble story of a character actor runs the risk of turning either too dull, or too exaggerated. Hardik Mehta skates the thin line between drama and drabness so adroitly that the film feels both enervated and energised at the same time.

*Kaamyab* is a moving, consistently engaging portrait of an artist as a weathering, weathered man. And Sanjay Mishra is faultless as the lead character — always the bridesmaid, never the bride; an insider but always on the outside.

When we first come upon Sudheer (Mishra), he is being interviewed. From the way the interviewer tries to talk up her subject, for herself and her crew, we know that the person in front of her, once a popular 'side' actor, now on the downslide of middle age, is just an assignment.

After a revival of sorts, Sudheer finds himself back on a movie set, but not until he has discovered just how far the world has changed from the time he and his compatriots played the stock characters of the Hindi cinema of the 70s and 80s — the cop who always arrives late, the bellowing bad guy who has his wicked way with the side actress, the lawyer who says 'mi'lord, the doctor who says, *badhai ho, ladka hua hai*, and so on, each assigned a dialogue or two, as stock as the character.

One of the sharpest sequences involves Sudheer fumbling his lines, in take after unsuccessful take. The hero's disdain, the production person's active hostility, the assistants bristling with their walkie-talkies and impatient instructions, the old-time sympathetic make-up artist: this could have turned into melodrama, but it's all low-key, just the right tone to make us see those small humiliations which hurt more than a big showdown.

The ensemble cast is well assembled. A scene which has many familiar, forgotten faces suddenly take you back to the movies



when the hero's entry was the most important thing about the film. Deepak Dobriyal as a self-important casting agent, is as always, spot on. Avtar Gill plays an actor called Avtar Gill, and it's all very meta: is the version of Gill we see on screen as insecure and annoying as Gill who is playing him? Mishra's playing of Sudheer is balancing act too: himself a long-time 'character' actor who has only occasionally played the lead (with spectacular results in *Aankhon Dekhi*), and who will, for all his success, never be A-list.

A pretty young woman (Talvar), playing the classic struggler, calls Bombay a terrible city which only hands out rejection, and flits off 'for a break'. That immediately grounds the film: there is life elsewhere too. As does Sudheer's growing interaction with his own family, a daughter with a husband and their little girl, which starts spiky but becomes filled with an awareness that this is where he belongs.

There are a few false steps, and some overstating the case. But the film succeeds in differentiating between the real and real: it can be really hard to choose between a head of

thinning grey hair and an awful jet-black toupee, if that choice leads back to the spotlight. To play second-rung well, you have to be first-rate, and Mishra, who has been single-note and loud in many performances, has pulled it off here. Where does real success lie? Being a good person, available emotionally to the people closest to you: that the film manages to give us this insight without getting preachy is its real *kaamyabi*, both heart-warming, and heart-breaking.

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## Everyday Magic

ONWARD  
★★★

Director: Dan Scanlon  
Voices of: Tom Holland, Chris Pratt, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Octavia Spencer

SHALINI LANGER

ONCE THE world was full of wonder, adventure and magic. But then came inventions, some as simple as a light bulb, rendering them superfluous. That's how *Onward* starts. However, by the time it comes around to the end, you realise what this latest Pixar animation has been nudging you all along towards: discovering the magic in your everyday life, the adventure and wonder of it.

Writer-director Dan Scanlon (Monsters University) doesn't really make neat work of it, and the film often seems confused about that line between magic that seeks to impress, and magic that just is. It is also too much about a lot of things: boys who miss fathers, brothers who quarrel, misfits who seek friends, adventures at the end of which lie phoenix gems, plus elves, Cyclops, centaurs, dragons and "manticores (Spencer, a real scene-stealer)". While the film is centred in a parallel universe where two moons light up the sky and the above creatures known from fairy tales populate the ground, it doesn't have to be about them. However, the story keeps falling back on crutches like these.

At the heart of the tale are two elves, Ian

(Holland) and elder brother Barley (Pratt), who have been raised by their feisty mother (Louis-Dreyfus) alone since their father died before Ian was born. That has left a giant hole in the life of Ian, a shy boy who has just had the loneliest 16th birthday ever, but also Barley, who keeps imagining a return to the days of yore, filled with bravery, quests, swords, and fights.

A gift their father has left behind for them can help them bring him back to life for a day, if they can get the magic right. In a decision that seems cringeworthy at first, in their first bid, the sons can revive only half their dad, in uncomfortably skinny trousers, with the top half missing. The brothers hook him with an extendable leash to keep track of him.

While the depiction is a little too on-the-nose, one can soon see where the thread is leading. Like a father moulds a child, it is upon Ian and Barley here to give shape to their father, which they must do within 24 hours. A road film, a coming-of-age tale, a Harry Potteresque adventure, *Onward* takes a very long route towards what is an inevitable end.

And then, just when you think it has wielded all that magic for no wonder, the film finds its sweet spot — in a dragon carved out of ordinary stones, in life's small triumphs and disappointments, in enchantments that can be spun only from love and sacrifice. *Onward's* spell may not be as lasting as it may have wished, but in those moments, it is strong enough.

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## Lost Story

GUILTY (Netflix)  
★★  
Director: Ruchi Narain  
Cast: Kiara Advani, Akansha Ranjan Kapoor



A STORY about the college heart throb being accused of rape by a not-so-popular girl, in the shadow of the recent #metoo movement. This sounds like the perfect launch pad for Dharmatic, the supposed alter ego of Dharmatic Productions, under the aegis of Karan Johar. Dharmatic presents *Guilty*, a two-hour film which speaks about rape, consent, privilege, slut-shaming, power dynamics, the he-said, she-said diatribe, etc. The list is endless. Set in an elite Delhi University college, the story is told through the shenanigans of a college band Doobydo, whose lead vocalist is VJ, son of an imminent politician. His girlfriend Nanki (Kiara Advani), in her black nail polish-tattooed-boyfriend jeans-wearing-Virginia-Wolf-goth glory, is the songwriter for the band. Enter Tanu Sharma from Dhanbad, whose chosen pronoun for herself is *hum*, who is unabashed about her desires — which includes VJ — and not apologetic about the attention she seeks. But as she is a 'scholarship kid' and doesn't fit into the elite, English-medium *wala* trope, almost everyone in college keeps her at a distance. On a fateful Valentine's day celebration, things happen and later at a time when the #metoo movement is at its peak, a

tweet by Tanu accuses VJ of rape. What unravels is predictable. Back and forth with lawyers, various versions of the incidents. Phrases like 'she was asking for it' 'consensual, he is a good guy' are all heard, as the timeline for that night are recreated. The lawyer (Taaher Shabbir) who is hired by VJ's parents, is the proverbial crusader with a heart of gold, as he digs deep and goes beyond the 'she's a gold digger' narrative. Care has been taken to show the complicity of everyone — college administration, police, and in the end even the bleeding heart liberals and women.

The problem with *Guilty* is not the subject matter or the premise. Rather a mainstream film on the given matter, in a post #metoo world would have helped take the conversation forward. But it's the other infractions and the rather insipid treatment that lets you down. We get that the writers wished to reflect that strong, independent, expressive women shouldn't be slut-shamed and that a no is a no but the way they stumble their way through it leaves much to be desired. Not once do we feel any empathy for any of the characters. Kiara Advani is reduced to the 'tortured artistic-creative' types, and Tanu Sharma, in

her ill-fitting clothes is a poor caricature of the small-town-girl with big dreams.

Also, Dharmatic, this alter ego of Dharmatic, inhabits a world, where they are trying hard to counter the 'it's all about loving your parents' brief of the parent company. Here, the 'youngsters' are all smoking weed, getting sloshed, and talking in swear words that would not look out of place in an Anurag Kashyap film. But in the end, the big melodramatic moment, which takes place on a stage, is everything Karan Johar, sans the Manish Malhotra lehengas and lavish sets. Just a polite shout out to the writers, not every kid from the north east in DU is called Tashi.

As we now inhabit offices where many accused of the #metoo movement are back and we as a society are trying to deal with it all, *Guilty* had an opportunity to take forward the conversation but this is certainly no *Pink*. With the film's director, writers and dialogue writer all being women, *Guilty* could have been that film that talked to us. Instead, it became a lost opportunity. One extra star, just for the subject matter. Go watch *Pink* again.

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## Still Rebelling without a Cause

BAAGHI 3  
★★  
Director: Ahmed Khan  
Cast: Tiger Shroff, Riteish Deshmukh, Shraddha Kapoor, Jaideep Ahlawat, Vijay Varma, Jackie Shroff



THE ONLY reason for *Baaghi 3* to exist is this: to showcase the amazingly ripped bod of Tiger Shroff, who is poetry when in motion, and faltering verse when there's emotion.

You'd think that combo would be just fine for a film which takes its *kuchh bhi* attitude when it comes to plot points, with as much seriousness as it does its relentless focus on our lithe hero who flows over multiple badies in multiple locations, straddling planes and automobiles and, yes, tanks, to stand before us, bloodied but unbowed.

The last time Tiger got into an actioner, he had to play second fiddle with the very sexy, equally fit Hrithik Roshan. This time around, no such risks are taken. Riteish Deshmukh, who plays Tiger's *bada bhai*, is made to be a scared pussy cat, the nice guy who can't deal with violence, the one who cries in movies.

No such problems with Tiger aka Ronny. He keeps all evil away from his older brother, at any cost, whether it is bullies in movie halls or terrorists in Syria. Just so we have no doubt either of intention or execution, a certain Abu Jamal, the *sargana* of a Tashkar outfit, is made to quaver after his wicked plans of blowing up humans appear to go astray: is it America,

or Roosia, or the Mossad?  
No, silly. It is Ronny, the one man army, who has dropped by Syria in order to rescue his brother and other unfortunates from a messy end. Yeah, yeah, we told you that logic is not the strongest suit of this flick; no one strains themselves trying to make us understand how easily a bunch of Indians seem to slide into one of the most dangerous places on earth right now, in order to create more mayhem, as if more were required.

While you are wrestling with this, and

watching all the grappling on screen, we have to tell you that this *bhai-mance* does make space, almost as an afterthought, for women. They are as stock as the rest of the characters: a ditzzy girl-friend who suddenly turns into a tanned action heroine (Kapoor), a dutiful wife who gets duly pregnant (Lokhande) and some more on the periphery.

Talking of stock, the Syrians say *yalla yalla*. Making up for their vocabulary is colourful desi villain (Ahlawat) who spouts rhymes, and a helpful fellow (Varma) who speaks in a Hyderabad accent, and who just materialises out of thin air to help. These are two good actors whose chief job is to show up the strictly limited range of the Shroff-Kapoor combine: when they are not chasing bad guys, they are dancing to tuneless songs.

But these are fringe benefits. The main act has Shroff show us just how he's conquered the action space. And two tiny, almost throwaway things, which you cling on to in this much too stretched saga, despite all the hustle-bustle: when a cop (yes, Jackie's here too, as a brave, sacrificial daddy-o) says that rioters have no *dham aur mazhab*, which gives off a sharp resonance. And when sonny boy strikes another for Hindu-Muslim amity, and rescues not just Hindustanis but also Pakistanis from the Jehadis, who are the enemies-of-us-all.

These bits are not as gung-ho as they would have been in the masala era of the 70s and 80s, but I will take this pallid stab — anything to hold on to in these dark days — and wave back at our *baaghi* while doing so. **SG**

### BREAKING DOWN NEWS

## The viral show

From Xi Jinping to Trump, what the news tells us about the responses of leaders to the coronavirus outbreak



BY PRATIK KANJILAL

THE CORONAVIRUS outbreak has the makings of a political thriller, and perhaps someone, somewhere is already writing a book in which world leaders are brought down after bungling in the face of an international public health crisis. China lost face when the world learned that the administration had initially tried to cover up the original

outbreak in Wuhan, by censoring a whistleblower for posting online about a new, SARS-like disease. Despite the rapid state response which followed, including the magical appearance of hospitals and wards where none existed before, the world's press had begun to speculate that the initial mishandling had undermined the credibility of Xi Jinping. Now, the US is giving China stiff competition, with a little help from its free press, which is exposing epic stupidity in high places.

Fox News covered a visit to the National Institutes of Health made by President Trump and Alex Azar, secretary of Health and Human Services. Azar dramatically announced that he had learned from the "actual bench scientists" (whatever that means) that they had "developed a poten-

tial vaccine for the novel coronavirus in just three days." Alchemy meets Indrajala. The president had been informed of something very important, "that yesterday, the Food and Drug Administration authorised it for entry into phase one safety clinical trials." Azar made it sound like it would be available over the counter in CVS and Boots by March, right next to the antacids. Well, he used to be a pharma lobbyist and president of Eli Lilly, so what do you expect?

A video on social media bearing the logo

But enough of this new plague. *Space.com* reported this week that Nasa had opened astronaut recruitment to the public with an ad on *usajobs.gov*

of the American Independent Institute is just as damaging. In it, Trump is seen bargaining for time with pharmaceutical executives. They tell him that testing a candidate vaccine would carry on into June. "In a couple of months?" the president coaxes. "I like the sound of a couple of months better." Someone has to explain to him that there is a history of poorly tested products actually triggering new diseases, and that the mistake should not be repeated. "Good idea!" the president interjects in a droll sort of way, and people titter politely. Other news reports had medical and pharma experts patiently explaining to Trump that his idea of using the common flu vaccine against the novel coronavirus would not work. "Not just a little?" he wheedled. Not only is the chief executive of the US unfamiliar with the rudiments of the life sci-

ences, but also with the principle that specialised matters should be left to specialists.

Repeatedly, it has fallen upon leading immunologist and HIV researcher Anthony Fauci of the National Institutes of Health and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, to save America from the exuberant ignorance of his CEO. At the NIH, after Azar's dramatic speech, Fauci told the press of a timeline of 12 to 18 months for developing a vaccine. Upon which, a disgusted Trump interjected with a waggle of forefinger: "You wanna tell them about therapeutics?"

Certain therapeutics are being discussed in India, too. The department of Ayush of the health ministry earned much opprobrium in the press for promoting alternative therapies for prophylaxis and the reduction of symptoms. It may have been acceptable if they were clearly defined as alternative, and if the priority of the widely publicised strategies to prevent and contain infection had been stressed. But what was on TV surpassed all nostrums: "Does a peg of liquor finish off coronavirus?" It was sanitised with a question mark signifying journalistic scepticism, and at least it didn't pro-

mote *gaumutra* as the universal specific, but what the hell?

But India's campaign against the virus has a natural advantage: the health minister is a doctor himself. So it is all right if the prime minister, who is a non-technical person, spends the week wondering what to do with his social media accounts on Sunday. Unlike the US Centers of Disease Control, which has been accused of limiting the publication of data to make the numbers look more palatable, the Indian government has promptly confirmed community transmission, which indicates that the superbug is now free to travel and needs no external impetus.

But enough of this new plague. *Space.com* reported this week that Nasa had opened astronaut recruitment to the public with an ad on *usajobs.gov*. Only US citizens are eligible, naturally, but the news was picked up everywhere. Because it contained two deadpan sentences displaying the comic genius of the copywriter: "Extensive travel required," and "Telework eligible: No." By Jupiter!

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# 21 BODY & MIND

## The tyranny of being social and outgoing

We tend to confuse shyness with introversion. Preference for solitude is a way of being, not an illness



IMAGINE  
BY SHELJA SEN

"WHY CAN'T you be more social?" This was my mother's constant grouse when I was growing up. No wonder that when I hear parents complaining about their children not being social enough, I want to ask them to back off immediately. Why do we put so much pressure on children to be outgoing, bold and popular? Why is there a general sense of dissatisfaction with a child who prefers to spend time on her own - reading, dreaming and just being. Just because somewhere the society has convinced us that a child has to be gregarious and socially skilled for her to be smart. But does she?

Imagine you are at a birthday party and kids are having a wonderful time jumping at the bouncy castle, pushing each other and laughing. Now picture that little kid who is

happily sitting in a corner making his drawing or rummaging in the mud for insects. The chances are high that he would be ticked off by so many well-wishers passing by for being on his own and not playing with other kids. He might also get a lecture on the way back home on, "Why can't you be like other children?" Let's shift the scene to the school PTM where a child is looking miserably at the floor as the teacher lectures on, "She needs to speak up in class. She is too shy." The three-letter word that will haunt her for life as if it is an affliction.

We also tend to confuse shyness with introversion when they are quite different. Shyness is the fear of being socially judged and disapproved whereas introversion is preference for quieter pursuits. Many times, through repeated messages that we give an introverted child, he might become shy as he starts thinking something is wrong with him and therefore fears social rejection.

It is tough if you are an introvert in this world as you will automatically be seen as being weird; an oddball that needs to be fixed. Actress Emma Watson (a.k.a. Hermione Granger) shared in one of her interviews, 'If you're anything other than an extrovert, you're made to think there's something wrong with you.'

In her influential book *Quiet, The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking*,

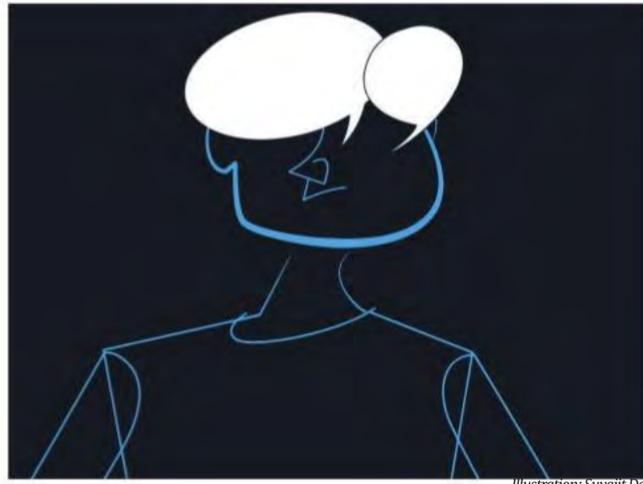


Illustration: Suvajit Dey

Susan Cain highlights research that indicates that there is a tendency in all of us to admire the Extrovert Ideal. She explained how people who are more talkative, speak with higher velocity and volubility (typical extrovert) were rated as smarter compared to people who spoke less or more slowly. How many of us are overwhelmed by the tyranny of being social and outgoing, attend parties, be part of team buildings when every cell of our being

wants to run and hide in a corner with a book? I know many will judge us for being boring, but preference for solitude and quiet is a way of being and not a deficit.

Schools are perfect examples of this bias. Children who shine on stage or in student councils are generally typical extroverts. Introverts are generally hauled up for not raising their hands, speaking up or being bold enough. They typically struggle for visibility.

They are the quiet ones who are not so social, popular, assertive and out there. They prefer hanging out with a couple of their friends or better still, spending their break in the library. They avoid attracting attention to themselves, so generally do not raise their hand to ask questions, give answers or offer more than necessary information. Many times their talents go unnoticed as they would rather not talk about it. They happily, or most times unhappily, stand in the shadows while others, less talented and skilled than them, take away all the limelight.

I remember once I was observing a class and there was an adorable, quiet little boy sitting next to me. He tried raising his hand tentatively to answer and at times even tried calling out gently for the class teacher. Unfortunately, the teacher was too busy responding to the louder voices vying to grab her attention. After some, I saw him give up and sit back quiet and dejected.

What our quiet children need is a balance of the ABC:

**Accept:** Introverts end up carrying a huge sense of guilt and anxiety for not being interesting enough. It is tough to go against society's ideal of what makes a smart child and accept the child as she is. Nowadays, in most progressive schools, there is a lot of focus on group learning. The assumption is that only through collaborative work can children learn effectively, and that it will encourage essential life skills. This approach is good for extroverts, but what about introverts who learn best in solitude? They could always be given a choice rather than making it mandatory. It could be worthwhile to make some quiet spaces in the classroom for these cerebral thinkers. A

child who understands 'I might be different from others, but I am fine', will be in a much better position to explore her strengths rather than wasting her time pretending to be somebody she is not.

**Balance:** I have to admit that introverts have a tendency to stick to their cerebral comfort zone and are averse to stretching themselves socially. We need gentle nudges to be a little more adventurous. And reminders that we all need our little village no matter how small. As long as the child is feeling accepted and she has a sense of personal agency and not something that is demanded of her, she can set her own pace and identify where she wants to "stretch". Similarly, we need to train extroverts to be a little more reflective, sensitive, learn to spend time on their own and appreciate their inner world.

**Celebrate:** Can you imagine what our world would have been without amazing people like Satyajit Ray, Munshi Premchand, Proust, J.K. Rowling and Virginia Woolf? Introverts are the thinkers, listeners, poets, writers, creators who love dwelling in their rich inner life. Known for being highly sensitive, they perceive and feel the world much more strongly. So go ahead and celebrate your introverted child. He might not be the star of the party, but his sparkling mind can shine like none other if given the space to be.

As Susan Cain put it so beautifully, "Love is essential: gregariousness is optional."

(Dr Shelja Sen is therapist, writer and co-founder of Children First, a child & adolescent mental health institute) write to shelja.sen@childrenfirstindia.com

### DIET DIARY

## Gender matters: Why we need to address women's health issues differently



BY ISHI KHOSLA

WHEN IT comes to health risks and outcomes, gender is an issue. While some differences have always been known, recent research helps to better understand that men's and women's needs for optimal health are unique. For example, women are four times more likely to have migraines than men, three times more likely to have thyroid disease and arthritis, and twice as likely to have anxiety, depression, and Alzheimer's. Hormones are an important part of the factors for women's health risks, including Alzheimer's.

Up until recently, research has demonstrated that gut microbes regulate many aspects of human physiology, including intestinal permeability, the absorption of nutrients from food, and immunity. However, recent studies suggest that gut microbes play another crucial role in the human body by regulating circulating estrogen levels. The collection of microbes in the gut, called the estrobolome, are capable of metabolising estrogens. Estrobolome modulates the circulation of estrogens and affects estrogen levels. It is now suggested that balancing the microbiome can be a new way to treat estrogen-related diseases

When the gut microbiome is healthy, the estrobolome produces just the right amount to maintain estrogen balance. However, with gut dysbiosis, there could either be a deficiency or an excess of free estrogen, thus promoting the development of estrogen-related disorders, including excess weight around the belly, heart disease, osteoporosis, endometriosis, polycystic ovarian syndrome and even breast, ovarian, endometrial and cervical cancer.

It's therefore not surprising that during hormonal changes associated with pregnancy, post-pregnancy and menopause, women's gut microbiome undergoes changes and the risk to diseases like autoimmunity and even psychological disorders increase.

Further, this suggests that replacing good gut flora through probiotics may help, along with the right diet, to restore hormonal balance and reverse estrogen-related pathologies. Understanding other causes of abnormal microbiome, and the potential impact of food sensitivities, leaky gut and nutritional deficiencies can go a long way in better prognosis of women's disease and their prevention. Once again, it underlines the importance of a good gut as a path to good health. Most importantly, it is critical to address women's health differently if we want to make a difference to prevent and treat serious health issues among them.

Author is a clinical nutritionist and founder of [www.theweightmonitor.com](http://www.theweightmonitor.com) and Whole Foods India

## Does exercise lower the risk of an infection?

Do not ignore basic hygiene and common sense. Wash your hands often before and after exercise

GRETCHEN REYNOLDS

DOES EXERCISE help or hinder our bodies' ability to fight off infections?

In the context of the novel coronavirus outbreak, that question has gained urgency and also, thanks to recent research, emergent answers. The latest science suggests that being fit boosts our immune systems, and that even a single workout can amplify and improve our ability to fight off germs.

But some studies also indicate that the types and amount of exercise may influence how exercise affects our immune responses. More is not necessarily better. And the location of the exercise could matter, too; cue recent findings about the germiness of gyms.

What follows is an overview of the state of today's science about how and why exercise interacts with our immune systems and whether we should plan to remain active, even as the incidence of new virus cases continues to grow.

Many of us who exercise have heard from well-meaning friends, spouses or parents that strenuous exercise will tamp down our immune systems, opening us to pathogens and illness. That notion gained credence in the late 1980s, the result of studies showing that "marathon running increased the incidence of infection symptoms among runners in the days and weeks after the race," says John Campbell, a professor of health science at the University of Bath in England and co-author of an influential 2018 review of exercise and immunity.

But those studies subsequently turned out to have relied too heavily on self-diagnoses from the runners about their sniffles. In experiments using laboratory testing of marathoners after races, few proved to have actual respiratory infections. Instead, most had developed airway irritations or other non-infectious conditions.

Follow-up studies then established that marathon runners and other competitive, endurance athletes tended, in fact, to report few annual sick days, indicating that their immune systems were not over-burdened by exercise but bolstered.

Since then, a wealth of research in both people and animals reinforced that idea. A series of 2005 experiments with mice, for in-



GettyImages

stance, showed that if rodents jogged gently for about 30 minutes a day for several weeks, they were much more likely to survive a virulent form of rodent influenza than untrained animals.

At the same time, though, some research hinted that a single, strenuous workout might temporarily diminish our immune responses soon afterward, putting us at heightened risk for an opportunistic infection after the workout. This possibility was known as the "open window" theory and relied on experiments

in animals and people showing that immune cells flooded our bloodstreams immediately after a hard workout and then abruptly disappeared, presumably dying as a result of the exercise stress. This disappearance seemed to leave us with lowered levels of the cells that recognise and fight pathogenic intruders, offering germs an open window for incursions.

But, once again, subsequent, sophisticated experiments offered a different explanation. In remarkable experiments with rodents, scientists marked some of their immune cells

with phosphorescent dye and had them run to exhaustion.

Afterward, the scientists noted that the levels of glowing cells in their bloodstreams spiked and then plummeted, as expected. But they also found that few of those cells had died; instead they had traveled to the animals' lungs, guts and other parts of their bodies potentially most vulnerable to germ invasions during exercise. After a few hours of sentinel duty, most of the cells returned to the bloodstream, stabilising immune cells levels there and suggesting that their immune vigilance had refocused but not declined.

Similarly, in a study published last year, fit, exercise-trained mice that were injected with germs immediately after a strenuous run fought off the infection better than sedentary animals, in large part, additional molecular analysis showed, because their immune cells homed in on and clustered around the pathogens, while those same cells were more diffusely scattered in the tissues of the inactive animals.

Taken as a whole, this research about exercise and our immune systems tells us that "there is no or limited reliable evidence for exercise directly increasing the chance of developing any kind of viral infection," says James Turner, co-author of the 2018 review about exercise and immunity and also a professor of health science at the University of Bath.

"So, it is safe to exercise, despite concerns about coronavirus," he concludes. Exercise, in fact, will probably lessen the risk of an infection, he says.

There are caveats, though. If you have not been exercising, now might not be the ideal moment to start an extremely ambitious and tiring new workout routine. In the 2005 studies with mice and influenza, a separate group of animals that ran strenuously for weeks developed somewhat more severe and longer-lasting symptoms than the mice that ran moderately before their infections, although the differences were slight.

"It is fair to say that a large increase in exercise intensity and/or duration, especially in people new to exercise, might have transient negative effects on the immune system," says Jeffrey Woods, a professor of kinesiology and community health at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, who studies exercise and immunity and led the mouse study.

And do not ignore basic hygiene and common sense. Wash your hands often before and after exercise; shorten or skip workouts if you feel unwell; avoid training partners who are sniffing or coughing; and rub a sanitising wipe over gym equipment before use. A study last year identified lingering, infectious germs on about a third of the surfaces at 16 different fitness facilities.

### SHORT COURSE

[0-20 YEARS]

#### Heat waves may raise risk of premature birth

HOTTER AND longer heat waves might increase the rate of preterm birth, new research suggests. Birth before 37 weeks of gestation is a leading cause of infant illness and death. The reasons for it are multiple and complex, but some previous studies have found evidence that one contributor could be extreme hot weather. This new study, in *Environment International*, tracked nearly two million pregnancies in California during the summer months from 2005 to 2013, comparing the duration of gestation with temperature records by ZIP code. Over all, 6.72 per cent

of births were premature. The researchers used four temperature thresholds to define heat waves, ranging from the 75th to the 95th percentile of all the maximum temperatures. Within each category, they recorded whether the heat wave lasted two, three days or more. With each increase in temperature or duration of the heat wave, the percentage of preterm births increased steadily. At a mean temperature of 88 degrees for two days, for example, 6.63 per cent of births were preterm. At four days of 98-degree temperature, the rate was 7.46 per cent. NYT

[20-50 YEARS]

#### Molecule in oranges may help reduce obesity

A MOLECULE found in sweet oranges and tangerines, called nobilletin, may reduce obesity and reverse its negative effects, according to a study in mice which may lead to new interventions against the condition. The study, published in the *Journal of Lipid Research*, said that mice fed a high-fat, high-cholesterol diet that were also given nobilletin were noticeably leaner compared to those that were fed a high-fat, high-cholesterol diet alone. It also noted that the mice fed the high-fat diet had reduced levels of blood fats and insulin resist-

ance - a condition in which the body fails to use the hormone insulin to process glucose from the blood for energy. "We've shown that in mice that already have all the negative symptoms of obesity, we can use nobilletin to reverse those symptoms, and even start to regress plaque build-up in the arteries, known as atherosclerosis," said a researcher. The researchers initially suspected that the molecule could be acting on the pathway that regulates how fat is handled in the body. PTI

[50+ YEARS]

#### Vegetarian diet may lower stroke risk: Study

EATING A vegetarian diet may reduce the risk of stroke, according to a new report. Researchers studied two groups of people from Buddhist communities in Taiwan. One included 5,050 people who were followed for an average of six years; the second included 8,302 followed for nine years. About a third of the people were vegetarians. The analysis is in *Neurology*. Overall, there were 175 strokes. In the first group, compared to meat and fish eaters, vegetarians had a 49 per cent reduced risk for stroke; in the second group, vegetarians had

a 48 per cent reduced risk. The most important risk factor for stroke, the authors write, is hypertension, and the vegetarians had significantly lower rates of elevated blood pressure than those who ate meat or fish. Cholesterol levels were also lower among the vegetarians. But even after controlling for hypertension, cholesterol and triglyceride levels, smoking, alcohol consumption, diabetes and other factors, the large reduction in stroke risk for people who avoided meat and fish remained. NYT



**"It's all about destiny, and I'm a big believer in destiny. I feel like this is the way it was meant to be. There is a joke going around that this World Cup is made in such a way that it's helping us, starting from the wickets to everything else."**

VEDA KRISHNAMURTHY, INDIAN WOMEN'S TEAM BATTER

ARUN LAL INTERVIEW

# Life coach

The cancer survivor has brought his tough-as-nails philosophy to the Bengal dressing room and it is working wonders



Former India opener and Bengal coach Arun Lal at his Central Calcutta residence ahead of the Ranji Trophy final. Partha Paul

**SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY**  
KOLKATA, MARCH 6

TWO DAYS after his surgery that lasted for over 14 hours, when he finally managed to gulp down some liquid, the doctors at the Tata Cancer Hospital & Research in Kolkata clapped. That was when it dawned on Arun Lal what he had been up against. Even doctors were not sure he would ever be able to eat again. Lal had shed a tear when the doctors said he was out of danger. That was 2016.

Four years down the line, as Bengal trounced Karnataka to reach the Ranji Trophy final under his charge, Lal's eyes were moist again. "It's more gratifying to achieve success as a coach. It's like a father watching his children achieving success in life. I won the Ranji Trophy as a player in 1989-90. But if this team goes on and wins the title, I would be happier," sitting in his back garden, Lal dips a biscuit into tea, while discussing life and cricket.

Adenoid cystic carcinoma is a rare type of cancer. A minor toothache served as an early symptom. Eventually, when malignancy was detected in early 2016, after an MRI, surgery became an immediate requirement.

"Somebody told me, before going to the operation, you write at least a small will; five-six points... That I did on compulsion. Now I don't even remember it. Maybe, I have purposefully forgotten it. There's no point thinking back. Now I have a different perception about life. I'm the happiest now."

The renaissance man of Bengal cricket, who brought the winning mentality to the team as a player in the 1980s, has now worked his magic as a coach. A process that started with a gruelling pre-season, with players doing 25 rounds every day, is very close to coming to fruition. Without Lal, it wouldn't have happened. Even Sourav Ganguly knew that.

As a young player, Ganguly looked up to the fighter in Lal. The former India captain and the current BCCI president still calls Lal his 'role model'. After bringing him to the Bengal fold as the team mentor last season, Ganguly, as then Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) president, made him the head coach this term. He knew only this man was capable of uniting a fractured dressing-room. Only Lal could turn a bunch of also-rans into a champion unit.

The fighter in Lal stonewalled cancer. It was a triumph of his will. "I have forgotten it yaar. One thing I remember is that it never occurred to me that I'm not going to live through this. Not once did it enter my mind that it's not going to work out. Never. Don't ask me why, but just that the fear of not making it never happened with me."

Easier said than done. Post-surgery, Lal was taken to a non-AC room virtually wrapped in tubes. He wasn't breathing from his nose. He was, in fact, breathing through a machine through his gullet. "That night was very tough. There were eight-nine tubes in me. You are like a living dead body. You are not breathing yourself. You are not urinating yourself. You are not talking. Your mouth is closed. You are not defecating yourself. You can't move. My right arm was paralysed. My left leg was gone, because they removed everything from there to make my face. There I remember I was trying to breathe and it was appearing very hot. I didn't realise, even though I was trying to breathe, it wasn't going in. Because they make a hole in your trachea and put a tube inside into your lungs and they feed the lungs separately."

Inside four months of his surgery, he was back commenting, as the CAB hosted its Super league final under lights, with the pink ball - India's first-ever multi-day day-night fixture.

Lal is known to be brave. Consider what

he did at Chepauk 32 years ago.

He stood at silly-point without wearing the box. Narendra Hirwani, a debutant, was bowling to Viv Richards. Lal didn't want to upset Hirwani's rhythm as he was spinning a web around the West Indies batters. Even after so many years, Lal doesn't think the decision was foolhardy.

"I tell everybody, it's only pain yaar. Pain will not kill you. If you have split webbing and you have taken stitches and you say, 'I can't bat... Why can't you hold the bat?' It's only pain. It's not going to get worse, it's not going to get septic, it's not going to kill you. It's only pain. What's the problem? We used to bat without a helmet, and even if we had helmets we never had a grille. Players didn't get hit very often then."

There's no surprise that a man of his toughness will snide at "too much mollycoddling" of the modern-day cricketers, which has given us words like 'workload management' and 'optional practice'. "If you can't do it here (at the nets), you can't do it there (out in the middle) also." With him as the head coach, this Bengal team has kept those words in abeyance in a by and large injury-free season.

Dr Anup Sarkar is a super speciality gastroenterologist at the PG Hospital in Kolkata. Ashwini is a doctor at AIIMS in Delhi. Sanjit is an IT professional in Sweden. Bikash is now a top honcho at JSW Steel. The common thread is that all of them were underprivileged and had been 'fathered' and 'mothered' by Lal and his wife Rina.

"Bikash was a part of our family because he lived with us. The others would come and when we would sponsor their education, we made it a point that we paid the fee monthly so that we could meet them at least once a



**"That night was very tough. There were eight-nine tubes in me. You are like a living dead body. You are not breathing yourself. You are not urinating yourself. You are not talking. Your mouth is closed. You are not defecating yourself. You can't move. My right arm was paralysed. My left leg was gone, because they removed everything from there to make my face."**

ON POST-SURGERY RECOVERY

month, we could go for lunch, could buy them gifts and we could spend time together."

Bikash's biological father did the laundry at the Lal household. He wanted his son to be enrolled at Julien Day school and approached Lal's wife, who was Bikash's English teacher. That started the association. Ashwini stood 24th at the Joint Entrance exam. Little wonder then that Lal has always been fatherly to his wards at the Bengal team but it's tough love, which worked.

"I came (to the Bengal fold) mid-season last year. I was mainly observing, trying to understand the psychology of the team and the guys. Not to offend anybody. But this season I

decided I would do it my way. I may be wrong. But when I have been entrusted with the job, I'm allowed to make mistakes. There was absolutely no interference from the CAB."

Lal talks about his approach of toughening up cricketers to help them reap the rewards when the going gets difficult during a cricket season.

"I felt we weren't fit enough. I felt that mentally we weren't believing in ourselves enough. Belief doesn't come on its own. I always believe that in my life, when I work hard and when I become stronger and stronger, I get more confidence. My body language improves. I feel stronger and stronger and then my confidence starts coming. So when you run the hard yards, it's not so much for your physical fitness. It's more for your mental fitness. It's like a prayer. One day you aren't feeling well, you haven't slept well, but still you do that; one hour running. It adds to your dedication and discipline. I decided we were going to do that. And you can see, the guys who did it for two months really benefited."

Anustup Majumdar is the best example of what hard work can do.

Until last season, he had just 50-odd first-class games over a 15-year period. He has been a revelation this term, arguably the best batsman in the Ranji Trophy, with back-to-back match-winning hundreds in the quarterfinal and the semifinal.

"See, a coach is as good as his team. The material was there. The potential was there for all to see. Last season, jokingly and to annoy him at times, I used to call Ishan Porel an 'old woman'. Because, his body language was always like stooping. Now he is; bloody hell. When I look at him I feel so proud. Until last season, Mukesh Kumar was bowling dabbly-dobbly medium pace. Now he is bowling unplayable deliveries. He made Karun Nair and Manish Pandey look like novices. Some of the deliveries bowled by

Porel, Mukesh and Akash Deep (in the semifinal) were actually unplayable."

The CII (Confederation of Indian Industry) once asked Lal to give the keynote speech at a symposium on environment. "I was very frightened. There were scientists from Norway, England and god knows where... I spoke from my personal experience. I signed off by saying, if we want to save the world, we save one sparrow (at a time). I got a standing ovation."

A bird-watcher by passion, Lal worked to save the migratory birds at Santragachhi in Howrah. Not one to collect birds, he now has orphaned birds - three parrots and three eagles. "The other day I returned an owl who was injured. He was with me for a while and then I returned him to the wild."

Add to this, the seven-eight dogs that he has in his farm. He has planted 4,000 trees. "My major passion is planting trees. Then cricket."

A monologue on bird-watching is probably overdue. When a man of this background walks into a dressing-room, also carrying his degree in Economics from St. Stephen's apart from his cricket exploits, players feel comfortable to place trust in his methods. That's exactly what has happened with the Bengal team. Someone like Ashok Dinda, who fell out, got the axe. The team moved on, unearthing the young Akash Deep as his replacement and in the process, forming a pace trio who have been running through opposition batting for fun. Not a single 250-plus score has been registered against Bengal in this Ranji season yet.

Originally from Kapurthala, Punjab, Lal came to Kolkata in 1978 after getting a job at a tea company. Along the way, he became Mr Bengal, as far as cricket was concerned. As a player, he had to play the waiting game, because India had Sunil Gavaskar. Kris Srikanth was getting into the groove as his partner. Lal's two overseas tours had been against Imran Khan's Pakistan in 1982-83 and in the Caribbean in 1989. Rub of the green didn't go his way, a reason why his Test appearances stopped at 16. His team mates knew that and always respected Lal.

Kolkata's 'soul', as he describes it was the reason why he became a permanent resident of this city. "I had never been to Bengal before I got my job. Initially I didn't quite like it. Then, within about three-four months, I really started loving Bengal and Calcutta. See, to me, a city is not only about the roads, lights and cleanliness. A city has to have a soul. It has to have warmth. It has to be forgiving. The people have to be loving. That Calcutta stands out even now. In the appreciation and understanding of art, culture and sport; you will not get what you get in Calcutta anywhere else. Life is not only about making money. Life is much more than that. I'm more Calcuttan than anybody else."

Irrespective of the outcome of the Ranji Trophy final, and Saurashtra are a wonderfully consistent team, this season has been a success for Bengal. A team that has unquantifiable heroes and a titan in Lal. But at 64 years of age, he might call it quits after the season. "See, my house at the moment is running in sort of autopilot. My wife is sick, my mother is sick. When Sourav offered me the job, I didn't know it would be so rigorous. Let's see what happens (next season)."

This Bengal team aren't a finished article yet and Lal still has some way to go before he hangs up his boots. But the journey so far has been fruitful.

BRIEFLY

## CSA terms Corona risk low in India

Johannesburg: Cricket South Africa is not overtly worried about their players travelling to India for the upcoming ODI series amidst coronavirus fears, saying the risk factor is "low" in Delhi, the first destination for the team. The Proteas will reach India via Dubai. They will land in New Delhi on Monday. "None of the playing venues have recorded positive cases and travel between these cities will be via chartered flights reducing the risk even further. The risks in Dubai and Delhi are considered low," the CSA said in a statement. "While the risk remains low, precautionary measures are necessary because of the highly infectious nature of the disease. The team has been appraised of hygiene precautions, avoidance measures, and symptom recognition in addition to being provided with travel kits," it added. The CSA said it has been liaising with the BCCI, the South African embassy in New Delhi, Indian security and risk experts. PTI

## Pandya smashes 158 off 55

Navi Mumbai: Fit-again India all-rounder Hardik Pandya blazed his way to an unbeaten 158 off just 55 balls against BPCL in a semifinal match of the D Y Patil T20 Cup here on Friday. Pandya, who returned to competitive cricket in this tournament after undergoing a back surgery, struck six fours and 20 sixes during his blitzkrieg to help Reliance One post 238/4 in their 20 overs. He had smashed his way to a sensational 105 off just 39 balls on Tuesday in a league game for Reliance One at the RCP at Ghansoli. Pandya was in a red-hot form on Friday also as he punished the BPCL bowlers with an array of sixes. The BPCL bowlers - Sandeep Sharma (0/37), Sylvester D'Souza (1/56), India all-rounder Shivam Dube (1/40), Parikshit Valsangkar (0/28), Sagar Udeshi (0/45) and Rahul Tripathi (2/32) - were hammered by Hardik, who looks all set to make a comeback to the ODI team versus South Africa. However, India opener Shikhar Dhawan, who is also on the road to recovery from an injury, managed to score just 3 runs for Reliance 1. PTI

## Russell powers WI to win over Lanka

Pallekele: Andre Russell smashed six sixes in an unbeaten innings of 40 off just 14 deliveries to lead West Indies to a seven-wicket win over Sri Lanka in the second Twenty20 and a 2-0 series sweep. Sri Lanka made 155-6 in 20 overs. Dasun Shanaka top scored with 31 runs while spin bowler Fabien Allan took two wickets for the West Indies. West Indies reached a winning 158-3 with three overs to spare. Russell was named the player of the match and series. Brandon King scored 43 off 21 balls including consecutive sixes off Lasith Malinga and six boundaries. Shimron Hetmyer anchored the innings with 43 not out from 42 balls. BRIEF SCORES: Sri Lanka 155/6 in 20 overs (A Mathews 23, D Shanaka 31; F Allen 2/24) lost to West Indies 158/3 in 17 overs (B King 43, S Hetmyer 43, A Russell 40; A Mathews 1/26). AP

FORMER CHIEF SELECTOR

# Selectors' role limited when on tour, this needs to change: MSK

**SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY**  
KOLKATA, MARCH 6

MSK Prasad's stint as the chief selector ended a couple of days ago, with the Cricket Advisory Committee picking ex-India left-arm spinner Sunil Joshi as his successor. Prasad's stint has been eventful. In an interview with *The Indian Express*, the former India stumper did a recap. Excerpts:

**Looking back, how do you see your stint as the chief selector? What are the positives to take and are there any regrets?**

Reaching No.1 rankings across all three formats from where we started is an excellent achievement. Also, developing substantial bench strength across all formats is a very satisfying point.

**You covered domestic cricket extensively. Do you agree that performances in domestic cricket should get prime importance for team selection? Or, for the short forms, the IPL should be the benchmark?**

I strongly believe that Indian domestic cricket is a robust structure, which is evolving with every passing year. We should give utmost priority to domestic performances and groom the players who are doing consistently well for a few seasons.

**During your time, did you always have a freehand in terms of picking the sides?**

**What was your equation like with the team management?**

Our committee had an excellent rapport with both Ravi's (Shastri) management and (Rahul) Dravid's management. In fact, we had a few meetings between the selectors and the two team managements which helped in building succession chart that has paved the way for smooth transition of players from India 'A' levels to the senior team.

**Did you ever find the team management imposing?**

When you work over the years, you build relationships with team managements. Then, that comradeship paves the way for mutual respect and understanding. And then, there will be no scope for imposing views as both parties are aligned.

**Lack of consistency in picking the playing XI and too much chopping and changing - from Ajinkya Rahane in South Africa two years ago to Wriddhiman Saha during the recently concluded Test series in NZ - has affected the team's performance and also the players' confidence. What is your opinion on this? Did you ever speak to the captain and the coach on the subject?**

Giving the best possible players for the squad is what we are restricted to by the new reforms and our role has been limited with regards to picking playing XIs. (According to the new constitution: On an overseas tour, the cricket manager, coach, captain and vice-



MSK Prasad's term as chairman of selectors came to an end this week.

captain shall constitute the selection committee). I feel this reform is not framed well and it needs to be amended at the earliest.

**India, despite being the World No.1 Test side for over three years now, haven't done well in important overseas Test series. They won against a depleted Australian team all right, but lost in South Africa, England and New Zealand. The World Cup, too, eventu-**

**ally turned out to be a failed campaign. Is there a feeling of disappointment? Going ahead, what do you think the team needs to do to shed their poor travellers tag?**

If you look at the stats of all visiting teams travelling across the world, no team has dominated consistently while playing as visitors. Having said that, this Indian team have won the ODI series in South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, West Indies etc. Apart from that, the

**"Giving the best possible players for the squad is what we are restricted to by the new reforms and our role has been limited with regards to picking playing XIs. I feel this reform is not framed well and it needs to be amended at the earliest."**

way our players played in South Africa and England Test series, I don't agree that we meekly surrendered. Those had been very hard fought contests where the results could have gone either way. We had our moments to win those series. With regards to the World Cup campaign, we were at the top of the table prior to the semifinals. So you cannot say that we had a poor run. You cannot say the series victory against Australia as a victory against a depleted side. They might have only missed the services of Steve Smith and David Warner, but they played with their best bowlers and our batsman came good in that series.

**During your stint, did at any time the idea of split captaincy come to you? And now that Virat Kohli is going through a form slump, do you think split captaincy would serve India well, as it might lighten his burden? Also, Rohit Sharma has proved his captaincy mettle in the shorter formats.**

Virat has led the team extremely well for the past few years, with a very high percent-

age of success across all formats. Having said that, Rohit also holds a good record in the limited opportunities he had in leading the team. I don't think it is appropriate to talk about Virat's form and attribute it to his captaincy, as he was outstanding across formats for the last three years. You cannot pinpoint his failure in only one series, which he had in the last few years. After all, he is human and this kind of average series will happen in one's career.

**How do you see the roles of BCCI president Sourav Ganguly and secretary Jay Shah in taking Indian Cricket forward?**

Sourav has tremendous record both as a player and captain for Indian cricket. He also has gone through the grind as an administrator at the CAB. On the other hand, Jay Shah has successfully taken the Gujarat Cricket Association to great heights during his tenure with the GCA. With sufficient experience behind them, I have no doubts that they will take Indian cricket forward.

**What will be your message to your successor, Sunil Joshi?**

Honesty and integrity are the fundamental factors required to become good selectors. If your heart is in right place for Indian cricket, then the results will automatically come good. I wish Sunil, Harvinder and my past colleagues Devang, Jatin and Sarandep all the very best in taking Indian cricket to greater heights.



Vikas Krishan was at his dominant best.

## Krishan enters quarters of Asian Olympic Qualifiers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
AMMAN, MARCH 6

FC COMMONWEALTH Games gold-medallist Vikas Krishan (69kg) entered the quarterfinals of the Asian Olympic Qualifiers of boxing with a thumping win over Kyrgyzstan's Nursultan Mamataly here on Friday.

Krishan clinched a 5-0 triumph to make the last eighth stage, where he will square off against third seed and Asian silver-medallist Sewonrets Okazawa of Japan. Okazawa, who won a gold medal at last year's Olympic test event in Tokyo, defeated Taiwan's Pan Hung-Ming in his pre-quarterfinal bout.

Krishan came into the event after claiming a gold medal at the South Asian Games in December last year. The SAG was his first amateur event after an undefeated stint in the professional circuit.

In a near-perfect display of his trademark defensive game, Krishan was consistently impressive. The Indian slowly built up the tempo and struck a particularly hard right hook in the second round to assert his dominance. The Kyrgyz boxer was left quite frustrated by Krishan's control over the proceedings.

Earlier, Sachin Kumar (81kg) advanced to the quarterfinals after notching up a comprehensive 5-0 win over Samoa's Dee Iaopo. Naman Tanwar became the first Indian to lose at the event as the 91kg contender went down in a lopsided decision to Syria's Alaa Ghousoun.

### Mary, Panghal begin quest

London Olympics bronze medallist Mary Kom (51kg) and World Championships silver medallist Amit Panghal (52kg) will begin their quest for a Tokyo Games berth when they enter the ring at the Asian Olympic Qualifiers here on Saturday.

Mary Kom's hunger at the age of 37 has been exemplary as she sets her sights on qualifying for the Olympics for a second time.

She has been putting in the hard yards at training a few months after earning a bronze at the World Championships, that made her the first boxer -- male or female -- to win a staggering eight medals from the Worlds.

The six-time world champion has been seeded second in her category and she will face New Zealand's Tasmyn Benny in the first round. Two wins will take her to Tokyo in what could realistically be her last appearance at the Games.

"Mary knows that this is her last Olympics and wants to do her best to close her dream with a medal. She has worked hard especially the reactivity work on the legs as well and has been working hard to be in good shape," said foreign coach of Indian women's boxing Raffaele Bergamasco.

Panghal is currently enjoying a purple patch in his career. A gold at the Asian Games was the start of his dominant show. He then bagged another gold at the Asian Championships before winning a historic silver at the World Championships. He starts off his campaign against Mongolia's Enkhmanadakh Kharkhuu after a first-round bye as the top seed in his category. He has a 1-1 record against his opponent. Determined as ever, Panghal is upbeat to avenge his defeat in his last meeting with Kharkhuu and get his campaign off to a great start.

# 'Want more Indians in Super League'

National coach Stimac says ISL should follow the Asian norm and have not more than four foreigners in a team

SHAHID JUDGE  
MUMBAI, MARCH 6

A CERTAIN rule change was implemented ahead of the 2017-2018 Indian Super League (ISL) that was expected to change the complexion of Indian football. The maximum number of foreign players allowed per squad was reduced from 11 to eight, and no more than five international players could take to the field at any time in a match - leaving at least six Indians on the pitch. It was a move that was met with positively, and one that was expected to encourage Indian goalkeepers in the starting line-up. To a great extent, that did happen.

In the current season, just one of the 10 teams has a starting custodian who is not Indian. Essentially that means that there are eight backups for Gurpreet Singh Sandhu, who at 28, has many years ahead of him as a goalkeeper. But this excess in-depth in the custodian's spot, that possibly stemmed from the rule, masks an even greater concern - that there is an alarming paucity of quality attacking players. And for national team coach Igor Stimac, the ISL needs to think of adopting the AFC rule on foreign players to address the problem.

"My suggestion for the top tier was to follow the AFC rule: 3+1 (three foreigners and one international player from an Asian country). That's the basic rule for the number of foreign players. It's not strange that the most successful Asian teams are following that rule. That's why they are successful. That's why they have the option for the national team to have strikers, to have midfielders and centrebacks," says Stimac. "The thing is, if you have 3+1 rule, then your second option is Indian striker. Then one centre back is Indian. Then your second option is Indian attacking midfielder. It makes a big difference."

Based on the AFC Champions League regulations from 2019, "each participating club may register four foreign participating players, however, at least one of these must have the nationality of an AFC member association."

Having a lesser number of foreigners in the line-up of ISL teams allows space for more outfield Indian players, which gives them more playing time and better chances of sharpening their skill. In terms of defence-minded players, Stimac has no shortage. What he's struggling to do is find a lethal attacker.

"If you consider that India with 1.5 billion people is having a top tier of 10 clubs, of which 60 percent (outfield players) are foreign players. This means there are only 40 players with an Indian passport, and out of these 40 players, 20 are fullbacks and 10 are defensive midfielders," he explains. "India is a team which is very difficult to beat today,



Igor Stimac at a training session with the Indian Arrows. The Croatian wants more young players to be given a chance. AIFF

you bring anyone, it's going to tough to beat us. But we are still not a team who can easily win games (because we don't have goalscorers)."

In the last few years, there's been a heavy reliance on Sunil Chhetri, the only consistent threat upfront for India's opponents. But the harsh truth is that the Bangalore FC forward is 35 and in the twilight of his career. Yet, there has been nobody good enough to replace him.

### Irreplaceable Chhetri

"We will never find a replacement for Sunil Chhetri while the situation is like this. We cannot take someone who never played striker, put him in the national team to play striker. And we don't have a striker in the I-League. Only Indian Arrows has an Indian striker but that's because it's a team only for Indian players. We have a big problem. But nobody wants to talk about that. You can bring (Jose) Mourinho and (Pep) Guardiola together here (as managers), and it will be the same," laments the 52-year-old, who was a part of the Croatian team that reached the 1998 FIFA World Cup semi-final.

In the current ISL season, where the best players in the country play, 23 Indians have been listed as 'forward' according to the ISL website. Only four, however, have played

over 900 minutes (the equivalent of 10 matches) through the season so far, with Chhetri playing the most, 1440 minutes over 16 matches. The numbers suggest that managers don't have much faith in their Indian forwards.

"The build-up for the U-17 World Cup in 2017 was made and executed perfectly. But how many of these kids are playing now? Where are they? Komal Thatal is warming up the bench in ATK. Amarjeet (Singh) was the only one which I picked immediately from the very beginning, and I recognised that he was the one who can give us aggressiveness, loyalty, awareness and strength in the middle, and I put him to play," Stimac says. "And because I put him to play in the national team, he was recognized by his club (Jamshedpur FC). It should be the other way around."

The coach, who has been in charge of the Indian team since May last year, is hoping to meet his players soon, since the outbreak of the coronavirus has delayed the national camp originally scheduled for March 9. According to him, he's called up the best Indians in the country, but maintains that these picks were easy to make.

"I called more than 40 players now in these two camps," he concludes. "It's very simple, this is all we have got."

### STIMAC SAYS

**ON INDIA NOT CONTINUING THE PROCESS AFTER U-17 WORLD CUP**  
We could easily help organise greater selection of young players in India every three months. We can divide India into five regions, north, south, east, west and central and organise 100,000 kids to be tested through selection in three-five days, and then come down to the number of 10,000 kids which are talented for football - with their speed, height, weight, talent. Out of these 10,000 we can get 2000 fantastic players.

**ON INDIANS NOT GETTING MANY CHANCES TO PLAY IN THE ISL**  
We closed these positions in ISL and I-League. Where are they going to play? Playing against the best players, you become one of the best. That's how you rise up in football. If you keep playing in the (local) league, you cannot advance your game to certain heights. These city or local leagues are the step in this structure work.

# Gojo overcomes nerves to beat Prajnesh; Cilic makes it 2-0

SHAHID JUDGE  
MUMBAI, MARCH 6

A BIG serve out wide produced a weak and short return from Prajnesh Gunneswaran. Borna Gojo duly glided down the court, opened up his body, not bothering to hide his intent of finishing off the point with an inside out forehand winner. Prajnesh stood rooted to the spot. Only, Gojo inexplicably thumped his forehand into the net.

That was the first point of India's Davis Cup World Group qualifier tie against Croatia. It was a point Gojo had no business losing. The nerves from Gojo, who was playing in only his second tie and third match overall, were evident.

About 90 minutes later, Prajnesh was commanding a rally on the indoor hard court at the Dom Sportova in Zagreb. He pushed the 22-year-old deep into his forehand side, then back to the backhand. The Indian played another angled shot again to Gojo's forehand side, this time marching up to the net. Gojo, running and on the stretch, played a cross-court passing winner. It was a rally Gojo had no business win-

ning. It gave him the break of serve in the third game of the third set. He took the lead for the first time in the match, a lead he would not relinquish, as he'd go on to register an upset 3-6, 6-4, 6-2 win. Gojo's win gave Croatia the first point of the tie. In the second rubber, 2014 US Open champion Marin Cilic extended the lead after picking a hard fought 7-6(8), 7-6(8) win over a tenacious Ramkumar Ramanathan in a match that went on for two hours and 12 minutes. At the end of day 1 of the two-day tie, the Croats hold a 2-0 lead.

It wasn't the start India were expecting. In fact, with the presence of former world no 3 Cilic in the mix, it was the two singles rubbers against Gojo that the visitors were targeting, and with good reason.

Just last month, the world no 277 decided to forgo his final year of college, at the Wake Forest University in the United States, in favour of turning professional. In terms of Davis Cup experience though, he was called into the line-up for the Finals last November, but lost both his singles matches to then world no 23 Andrey Rublev and former world no 1 Rafael Nadal. And against Prajnesh, he was coming up

Just last month, the world no 277 Gojo decided to forgo his final year of college, at the Wake Forest University in the United States, in favour of turning professional. In terms of Davis Cup experience though, he was called into the line-up for the Finals last November, but lost both his singles matches.

against a player ranked much higher, 132, and with much more experience. Perhaps that's what caused the nerves at the start of the match. Gojo dropped serve twice in the first set, conceding 18 unforced errors and hitting no winners at all. The changeover after the first set was an opportunity to calm down.

And in the first game of the second set, Gojo broke Prajnesh's serve: staying in the rally on his sixth break point attempt, playing into the

angles to open up the court, botching up an overhead smash, but then redeeming himself to slot home a backhand volley. That game was the first sign of what the 6-foot-5 was capable of. The defence grew steadily, and the number of percentage shots over the lowest part of the net increased. The groundstrokes fluctuated between flat and topspin, and the angled shots opened more of the court. The patience grew, and the momentum shifted.

On Prajnesh's part, the Indian stuck to his guns in the second set, playing the big forehand and serve, using the backhand to keep in the rally and snuff out an opening. The only difference was the way Gojo handled the situation. The Split-native, playing in his first Davis Cup tie on home soil lapped up the support from the crowd, getting them more involved in the match, as he started to dictate proceedings. He did get broken in the third set, but at that point, he had already taken two games on Prajnesh's serve, and soon broke for the third time. After an hour and 57 minutes, the tall Croat launched his ninth ace of the match to give the home team the first point of the tie. The Indians had hoped to exploit Gojo over two

## FC Goa eye great comeback vs Chennaiyin in ISL semifinal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MARGAO, MARCH 6

FC Goa face Chennaiyin FC in the second leg of their Indian Super League semifinals, looking to overturn a 4-1 deficit, at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here on Saturday. FC Goa will be boosted by the return of Edu Bedia who missed the first leg game in Chennai - which they lost 1-4 - due to personal reasons.

There is more good news as Brandon Fernandes and Hugo Boumous, who were injured for last week's tie, are back in contention for a start. Boumous, in particular, has been in spectacular form this season having scored 10 and assisted 11 in 14 matches.

With the return of Brandon, FC Goa would hope for better deliveries from wide positions, something which was missing from their game in the first leg.

Ferran Corominas will play as a number nine after playing as a withdrawn forward in the last game. The Spanish striker has 14 goals to his name this season and FC Goa need his goals now more than ever.

Interim coach Clifford Miranda will have a decision to make as to whether he would deploy an all-attacking line-up of Bedia, Boumous and Corominas or choose to go with two foreign centre-backs in Mourta Fall and Carlos Pena.

"We have to win to overcome the deficit, but that does not mean we go all out from minute one. It's 90 minutes and more and whatever football that I know, it is not decided in the first 10 to 15 minutes. It will be till the final whistle and we will take it minute-by-minute," Miranda said.

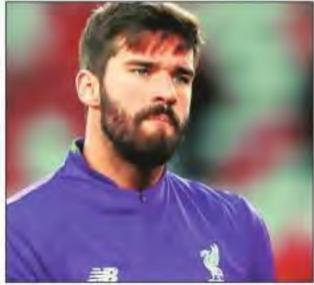
Meanwhile, Chennaiyin FC would look to score first and make the task even more improbable for the home side. Should Chennaiyin find the back of the net, FC Goa would need at least five goals to move to the final.

Chennaiyin head coach Owen Coyle has mentioned that his players would not be lackadaisical in the second leg, despite enjoying a three-goal lead.

He would also ask for an improved performance from the front three of Nerijus Valskis, Rafael Crivellaro and Andre Schembri who had a quiet game by their standards in Chennai. FC Goa also need to keep a check on the Chennaiyin attackers who are more than capable of hurting the opponent through a quick counter-attack.

"When you have any sort of advantage, it's good to have that. That being said, we know we have a very dangerous match. Over the course of the 18 games in the league, they have been the best team," said Coyle.

## [SPORTS BAR]



### Banerjee on pacemaker support, says family

Legendary Indian footballer P.K. Banerjee suffered a cardiac arrest on Friday and he has been put on pacemaker support, family sources said. "His condition is critical after suffering a cardiac arrest. He's been put on pacemaker," a family source told PTI. The 83-year-old Asian Games gold medallist is suffering from respiratory problem due to pneumonia. He has an underlying history of Parkinson's disease, dementia and heart problem. He has been on life support since March 2.

### Liverpool's Alisson injured for Atletico tie

Liverpool goalkeeper Alisson Becker will miss Saturday's home Premier League game against Bournemouth as well as their Champions League clash against Atletico Madrid after suffering a hip injury this week, manager Jurgen Klopp said on Friday. The Brazilian was left out of the squad when Liverpool lost 2-0 at Chelsea in the FA Cup with Spaniard Adrian playing in goal instead and Klopp revealed he had injured his hip in training prior to Tuesday's game. The German coach confirmed that Alisson would sit out Saturday's encounter and the second leg of their Champions League last-16 tie at home against Atletico Madrid on Wednesday. "We thought it was nothing and he was not going to play anyway, he was going to be on the bench. He had a scan the next day and they found something." "We will see next week," said Klopp.

### Solskjaer frustrated over scheduling

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer has voiced his frustration over how Manchester United's preparations for their derby against Manchester City have been impeded by the scheduling of their midweek FA Cup tie. United cruised through to the quarter-finals at second-tier Derby on Thursday, when Luke Shaw's second career goal and two strikes from January signing Odion Ighalo wrapped up a 3-0 win. Europa League football this season means United are used to playing on Thursdays, but City have an extra day to prepare for Sunday's Old Trafford encounter. "It's that help we get from the FA again - that extra 24 hours that they've had," Solskjaer said. "I cannot believe why there's a derby on Sunday and we've got to play Thursday night."



GMs P Harikrishna and Vidit Gujrathi are likely to join Anand in the team.

### Anand to lead Indian squad, Kramnik to coach

Five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand will lead the Indian team in the 44th Chess Olympiad to be held in Moscow in August with the legendary Vladimir Kramnik set to train the men's squad. World number two Koneru Humpy will be the spearhead among Indian women in the biennial event that is likely to see participation of around 180 countries, a press release from All India Chess Federation (AICF) said. The 44th Chess Olympiad will be held from August 5 to 18. Apart from the 50-year old Anand, Grandmasters P Harikrishna and Vidit Gujrathi look like to be certainties in the men's team. However, it could be a close race for the remaining spots in the five-member men's team. B Adhiban is expected to take one of the places on current form while the likes of K Sasikiran, S P Sethuraman, Surya Shekhar Ganguly and Aravindh Chithambaram would also be in contention for other spots in the team. Humpy and Dronavalli Harika will form part of the women's team on the basis of their rankings, while Tania Sachdev, Bhakti Kulkarni and R Vaishali are front-runners for the remaining three slots on current form.

### Rutuja wins, Ankita loses against Taiwan

Rutuja Bhosale came back from the brink in the deciding set to win yet another marathon contest but Ankita Raina suffered her second straight singles defeat as India and Taiwan were locked 1-1 in their Fed Cup match against Taiwan. Up against lower-ranked Ya-Yi Yang, Rutuja eked out a 6-3-3-6-7-6(6). In the second singles, Ankita Raina lost 6-3-2-6-3-6 to En Shuo Liang. Sania Mirza and Ankita are scheduled to play against Hao-Ching Chan and Latisha Chan. India lost to China before winning against Uzbekistan and Korea.



### Injury-plagued Murray eyes return in Miami

Andy Murray hopes to make his latest comeback at this month's Miami Open as the former world number one battles to recover from his injury woes. Murray is back on the practice court after being unable to hit for three months because of what was initially diagnosed as a mild bone bruise. The 32-year-old believes the problem was actually bone growth associated with the hip resurfacing operation he had in January 2019. Now Murray has raised the prospect of taking a wild card into the ATP tournament in Miami, which begins on March 25. "I'm training to try and get ready for Miami," Murray told Amazon Prime Video. "I've done so much rehab these last few months that, in terms of my strength and everything, all of the muscles around the hip are working well, it's just I hadn't played tennis."

### Chawrasia 14th in Qatar, Sharma misses cut

Indian golfer SSP Chawrasia dropped a bogey on the very last hole and finished at two-under 70 in the second round of the Qatar Masters Championship here on Friday. Chawrasia, who was ninth overnight, dropped to T-14 even as his colleague Shubhankar Sharma (71-78) missed the cut. Chawrasia birdied fourth, sixth and eighth to go three under before dropping a shot on ninth just as he did on first day. On the back nine, he birdied 10th and had seven pars before again dropping a shot on the final hole. Jorge Campillo and Andy Sullivan shared the lead heading into the weekend. But they had a host of European Tour winners breathing down their necks at Education City Golf Club.



**TRACKING THE VIRUS**

**Premier League scraps handshakes**

The Premier League is scrapping pregame handshakes between players and officials as a precautionary measure to prevent the spread of the new coronavirus. The league said Thursday that the traditional handshakes will not take place "until further notice based on medical advice." Premier League leader Liverpool also said it will not use any child mascots on game days.

**Bahrain GP puts ticket sales on hold**

Bahrain Grand Prix organisers have suspended ticket sales for this month's Formula One race while they assess how many spectators will be allowed to attend in the face of the coronavirus outbreak. A spokesman for the Bahrain International Circuit said that, depending on the outcome, refunds could be offered or more tickets put on sale. A circuit statement said organisers needed to "ensure appropriate social distancing guidelines". The spokesman said this meant looking at the capacity and adjusting it accordingly.

**Weightlifting: Asian C'ships cancelled**

The International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) has cancelled next month's Asian Championships, scheduled to take place in Uzbekistan. The April 16-25 event, which was originally set to be held in Kazakhstan but shifted to neighbouring Uzbekistan last month, joins a long list of sporting events hit by the flu-like virus that originated in China late last year. The tournament schedule on the IWF website on Friday listed the meet in the country's capital Tashkent as cancelled.

AGENCIES

# That empty feeling

During a conference call with the WHO, sports federations discussed holding Tokyo Games without fans

MATTHEW FUTTERMAN, TARIQ PANJA & ANDREW KEH  
MARCH 6

IT IS the option that nobody in the Olympic movement wants to talk about, but it is the one staring everyone in the face: a Tokyo Games this summer with no fans, just 10,000 athletes competing in front of seas of empty seats.

As the coronavirus continues to spread, with more than 3,000 deaths and 90,000 documented cases worldwide, sporting events without fans are edging toward becoming a kind of new normal. Fans were barred from attending the International Biathlon Union's World Cup event in the Czech Republic that began on Thursday. In Italy, the country's top soccer league will resume its schedule this weekend by playing matches in empty stadiums with no fans allowed until at least early April.

And in England, where Premier League clubs have been told to avoid pregame handshakes, teams have been advised to begin making plans for the prospect of playing matches without crowds. But the biggest question on the 2020 sports calendar remains the Olympics in Japan, where competition is scheduled to begin July 22.

Last week, the World Health Organization participated in a conference call with dozens of medical officers for the international sports federations that run the competitions at the Olympics.

The discussion turned to worst-case scenarios for the Olympic Games, and the risks and benefits of a fan-free Olympics, according to several people familiar with the nearly two-hour call, all of whom requested anonymity because they were not authorized to speak about a conversation the W.H.O. deemed private. Holding fan-free competitions, with only sports officials and broadcasters as spectators, was one of a number of options suggested for managing large sporting events in the weeks and months before the Games.

According to the people, an expert from the W.H.O. on the call said that the most important thing would be to create a screening process for participants, athletes, fans and others, and to create a risk profile of countries and regions. Participants on the call also discussed the different risk profiles of indoor and outdoor events, as well as those for contact and non-contact sports.



A Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee staff mops the floor in front of the climbing wall at the test event of Speed Climbing at Aomi Urban Sports Park on Friday. AP

**HEAVY PRICE**

**\$850mn**

Holding the Tokyo Olympics without spectators, and having to refund ticket sales, could cost Tokyo organizers some \$850 million, according to the organizing committee's budget documents.

Tarik Jasarevic, a spokesman for the W.H.O., declined to comment on the discussion because "that call was not public." But Jasarevic said that the W.H.O.'s role is not to call off — or to permit — any sporting events but is merely "to provide rational and science-based public health guidance and recommendations." On Wednesday, Thomas Bach, the president of the International Olympic Committee, said the organization

**Test event without fans, top athletes**

Tokyo: Despite the spreading virus, Tokyo Olympic organizers have finally held a test event. The recent outbreak of the coronavirus has forced them to rearrange or postpone several. But they allowed a sport climbing event on Friday to go ahead, with a few restrictions: no fans and no top athletes. Instead they used amateurs to test the climbing facility. AP

had not mentioned the words "cancellation" or "postponement" during two days of executive board meetings in Lausanne, Switzerland. Bach said the I.O.C. would follow the advice of the Geneva-based W.H.O.

It remains unclear how any decision about the Olympics would unfold if officials in Tokyo conclude they have to alter plans for the Games. Seiko Hashimoto, Japan's Olympic minister, said this week that Japan's position

was that as long as Tokyo held the Games in 2020, the I.O.C. could not cancel them.

The 80-page contract the Japan Olympic Committee and the City of Tokyo signed with the I.O.C. in 2013 obligates the local organizers to set up the competitions, ticket sales, fan services and countless other amenities — a deal that would seemingly allow the I.O.C. to push back against any plan to hold the Games without spectators.

But the I.O.C.'s host city contract also gives the organization broad rights to cancel the Olympics in the event of war or other forms of civil unrest, or if it believes, in the contract's words, that "the safety of participants in the Games would be seriously threatened or jeopardized for any reason whatsoever."

Neither Bach nor officials in Tokyo have set a timetable for deciding whether the Olympics will take place. A senior official for the 2012 London Olympics said contingency plans had been made for those Games to take place without spectators in the event of an act of God or terrorism. According to those plans, the first group to be prohibited from attending would have been spectators, then nonessential staff members and other groups until only broadcasters and those responsible for running the events were allowed to remain.

The most immediate concern, according to United States and international sports officials, is the qualifying events for the Games; a number have already been postponed or canceled, wreaking havoc on the process for choosing athletes and teams that will go to the Olympics. In the United States, athletes in diving and table tennis could lose qualifying opportunities, and the final qualifying event for the Olympic baseball competition — scheduled for Taiwan in June — could also be in jeopardy.

Without final qualifying competitions, officials may be forced to rely on seasonal leader boards or world rankings to determine who gets to participate.

That could lead to athletes' missing out on the Games, or filing last-minute grievances with the Court of Arbitration for Sport to fight for their places. As the window before the Games narrows — while CAS still wrestles with the eligibility of Russian athletes caught up in the country's doping scandal — it is unclear whether the court will have time to rule on the qualifying challenges. NEW YORK TIMES

**Delhi shooting World Cup postponed, to be held in May-June**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

THE UPCOMING combined shooting World Cup in the national capital was on Friday postponed to May, while an Olympic test event in Tokyo stood cancelled due to the global novel Coronavirus outbreak.

The tournament, sanctioned by the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF), was to be held from March 15 to 25 in the capital's Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range. The Olympic Test event was scheduled to be held from April 16. The World Cup will now be held in two parts before the Olympic Games. "It is proposed to divide the World Cup in two parts and hold Rifle and Pistol competitions on May 5-12, 2020, while Shotgun competitions — on June 2-9, 2020," the ISSF said in a statement.

The decision was taken after the tournament organisers National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) approached the ISSF with a proposal to postpone the event. The development comes after the government imposed several restrictions on the entry of travellers from affected countries such as China, Italy, South Korea, Japan and Iran, in a bid to contain the coronavirus outbreak.

Considering the extraordinary situation, the ISSF has also requested the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to prolong the internal Olympic qualification period in order to ensure all shooters get equal chances of making it to the Games. "In case of the IOC approval, the World Cups in Munich, Germany, and Baku, Azerbaijan, can also influence the outcome of the Olympic Qualification," the ISSF said. "It must be noted that all Qualification Quota Places, as planned, will be allocated by May 31, 2020," the sport's apex body added.

In all, 22 countries had pulled out of the Delhi event, an official in NRAI had earlier told PTI. "While 22 was the last count till Thursday night, some counties who had withdrawn, have also reapplied for visas," he said. The Indian government's list of guidelines states that the visa of all foreign nationals, who have visited the affected countries in the year 2020 and have not yet landed in India, will be cancelled. The Delhi event was to be a combined World Cup for rifle/pistol and shotgun shooters.

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