



SUNDAY STORY PAGE 8

The Recovered

Hidden behind grim statistics of death, COVID-19 cases is another heartwarming number: those who recovered. Their stories

THE WORLD PAGE 10

Highest 1-day toll in US

Americans should wear face masks while outside, recommends Trump — then he says he won't





Dear Reader,

The national lockdown to fight the coronavirus has disrupted production and distribution of The Sunday Express. This has compelled us to reduce page count. To ensure that you do not miss out on the special weekend package, Eye, The Sunday Express Magazine, is being integrated into the main edition.

Do the light thing!

200 OF 500 DISTRICTS HIT, KEY GOAL TO BRING GOVERNANCE BACK ON TRACK

Easing lockdown, how, when, where: Ministers explore steps post-April 14



RAVISH TIWARI NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

AN INFORMAL group of Union Ministers has been brainstorming on the issues arising out of the nationwide lockdown to counter the coronavirus outbreak and exploring the possible next steps and options after the 21-day period ends April 14.

"This (nationwide lockdown) cannot continue for an indefinitely long period. But it also doesn't appear advisable to lift it from everywhere in one go," said a source aware of the deliberations in the informal group headed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

The committee met for the third time on friday and is likely to meet early next week again. It is learnt that the group may be in a position to make up its mind only after looking at the corona numbers — rate of growth of new cases, extent of the spread by April 10.

More so, when currently, positive cases have been reported from little over 200 of the over 700 districts across the

"Given that there could be asymptomatic cases of COVID-19 in areas/hotspots and positive cases, these will have to be dealt with differently. Rural areas will have to be dealt with separately. Smaller shops need a different response than what needs to be done for malls or shopping complexes," said the source.

"For example, large shopping malls could pose a challenge in **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**



At Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in New Delhi, Sunday, after 108 medical staff were quarantined. Praveen Khanna

Use homemade mask when stepping out: Govt

ABANTIKA GHOSH NEW DELHI. APRIL 4

AS THE number of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) cases climbed to 3,072 and the toll rose to 75 on Saturday, the Health Ministry, for the first time, advised use of "homemade face cover" for those stepping out of their houses, saying this would "help in protecting the community at large".

In the US too, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) revised the earlier stand and recommended "the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus".

WHO TESTED POSITIVE **AGE GROUP CASES** (IN %) **0-20** years 8.61 21-40 years 41.88 41-60 years 32.82 Above 60 years 16.69

World Health The Organisation (WHO), however, has said there is no evidence that covering the face has any "selfprotection paradigm."

Source: Ministry of Health

and Family Welfare

Meanwhile, of the total **CONTINUED ON PAGE 6**

After two test positive at Ganga Ram hospital, 108 staff quarantined

ASTHA SAXENA NEW DELHI. APRIL 4

DELHI'S SIR Ganga Ram Hospital has quarantined 108 staff members, including 20 doctors and 75 nurses, after they came in contact with two patients who were brought to the hospital with no coronavirus symptoms, but later tested positive for the disease. While 85 people have been sent to home quarantine, 23 have been quarantined at the hospital's isolation ward.

Apart from the doctors and

nurses, nine ward boys, three technicians and a pantry staffer have been quarantined.

The two patients with critical illnesses were admitted to the hospital's ICU last week, "They did not have any symptoms of COVID-19 when they were admitted. But they later developed respiratory symptoms and were checked for COVID-19 as per ICMR protocols. Since then, staff associated with the patients have been quarantined," said Dr D S Rana, chairman (Board of Management), Sir Ganga Ram Hospital.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Modi, Trump: Use India-US partnership to jointly fight COVID-19

SHUBHAJIT ROY NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi Saturday said he had an extensive discussion on the COVID-19 crisis with US President Donald Trump over the phone.

Stating it was "a good discussion", the Prime Minister said in a tweet, "Had an extensive telephone conversation with President @realDonaldTrump. We had a good discussion, and agreed to deploy the full strength of the India-US partnership to fight COVID-19." The two also discussed the impact of the pandemic on the global well-being and economy, the PMO said in a

"Stressing the special relationship between the two countries, the Prime Minister reiterated India's solidarity with the USA in overcoming this global crisis together. The two leaders agreed to deploy the full strength of the India-US partnership to resolutely and effectively combat COVID-19," the statement said.

Modi and Trump exchanged notes on the steps taken in each country for mitigating the health and economic impacts of the pandemic. "The two leaders also touched upon the significance of practices such as Yoga and Ayurveda (traditional Indian herbal medicine practice) for ensuring physical and mental wellbeing in these difficult times," the statement said. They agreed their officials would remain in close touch.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Batti off, butter on! For 9-min lights-off today, power sector switched on high alert

PM call only for lights at home, not street lights or appliances: Ministry

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

THE NINE-MINUTE 'lights-off' exercise scheduled for Sunday evening, as per Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal to people across the country, has forced the grid operator to initiate an elaborate set of contingency measures to avert any crisis caused by the sudden massive load reduction quickly followed by a sharp increase.

These measures include tapering thermal output and increasing generation from hydro and gas stations to enable ramping up and down of power during the episode, calling for all personnel to be present on duty across the country and even requisitioning for "black start facilities" to be kept active as a conEXPLAINED to trip LIGHTING, WHICH is part of the domestic load, accounts for under 10 per cent of the all-India load. If lighting load goes off, it is unlikely to have a ma-

Grid not

likely

jor impact on the grid frequency in normal times. While grid frequency is expected to swing, the possibility of tripping is remote. tingency measure. This refers to

the set of restoration procedures at regional load despatch centres alluding to the possibility of **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

Almost 33% cases traced to Tabligh meet, Govt says one slip can be big

ABANTIKA GHOSH NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

OVER 33 per cent of all COVID-19 cases in the country are linked to the gathering of the Tablighi Jamaat at Nizamuddin in Delhi

last month. So far, 1.023 of the 3.072 positive cases in India have been traced to that one congregation. The cases have come from 17 states and Union Territories — Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Assam, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Arunachal Pradesh, Jharkhand and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Lav Agarwal, Joint Secretary



At Ghaziabad hospital where some who were at Markaz event are admitted. PTI

in the Ministry of Health, said Saturday, "About 30 per cent of all our cases have been linked to this one incident. For us, it is a

ACROSS STATES, 107

Won't spare those spreading fake news, communal messages on virus: Uddhav

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI. APRIL 4

TWO DAYS after BJP president JP Nadda urged his party leaders to refrain from giving any communal colour to the COVID-19 outbreak. Shiv Sena leader and Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray warned that strict legal action would be taken against people spreading "fake news" and "communal hatred" over the pandemic.

"Like coronavirus, there is an-



'Don't do it even for fun'

other virus that is emerging, which is creating a rift in the society — it is the virus of fake news CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

BMC SCRIPTS FIGHTBACK PAGE 5

INSIDE



INDIAN RAILWAYS **DESIGNS ITS OWN VENTILATOR**

CORONA WARRIORS: THE PRICE THEY PAY TO KEEP VIRUS AWAY **PAGE 5, 6**

In quarantined Bengal village, fear of stigma as big as that of corona

RAVIK BHATTACHARYA & JOY PRAKASH DAS NIJAMPUR. APRIL 4

POLICEMEN AND local guards man the entry and exit points of Nijampur, a village 130 km from Kolkata. A log and wooden benches block the breadth of the thin road that snakes its way through the village. A bamboo bridge over the Kansai tributary. the only other way out, has been severed by residents of Gobindopur across the waters. Ever since March 31, when a



Policemen and villagers at Niiampur village in West Midnapore district. Partha Paul

goldsmith back from Mumbai and his father tested positive, Nijampur in Daspur 1 block of West Midnapore has been under quarantine. All its 250 families have been ordered indoors.

No one gets in, no one gets out. The only people visible are village resource persons and an auxiliary nurse midwife (ANM) who make a team of nine. Wearing personal protective equipment, they have been going door-to-door, looking for anyone with symptoms of COVID-19.

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MORE CASES WITH TABLIGHI LINK PAGE 6

Amid yoga, TV and chai, group at Varanasi station asks: Will trains take us home?

AVISHEK G DASTIDAR NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

WHAT DO you do when you are at a railway station, waiting for a train?

On Sunday, a group of 50 passengers from various parts of India will perform yoga together in the waiting hall of Varanasi railway station. After that, they will watch the re-run of Ramayan on Doordarshan on a 55-inch TV installed especially for them. After *Ramayan*, there will be lunch.

These passengers have been waiting for their trains since

Sunday, March 22, when the government observed Janata Curfew. The "curfew" ended, but their wait for a train did not.

The 21-day lockdown happened, the city shut down, and the railway station became their

Caught in this unintended consequence of the lockdown are daily-wage labourers, farmers, traders, professionals and pilgrims to the Kashi Vishwanath Temple from such far-flung places as Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat. There are women, children, sen-

ior citizens - all waiting for that one elusive object: a train.

"There is nothing to do. In the beginning, I used to go out of the station to look for some other ways to go home. But now, we just wait," says Manoj Shinde, part of a group of 11 daily-wage

labourers from a village near

Aurangabad, Maharashtra. Shinde and group did some work around Patna for a few days and were due to return home. The Janata Curfew was still 24 hours away. So from Patna station, the local authorities got them to board a train, which, they said, was going to Maharashtra.



The group of 50, from Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra and other states, has been stuck since March 22

"Around 3 in the night, the train stopped at Mughalsarai. We were told that the train has been terminated here because of the Janata Curfew. We walked to the Varanasi station after that." he says.

It took the railway authorities just about a day to realise what had just happened. On Sunday, even as the curfew was on, the government suspended all train services till March 31.

Officials soon realised that there was a group of some hundred people waiting at the Varanasi station. "They were scattered across the station. We quickly got them to the large waiting hall with benches and all. Then we formed a plan," says Anand Mohan, the station director, whose job, apart from running the station during the lockdown, has also been to take care of this group of stranded.

A couple of days later, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the 21-day lockdown. The station authorities realised that these people were now here for the long haul.

"Slowly, with coordination with state authorities, we started sending some people home, the ones who lived within distances manageable by taxis. But finally,

a group of 50 remained - they

from their homes. We decided to take care of them as best as we could," he says. The yoga class and TV are

were some 1,500-2000 km away

new additions to their daily routine, starting Sunday. "...so that people have something to do and also stay fit," Mohan says.

The station officials arrange food. There is tea a few times of the day. Children play, people are on phones, the senior citizens are seen praying daily. Fights and laughter break out in equal measure, people sing songs, play music on phones, clothes are

washed and put to dry every day. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 6** WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

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EXPRESS TECHNOLOGY **Apple CEO Tim Cook** defends billion dollar deal with Google



WHY LOCKDOWN IS FORCING ASSAM FOREST DEPT TO ISSUE NEW ADVISORIES

Wild animals venturing into human habitation is not a new phenomena — at least in Assam, in which 34.21 per cent of total geographical area lies under forest cover. In fact, Guwahati, the state's busy capital city shares its boundary with the Amchang Wildlife Sanctuary, and a number of notified Reserve Forests

VIDEO OF THE DAY



OTHER PANDEMICS THAT HIT INDIA

How Spanish Flu Pandemic Of 1918 **Affected India**

EXPRESS EXPLAINED



PM CALLS FOR LIGHTS OUT ON SUNDAY

What will be the impact of the Sunday 9 pm lights out?

3THINGS

EXPRESS

Understanding India's migrants

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

On the Sandip Roy Show podcast, author Chinmay Tumbe talks about migrant workers and why they are often not considered during policymaking

FROM PAGE ONE

Easing lockdown

Virat Kohli reclaims top position

in ICC Test Batting Rankings

maintaining social distancing. There could be intra-district movements allowed where there are no cases, but inter-district movement? Not sure. Also, depending upon the spread, different situations prevail in different states after April 14. All these factors have to be considered," said the source.

One key issue being discussed is how to bring aspects of "regular governance" back on track after April 14 without compromising the need for vigilance against the transmission of the pandemic.

Directions have already been issued relaxing movement of farm labour given the necessity of farm operations and also the broad pattern so far that rural areas and smaller towns with low population densities are not reporting any significant outbreak.

"The economic reality is that for a large section of the population, there is little cushion for a long duration of lockdown. Many of them barely scrape through each month. This is a broad understanding within the group," said another source aware about the deliberations.

"But given that the numbers are rising and there is a spread in many states, caution has to be observed. If it doesn't get much out of control and the curve signals flattening, we could see an easing," said the source.

For this group of Ministers, the first phase of the lockdown - the issue of migrants movement - is almost over. "That was an issue in the first phase. It has now been attended to by and large," said the source highlighting how shelters and food arrangements have been made to arrest large-scale movement that initially threatened to undermine the lockdown.

The group considers the period till April 14 as the second phase which has its own challenges for unaffected population

"As for the unaffected population, there is disruption but key issues of supply have been resolved. The other challenge is around the affected population and health infrastructure for them. Availability of testing kits, trained health workers in case of cases emerging in newer areas, identifying asymptomatic cases, testing, tracing and isolating

Sources said the Ministers were using their ministries and political networks to gauge the situation before providing guidance to shape the government's policy prescriptions.

them - that remains a focus

area," said the source.

Besides Rajnath Singh, the group comprises Home Minister Amit Shah. Food Minister Ram Paswan, Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, I&B Minister Prakash Javadekar, Minister Ramesh HRD Pokhariyal Nishank, Agriculture Minister Narendra Tomar, WCD Minister Smriti Irani and Animal Husbandry Minister Girirai Singh among others. Interacting with Chief

Ministers over video-conference Thursday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had suggested the need to "formulate a common exit strategy to ensure staggered re-emergence of the population" when the lockdown ends after April 14.

Delhi hospital

The guarantined healthcare workers are mainly from the ICU, medicine emergency and fever OPD. The hospital said none of them had developed symptoms for coronavirus until Saturday evening. "We have hired a special building to accommodate our healthcare workers deployed in the COVID-19 ward. Fifty per cent of our staff is already not coming as all our OPDs are shut. We are also trying to keep our healthcare workers safe as PPEs are still not enough," said Dr Rana, adding that

University Games Committee,

Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders on the prescribed format are

invited for the feed for horses of MU Riding Club up

to 15/04/2020 by 04 PM. Interested parties may

visit the AMU Website www.amu.ac.in/pdf/sports

employees. The 600-bed hospital has earmarked 51 beds in the isolation ward for coronavirus patients, and kept 50 more vacant, to be used in case of an emergency.

Over the past few days, at least 15 healthcare workers in the national capital have tested positive for coronavirus, with most of them catching the infection from patients. Several doctors and medical experts have highlighted the shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) kits across the country.

On Saturday, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal too raised the issue: "In Delhi, the situation is a little critical as we are having to take the responsibility of those who came from abroad. Around 2,300 people were evacuated from the Markaz and many among them are likely to test positive. So, suddenly, there has been a shortage of PPE kits. I am worried about our doctors and nurses. I don't want any doctor and nurse to treat corona patients without PPE. We wrote to the Centre vesterday, seeking the kits urgently, but so far we have not received any kit.'

Hospitals in Delhi where healthcare workers have tested positive are meanwhile preparing lists of staff members who have been in contact with them. The Delhi State Cancer Institute (DSCI) is contemplating shifting all cancer patients to a private hospital after four of its healthcare workers — a doctor and three nurses tested positive for COVID-19.

"We have 48 patients admitted to the hospital and are planning to shift them to a private hospital. Cancer patients are already on strong medications with a weak immune system; this makes them prone to catching the disease. We can't take the risk and become the source of transmission. At our level, we are trying to contain the infection," said Dr B L Sherwal, director of DSCI.

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Manager (SHP) at Manen Bhall-II Colony, Rishikesh.

9-min lights-off

potential grid failure and having to restart the grid from scratch.

After many states, through their respective state load despatch centres, flagged risks to the grid from the proposed move, the national grid operator, Power **System Operation Corporation** Ltd (POSOCO), issued a 30-point guideline Saturday to load despatch centres at the state, regional and national level. The objective is to counterbalance the expected sharp reduction in load and subsequent recovery, which it has termed as "unprecedented".

"These apprehensions are misplaced," said the Ministry of Power in a statement Saturday. "The Indian electricity grid is robust and stable and adequate arrangements and protocols are in place to handle the variation in demand."

The ministry also clarified that the PM's appeal is to only switch off lights and not other appliances. The statement said, "The appeal of the Hon Prime Minister is to simply switch off the lights in their homes from 9 pm to 9.09 pm on April 5. There is no call to switch off either street lights or appliances like Computers, TVs, Fans, Refrigerators and ACs in the homes. "The lights in Hospitals and all other essential services like Public Utilities, Municipal Services, Offices, Police Stations, Manufacturing Facilities, etc will remain on...All local bodies have been advised to keep the street lights on for public safety."

PIB Principal Director General KS Dhatwalia also appealed to people to not use alcohol-based hand sanitisers before lighting candles on Sunday.

From the grid managers' perspective, the primary concern is that just before 9 pm, there may be unprecedented load reduction, followed by sudden increase in load post 9.09 pm. During this lights-out exercise, about 11,344-

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TENDER TIME EXTENSION NOTICE-01

Due to unavoidable reasons, the date of submission and opening of the

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NIT No. = 26/2019-20/EE(C)/Pashulok Barrage = Operation and

Maintenance of UJVNL Officer Transit Camp and office of General

NIT No. - 27/2019-20/EE(C)/Pashulok Barrage: Construction of New

NIT No. - 28/2019-20/EE(C)/Pashulok Barrage: - River Training Works of

Ghasi Ram Nala for Protection of Main Road (D/S Side) of Chilla Powe

Last Date of Downloading of Tender: 21.04.2020 upto 17:00 Hrs. (IST)

Last Date of Submission of Tender: 22.04.2020 upto 14:00 Hrs. (IST)

For the eligibility and other detailed information, the Nigam's website

Date of Opening Tender: 23.04,2020 at 11:00 hrs. (IST)

12.879 MW of load nationwide is expected to drop suddenly and then come on stream a few minutes later — the equivalent of five large thermal generating stations

going off together. POCOSO's 30-point detailed guidelines, issued under three broad heads — generation scheduling and frequency control; voltage control measures: and general guidelines — include basic checklists such as all clocks at generating stations being synchronised to Indian standard time, strengthening of the control room staff across the NLDC and all load despatch centres staying "in alert mode and monitor the grid closely in order to take care of any contingency". Distribution companies are being warned to ensure that distribution substations, housing society and residential apartments main supply shall not be switched off at either the feeder or mains level.

On the generation side, too, there are a series of detailed contingency planning measures.

During evening peak hours – from 6.10 pm to 8 pm - hydrogeneration is to be reduced "and conserved" for providing flexibility for the 9 pm event. During this time, thermal and gas generation are to be scheduled to manage the peak demand. After peak hours, major thermal Inter-State Generating Stations generation are to be "gradually reduced to near technical minimum level of 60 per cent by 8.55 pm and simultaneously hydro generation is to be increased to maintain the load generation balance".

Hydro generation and gas generation — both of which offer more flexibility as compared to coal-fired units in ramping up and down in line with the requirements of the grid — are to be specifically ramped down starting from 8.57 pm, depending on the system frequency. Gas-based units have been specifically instructed to ramp down to the "minimum level".

Subsequent to this, ramping up of thermal units are to be carried out from 9.05 pm on. And from 9.09 pm on, hydro generation is then to be ramped up to meet the increase in load. Following this, "after the stabilisation of system parameters", hydro units are to be withdrawn in consultation with the regional and state load despatch centres.

At the state, regional and national load despatch centres, some of which have been functioning on a rotational staffing basis on account of the lockdown, there are specific instructions of all hands needing to be on deck. "All RLDCs/ SLDCs & NLDC (regional, state and national load despatch centres) are

Quantity

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राजकीय दून मेडिकल कालेज, देहरादून

advised to extend the evening shift timings till 10 pm preferably and allow overlap with the incoming night shift."

All senior personnel have been asked to be available at the generating stations, substations, Load Despatch Centers (LDCs) between 6 pm to 10 pm on Sunday as a matter of abundant caution. India is one of the largest synchronous interconnected grids in the world, with an installed capacity of about 370 gigawatts (3,70,000 mega watts) and a normal baseload power demand of roughly 150 gigawatts.

When an exigency occurs, like an outage at a power plant or the tripping of a transmission line or sudden change in electrical demand, the operator needs to ensure that there is an automatic corrective response, failing which the operator then needs to manually intervene to avert a crisis. While domestic load is about

30-32 per cent of total load during the normal times, the grid load currently, because of the lockdown, is largely accounted for by domestic load.

The normal baseload power demand of roughly 150 gigawatts has already dropped by 20 per cent since most of industry and commercial establishments are not operational. So the lighting load, as a percentage of total load, is much higher now and the impact of a sudden drop in lighting load could be more accentuated than in regular times. There is, however, hope that the airconditioning load in the country's western and southern regions would act as a counterbalance. In the west and south, the airconditioning load is already high, which could ensure that the switching off of the light could place a lesser stress on the grid.

Tabligh meet

daily battle, contact tracing is on in all these 17 states... I want to tell you that our doubling rate is lower than most countries, but I want to emphasise that one failure by one person will put us back hugely. a chain is only as good as its weakest link."

From the first week of March, hundreds of Tablighi Jamaat activists had gathered at its Nizamuddin headquarters for a religious event that continued for days even as a government advisory barred all congregations in view of the worsening COVID-19 situation.

According to the Ministry of Health Affairs, more than 2,000 of the Tablighi Jamaat participants were foreigners. After the gathering, over 800 of them toured various parts of the country. On Thursday, the MHA blacklisted 1.320 foreigners as-

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sociated with the Tablighi Jamaat for violating visa rules even as it cancelled tourist visas of all such visitors to India. Punya Salila Srivastava, Joint

Secretary in MHA, said about 22,000 people linked to the Tablighi Jamaat and their contacts across the country are currently under quarantine. Of the 2,000 foreigners from

70 countries who were in different parts of India on tourist visa, most are from Bangladesh (493), Indonesia (472), Malaysia (150) and Thailand (142). Health Ministry officials said

that before the fallout of the Tablighi Jamaat gathering came to light, there were "serious signs" of the lockdown bringing down the rate of increase of cases. "We were hopeful that we could really bend the curve and not just flatten it in a few more days. But all of that has now changed. That is why it is so important that there are no more slip-ups," a senior official said.

Bengal village The youth and his father, who

tested positive, are at an infectious diseases hospital in Kolkata while others in the family, and their relatives are under isolation in government hospitals.

While their shifting out did bring a wave of relief in Nijampur, that has since been overtaken by a fear of social ostracisation. Because no one wants to have any dealing with Nijampur, at least not now. Such is the fear of Nijampur that residents of adjoining villages too have locked themselves in. They call Nijampur the village of coronavirus - that's the reason for the dismay here.

Constables and guards manning the roadhead where Nijampur ends and Parbatipur begins say they have been working in shifts 24x7 for the last three days. "No one can enter or leave Nijampur. This is the order we have been given. There were two cases here and the village has been quarantined.

Another team makes rounds of the village to ensure everyone is at home all the time," says Sambhunath Panda, the 22-yearold civil guard. The bamboo bridge has been cordoned off at the Nijampur-end, and severed by Gobindopur on the other side. "Links to neighbouring villages have been cut off. You can see the bamboo bridge. My family too is scared that I do duty here. But duty is duty," Panda says. No one stirs out. The temple

is empty and the local quack's chamber is shut. From behind windows, faces emerge. A little later, people stand at the doors. "Our entire village is cut off.

We cannot move out. Police and people of neighbouring villages chase us.

We heard that the state government is giving 5 kg rice and flour, free, to each family from ration shops. The ration shop is in Gobindopur and we cannot leave this village. Panchayat members said they would get us the free ration, but that has not happened," says Mithu Pramanik. A mother of two, she is very upset that Gobindopur chose to sever the bamboo bridge at its end.

Her husband Dilip Pramanik, who drives

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a Toto, an e-rickshaw, says he sneaked out to get to a grocer in Parbatipur. "The policemen and residents of the village chased me. They said they will not let me enter their village. I had to rur back home. We need groceries we have run out of essentials. There's no cooking oil left."

Others like Manik Pramanik, a farmer who is also the secretary of the Unnayan Committee (village development committee), try to help people in the village by sharing what they have.

"I have two cows which give 7-8 litres of milk daily. I share it with others in the village. There are vegetables in our fields, but most households have run out of rice, flour and potatoes. We also need medicines," he says. Quarantine means Nijampui

cannot take its produce to the market. Most farmers grow vegetables in small plots, and have to ensure these perishable goods sell early. "I have a daily yield of cucumbers. I have been calling traders in Timohini market, just about a kilometre away. They say they will not accept vegetables from our village. My produce lies in the field and will soon rot. Ever if this quarantine ends, the stigma will remain. Who will buy ou vegetables," says Ajit Pramanik.

Families in the village have told their sons, who works as goldsmiths or flower decorators in the big cities of Mumbai Delhi, Hyderabad and Ahmedabad, not to return even after the lockdown ends.

On Friday, 27-year-old Sisir Majhi, suffering from kidney failure, was unable to reach the town of Ghatal for dialysis. "My condition is not good. Every week, I have to undergo dialysis twice. In the morning, I got a call from the hospital in Ghatal. The person said since the virus is now in our vil-

lage, the dialysis will not happen. When *The Sunday Express* contacted health officials, an ambulance arrived Saturday to take Majhi to the hospital in Ghatal where the dialysis was done.

The team of health workers on the ground have a Herculean task on hand. They are going door-to-door daily. Sheikh Latifuddin, one of the village resource persons, says: "In each household, we are checking for any kind of ailment, especially fever, cough or respiratory problems which are symptoms of COVID 19. This is being done every day. We are a nine-member team now. I have requested for two more persons."

Mamoni Jana Ghorui (30), the secondary ANM who rides a cycle to do the daily rounds, says, "We know each family here. So even if they hide any symptom, we will find out. If they have other health problems, we try to help them. We have also distributed handbills on precautions that need to

be taken against COVID-19."

Kamal Krishna Samanta, pradhan of Nandanpur 1 gram panchayat which includes Nijampur, says, "Two persons have tested positive. We are aware that ration and groceries are yet to reach Nijampur. We will soon get ration from the shop at Gobindopur and transport it to the village. Earlier, there was a problem because people in Gobindopur protested. But it has been resolved. We have decided that civic police members will go door-to-door in PPE and take lists of groceries from each household. We will deliver the groceries at the doorstep. We are taking all care possible."

www.uttarakhandjalvidyut.com keep watching continuously. 199/UJVNL/Advt./ Dated 04-04-2020 "Avoid wasteful use of Electricity" राजकीय दून मेडिकल कॉलेज, देहरादून

देहराखास,पटेल नगर, देहरादून, फोन न0 0135-2726020,2726021

फैक्स नव 0135-2726020 Website-www.doonmedicalcollege.com

कोटेशन सचना

अधोहस्ताक्षर कर्ता द्वारा राजकीय दून मेडिकल कॉलेज चिकित्सालय में कोरीना वायरस से संक्रमित रोगियों के लिये

ओवटीव में उपचार हेतु प्रतिष्ठित स्विनर्माता कम्पनियों / अधिकृत विक्रेताओं से निम्नलिखित उपकरणों एवं सामग्रियों हेतु

कोटेशन आमंत्रित किये जाते है। इच्छक फर्म अपने कोटेशन ई-मेल के माध्यम से दिनोंक 08.04.2020 सार्य 5 बजे तक

E-Mail ID- gdmcprocurementcell@gmail.com पर प्रेषित कर सकते है। विलम्ब से प्राप्त आवेदनों पर कोई विचार

OT Table- it should be C-arm compatible, fully remote controlled, made up

Due to administrative reasons the Tender No. REUMBCIVILGr-287B-

02-267 for the work "Construction of service and residential

RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION,

the hospital has more than 5,000

President, Riding Club

AMU, Aligarh

University Games Committee

AMBALA CANTT CORRIGENDUM Tender Notice No.RE/UMB/Civil/1202/E-T Dated: 26/03/2020

buildings, Misc/other allied works at Firozpur Cantt, in C/W with Railway Electrification of Bhatinda-Firozpur Cantt section", which is scheduled to be closed on www.ireps.gov.in on 01.04.2020, is being postponed. Now the same tender will be closed on 11.05.2020 at 12.00 hrs. All other terms and conditions will remain same.

R.D. Adv

and those affected.

Dy. Chief Engineer. Rly. Electrification/Ambala Cantt. (For & on behalf of the President of India) "Serving Customers with a Smile"

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Tender Notice

Office of the Executive Engineer (Civil), MB-I, Maneri (Uttarkashi) invites sealed tenders from interested parties. Brief summary of tenders is given below:

Tender No:-01/EE(Civil)/MB-I/Maneri/2020-21 Name of work:-Annual sweeping, cleaning, repair & maintenance of septic tank soak pit sewer line and drain in Kuteti Devi Colony Rs 12,71,290/- (Excluding GST) Estimated Cost Earnest Money Deposit Rs 32,000/-Tender Fee Rs 1180/- (Including GST) Date of availability of bid 04-04-2020 From 16:00 hrs document on website

Date of opening of Tender 28-04-2020 At 15:00 hrs For fuller & further detail kindly visit our website. The tender document can be downloaded from Nigam's website "www.ujvnl.com". No. 193 dated 03/04/2020 Executive Engineer (Civil), MB-I, Maneri "Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

Last date of submission of Tender 27-04-2020 Up to 14:00 hrs

EQUIPMENT MAKE, MODEL, BASIC RATE PER UNIT QUANTITY ESTIMATED WARRENTY CMC/AMC NAME SPECIFICATION RATE (INCLUSIVE ALL IN STOCK TIME OF RATE AFTER PERIOD. PER TAXES) DELIVERY WARRENTY UNIT PERIOD निविदादाता फर्म द्वारा प्रेषित किये गये मूल्यों की पुष्टि हेतु किसी भी दो राजकीय संस्थान में प्रदत्त मूल्यों के क्रय आदेश

सम्बन्धित कोटेशन के साथ संलग्न किये जाने आवश्यक है। तथा क्रय आदेशों की पृष्टि हेतु सम्बन्धित राजकीय संस्थानों का पता. फोन न0 एवं ई-मेल आई0डी की जानकारी भी उपलब्ध करवानी आवश्यक है। अधिकृत विक्रताओं के द्वारा आवेदन किये जाने पर कोटेशन के साथ निर्माता कम्पनी द्वारा प्रवत Authorization Certificate की प्रति संलग्न किया जाना आवश्यक है।

, क्रय आदेश के सापेक्ष किसी भी तरह के अग्रिम भूगतान की कोई व्यवस्था नहीं होगी। तथा सम्बन्धित फर्म के बीजक का भूगतान उपकरणों की प्राप्ति एवं इन्सटालेशन के 60 दिन के उपरान्त किया जायेगा। रा0द्0न0काँ0 / Covid-19 / 2020-21 / 1459

NIT No.: RITES/RPO-LKO/JVUNL-JTPP/00018/P-7, Date: 04.04.2020

The GM/P, RITES Limited, RPO-Lucknow on behalf of Jawaharpur Vidyut Utpadan Nigan Ltd. (JVUNL), Distt.:- Etah, UP (A 100% subsidiary of UPRVUNL) invites online percentage rate tenders on two packet system for the following work:

Name of work: Construction of Workshop Shed, POL Line, Administrative Building, Station
Building, S&T Buildings, TXR Building, Rest Room and Staff Quarters etc. at Jawaharpur TPF Singhpur Loya, Etah, Awagarh, Jalesar City, Shivala Tehu Stations and Proposed New Barhar Station on DFC Route (Package-7) in connection with construction of Railway Siding of 2 X 66 MW Jawaharpur Thermal Power Project of JVUNL at Etah (UP)
Estimated Cost: Rs 25.53 Crore, Earnest Money: Rs 25.53 Lac, Period of Completion: (Fifteen) Months, Last date of submission: 05.05.2020 at 15.30 Hrs. The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the websit https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app Addendum / Corrigendum, if any, shall be hosted online



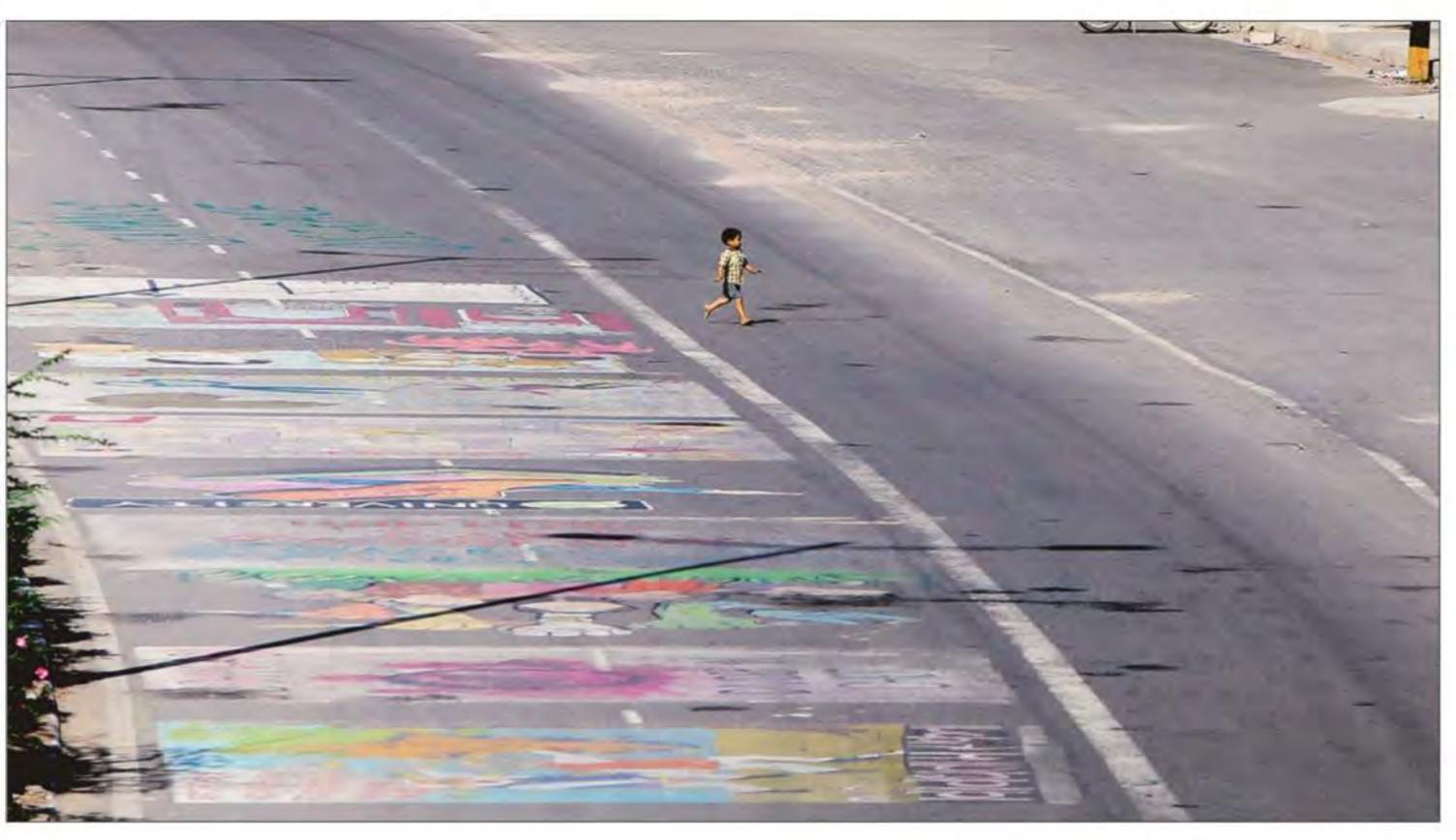
SITUATION VACANT

Agriculture Management: Objective: Maintain and grow land parcels in Northern India. Contact:

0050164302-1

sharmafarmsbharat@gmail.co

THE OUTBREAK THE CITY



A Large Playground

A child runs on an empty road at Shaheen Bagh on Saturday as the nationwide lockdown continues. Gajendra Yadav

ANOTHER SURGE IN NUMBER OF CASES LIKELY

Shortage of PPE kits, worried about docs and nurses, have written to Centre: CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

CHIEF MINISTER Arvind Kejriwal said Saturday that hospitals under the Delhi government are facing a shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) kits. He attributed the crisis to the surge in the number of people testing positive for coronavirus, fuelled by those evacuated from the Tablighi Jamaat gathering. He also said he had written to the Centre, but was vet to receive the kits so far.

Kejriwal said the number of cases in Delhi has risen to 445, with 59 new cases emerging in the last 24 hours.

"In Delhi, the situation is a little serious as we are having to take the responsibility of those who came from abroad. Around 2,300



At RML Hospital, Saturday. Fifteen people in the healthcare **sector have tested positive.** *Praveen Khanna*

people were evacuated from the Markaz and many among them are likely to test positive. So suddenly, there has been a shortage of PPE kits. I am worried about our doctors and nurses. I don't want

any doctor and nurse to treat coronavirus patients without PPE kits. We wrote to the Centre yesterday, seeking the kits urgently, but so far we have not received any kit," said

As of Saturday, more than 10 people in the healthcare sector have also tested positive.

The CM said the city is likely to witness another surge in positive cases within the next one or two days, as reports of 500 out of 2,300 people who were hospitalised start coming in. However, the situation is very much under control, he added, pointing out that the total figure of 445 should not be analysed in isolation.

"The fact is, only 40 cases are those with a local history of transmission. The rest are either connected to the Markaz gathering or have a history of travelling abroad. This is somewhat reassuring... this is local transmission, not community transmission," he said.

So far, six patients have died in the national capital — five were aged over 60 while one was 36 years old. Five patients had

health issues such as diabetes. liver, respiratory or cardiac ailments. "Out of those admitted, 11 are in ICU and 5 are on ventilation. Their conditions can be described as serious... The elderly will have to stay safe. Those with sugar, heart and other serious diseases will also have to take special care," said the CM.

Kejriwal has also directed officials to convert Lok Nayak, GB Pant and Rajiv Gandhi Super Specialty hospitals into COVID-19 centres.

The Delhi government also alleged unfair treatment on the Centre's part, with Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia questioning the omission of Delhi from the list of states that are due to receive financial assistance from the Union government to

fight COVID-19. In a letter to Union Finance

tion two days ago. He said he is

worried about his friend as he

had locked him in the flat when

ing over the phone last I spoke to

him. I don't know what happened

used to work at a Styrofoam-

making unit in Haryana, was

dropped off in Delhi by the fac-

tory owner after evading several

police checkpoints along the

way. Though he managed to

reach a relative's house in Anand

Mohammad Abid (24), who

to him now," said Khalid.

"I have a phone which has run out of battery. My friend was cry-

he stepped out.

Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. Sisodia said Delhi has been left "high and dry" despite Prime Minister Narendra Modi's assurance, at the meeting with the Chief Ministers, that all states will receive assistance. So far, the Centre has released Rs 17,287 crore to states under the first instalment of state disaster response mitigation fund and on account of revenue deficit grants.

"To our utter disbelief, Delhi has been left high and dry with zero allocation for the substantial burden of the fight against corona... People of Delhi expect fair and equal treatment by the government of India...do not deserve step-motherly treatment from the government of India... I humbly request you to allocate Delhi's due share of funds to fight the worst disease mankind has ever seen," Sisodia wrote.

Govt issues guidelines on disposal of bodies

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

LAYING OUT guidelines for proper disposal of bodies of COVID-19 victims, the government said burial or cremation of bodies will be carried out in the presence of trained healthcare

workers in protective gear. In a statement on Friday listing steps to be taken by hospitals, the Health and Family Welfare Department said, "Hospitals should store the body in a mortuary after ensuring proper disinfection of the body and the

body bag as per guidelines." The guidelines came soon after a conference was held by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal with doctors from various government hospitals. Without clear instructions so far, there was a lack of consensus regarding disposal of bodies and to whom it must be handed over to.

The guidelines ask hospitals to take a call on whether an autopsy is required or not and insist that they provide a hearse van to transport the body to the cremation or burial ground.

Hospitals have also been asked to ensure a trained healthcare worker in protective gear packs and handles the body, and is present in the hearse van

transporting it. After completion

of the procedures, the van will

be disinfected as per protocol.

RK Puram slum cordoned off as AIIMS staffer tests positive

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL& ASTHA SAXENA

NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

THE NATIONAL capital reported 59 new cases of coronavirus on Saturday, taking the total number to 445. Of the new cases, 42 were evacuated from Markaz Nizamuddin, two are cases of local transmission, while 15 are under investigation.

Among those who tested positive is a 50-year-old man working as a contractual sanitation worker at the AIIMS Trauma Centre, who lives at the congested jhuggi jhopri camp near South Moti Bagh.

The entire area was cordoned off on Saturday after tests confirmed that the man had contracted COVID-19. He is admitted to Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital. While his family was initially asked to isolate themselves, they were later shifted to a quarantine centre in South Delhi's Chattarpur on Saturday evening.

The pradhan of the IJ camp said, "We got to know about the case today after an ambulance came to our colony. We found out the man had gone to the hospital to get tested four days ago, after he ran a fever. Today, his elder son went to collect the report and was told that his father had tested positive. There are 12 members in his family."

Close to 1,200 families live in the area, which is now under a strict lockdown. "His family members were also taken to hospital, but they returned as they were asymptomatic. We assured them help after they were advised to isolate at home. We are getting food at the government school nearby, so we told them



The Trauma Centre at RML will be turned to a dedicated isolation ward. Praveen Khanna



they would get food inside their home," said the pradhan.

A senior police officer said they have informed the department concerned and requested them to take necessary actions to contain the situation.

The total population of the [] camp is around 5,000, and several people are now worried about their well-being. "We have asked everyone to be more cautious and alert their neighbours or the agency concerned if they notice any symptoms. The lockdown will be stricter in the area now, but perhaps that is needed," said a resident.

The city has seen 15 people who work in hospitals, including doctors and nurses, test positive for the virus so far.

On Saturday, two more nurses — one each from the Delhi State Cancer Institute and Indraprastha Apollo Hospital tested positive. Five COVID-19 positive patients were discharged from hospitals Saturday.

Did not seek details of hospital WhatsApp groups, say police

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

A DAY after the additional medical superintendent at Vardhman Mahavir Medical College and Safdarjung Hospital issued an order asking details of the administrators of WhatsApp groups of the hospital for "onward transmission to police", senior Delhi Police officers said they had made no such requests of the hospital administration.

A total of 48 people -20 of whom have tested positive, while reports of others are awaited - are admitted at Safdarjung Hospital. "We did not ask hospital au-

thorities to issue any such order. It appears they did this to stop people from spreading any kind of fake news," said a senior police officer.

The circular, issued on April 3, said: "... I am directed by competent authority that as a legal requirement, names, mobile numbers, email of all admins of WhatsApp groups of hospital are

required for onward transmission to police. This is required to prevent spreading of any fake news, rumour or any other adverse comments/statements on social media and in the institution by any hospital/college staff." Asked why these details had

been sought, Medical Superintendent of Safdarjung Hospital Balwinder Singh Arora said, "No one should spread fake news."

He did not respond when asked if there had been an instance of someone sharing fake news or if the police had asked them to issue the circular.

Dr Manish, president of the Safdarjung RDA, said: "There was fake news which stated that five days' salaries of doctors and healthcare workers will be deducted. The Ministry then clarified that no such orders have been passed by the Director-General of Health Services. Also, many staff members are circulating wrong information about COVID-19 cases. The letter has been issued to ensure there is no panic among the general public.'

CORONA WATCH

DJB staff to donate day's salary to CM relief fund

New Delhi: DJB vice-chairman Raghav Chadha Saturday said all employees will donate one day's salary to the Chief Minister's coronavirus relief fund — an amount totalling nearly Rs 2 crore.

Gambhir lends a hand

New Delhi: East Delhi MP Gautam Gambhir Saturday gave 500 N95 masks and 125 PPE kits to the Delhi government's Lal Bahadur Shastri Hospital.

Man arrested *Gurgaon:* A 26-year-old tax consultant has been arrested for allegedly spreading rumours regarding coronavirus on social media, alleging that a person in his neighbourhood had been infected and taken away by police. **ENS**

Among those at sports complex, some who just stepped out to buy supplies house in Shahdara looking for ra-

ANAND MOHAN J NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

THE THOUGHT of biscuits dipped in tea made Vijay Kumar (55) step out of his home at a park in Anand Vihar and head to a local market nearby. But he was stopped by Delhi Police, who promised to feed him biscuits. Instead, he was dropped off at the Yamuna Sports Complex in Anand Vihar. For the past four days, Kumar

has been trying to convince officials at the sports complex to release him, claiming he has a family waiting for him at the park. But they are not convinced, and Kumar is expected to stay at the sports complex till the lockdown is lifted.

Since March 31, the Yamuna sports complex has been converted into a makeshift camp for those stranded in Delhi without a home. Among its 300 occupants are labourers who tried to leave Delhi on foot, street children, and many who simply broke curfew.

DCP (Shahdara) D K Gupta said, "The Yamuna Sports Complex near Vivek Vihar is being used as a shelter by the Delhi government. So far, we have managed to take 1,100 people there. They are mostly homeless people and migrant labourers who wanted to return to their villages. They are being provided meals, water, bathing facilities. Four police personnel are managing the



The Yamuna sports complex has been converted into a makeshift camp for those stranded in Delhi. Amit Mehra

security arrangements."

He said that since the complex is huge there is scope to add more people and that people here were transported via DTC

Around 250 beds have been laid out on a red carpet at the main lobby of the stadium, and officials said more are on the way. A three-member medical team, comprising a doctor and a pharmacist, works in two sixhour shifts, in addition to around 35 civil defence volunteers who work on rotation.

Further, there are two portable toilets which are changed every 24 hours. Due to a lack of bathrooms, men and women have to bathe in the open in separate areas of the

Officials have so far stocked

around 1,000 masks, 250 soaps and four bottles of hand sanitisers, which they believe should sustain them for at least a week.

Despite the facilities, Kumar and some others find themselves in a predicament. Among them is Ajijul (25), who claims he was stopped by police while on his way to get ration. "They said they will give me free ration and now I am stuck here." he said.

Ajijul used to work at a jeans making unit in Shahdara and earned Rs 500 a day. He has now run out of money and is waiting for his relatives to pick him up. "I should have walked to Bihar like the others," he said.

Abdul Khalid (34), who worked in a cloth-making unit for Rs 450 a day, was also picked up by police after he left his

Vihar after a 10-hour walk, he was not allowed in. "The colony residents did not let me enter until I got tested for coronavirus. I was picked up by police at GTB Hospital. I don't

even have a spare change of

clothes with me," he said. Reena (34), a construction worker who used to earn Rs 300 a day, is worried about her children who are at a relative's house in UP. She was planning on walking to her village when she was picked up by police from Vivek Vihar. "I just want my children to know I am alive," she said.

Sohan Lal. the executive magistrate managing the stadium, said: "They will be allowed to leave if their families turn up with their address proofs in Delhi. We are trying to connect with the families." He said the facility can accommodate more than 1,000 people.

Rashtrapati Nivas, Shimla- 171005

Advertisement No : SPRO/02/2020 An application is invited from the desirous candidate for the post of Accounts Officer at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study Shimla on deputation basis, initially for a period of two years. The description of the post is as under: 1. Accounts Officer

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDY

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Important General Instructions:

Application Form and detailed advertisement are available on the Institute's Website (www.iias.ac.in). Interested candidate should apply through proper channel. Applications should be sent to "Secretary, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Rashtrapati Nivas, Shimla- 171005 (Himachal Pradesh)". It should reach within 30 days from the date of publication of this advertisement in Employment News.

Secretary

THE () UTBREAK THE CITY

ONLINE SESSION

Vacations to lockdown, CM chats with parents on virus fears among children

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

FROM HOW to keep fear at bay among children to concerns re-

garding shortening of summer vacation, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, along with a panel from the government, addressed concerns of children and parents in a half-hour-long online session on Saturday afternoon.

Calling the online session 'Parenting in the Time of Coronavirus', Kejriwal, Education Minister Manish Sisodia, Director of Education Binay Bhushan and education professional Seemant Dadwal fielded questions which were sent to them in advance.

"All schools in Delhi have been closed for the last 15-20 days. This is an extraordinary situation... We have some 44 lakh children studying in schools

A DOCTOR from Agra and his son

who had recently travelled to

Gurgaon are among three people

who tested positive for coron-

avirus Saturday morning, bring-

ing the total number of cases

Palwal, eight from Faridabad and

one from Nuh also tested positive

Saturday. Officials said most of

these new cases were directly

linked to the Tablighi Jamaat

gathering at the Nizamuddin

उ.प्र. पावर ट्रांसमिशन कारपोरेशन लि. ई-

निविदा आमंत्रण सुचना अनुभवी फर्मीं/ ठेकेदार/

कार्यदायी संस्थाओं से विद्युत पारेषण मंडल मेरठ

के अंतर्गत निम्न कार्यों/ आपूर्ति हेतु मोहरबंद ई-

Markaz in Delhi last month.

Additionally, 13 persons from

recorded in the district to 18.

SAKSHIDAYAL

GURGAON, APRIL 4



across Delhi who are now confined to their homes. I know that children have a lot of energy and now all their activities have stopped. They also must be having a lot of questions on their minds... We have received very interesting questions. A parent

said that her five-year-old daughter asked if we're all going to die. Parents must be trying to answer and we will also try to answer their questions," said Kejriwal.

While emphasising that parents should try to explain to children why they cannot go out at

this time by telling them how the virus spreads, Sisodia said this should be done without scaring them, especially younger children.

"It is an unprecedented situation. Parents are also anxious. Children are not being able to do the things they enjoy, like going to a park or meeting their friends. Perhaps parents can enable them to spend some time with their friends through technology or use charts to create a park-like setting in the house," added Dadwal.

One of the questions addressed was on how to sensitise children to the current plight of labourers who have lost income and been displaced because of the lockdown.

"The Delhi government has taken steps to provide food for the labourers... I also ask that parents take responsibility that no poor person near your locality goes hungry. It will teach the children

good values. Do not cut pay of any worker in your homes or workplaces at this time. It will be a good influence on the children, and teach them their responsibility to society," said Kejriwal.

Among school-related queries were if the summer vacation will be shortened. Bhushan said currently, there is no intention to do so because of the hot weather conditions at that time, but added that he can't give a conclusive answer at the moment.

Kejriwal said that more such sessions will be conducted soon with more experts on the panel.

The Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights, in partnership with NGO COVID Response, has also set up a central helpline to provide counselling to children and their parents. The helpline will be operational from 10 am to 7 pm through the week till April 30.

> We saw an exodus of migrants from Delhi during the lockdown and a large force had to be deployed at the borders with Uttar Pradesh. What was the police strategy then?

AMIL BHATNAGAR

Since the lockdown was

announced, what have been

man face. Motivating and equip-

ping police to handle the pan-

out to help save citizens from a

pandemic that has no other

medicine but to avoid mingling

of people.

NOIDA, APRIL 4

lockdown.

in the district?

As large numbers poured on to our locked borders (both at Ghaziabad and Gautam Buddh Nagar) along with other places of NCR, effort was to see that people keep moving so as to maintain some social distancing. We also tried to take care of their basic requirements of food and water and later helped them move to their destinations. Our teams worked 24x7 at many places and we also tried to convince them to stay back.



THE EXPRESS

Police braving odds with

resolve, insurance can be

considered, says top cop

the challenges faced by police The challenges have been humongous and unprecedented. We had to ensure there is enforcement but with a hu-

INTERVIEW demic challenge, which came without a written template. A challenge was to ask people to **ALOK SINGH** cooperate with all government COMMISSIONER OF POLICE agencies and particularly the **GAUTAM BUDH NAGAR** uniformed personnel as they are

> Several societies are in lockdown as Noida has been announced a hotspot for coronavirus. What are the daily problems encountered by police while enforcing home quarantine and restricting general movement?

We are coordinating with the government agencies to ensure timely sanitisation. We are keeping a constant vigil and guarding these places so that the norms of quarantine are completely ob-

Police have released several helplines to assist people in their lockdown-related queries. What is the nature of conversations people want to have with police?

People reach out to us in great numbers. Most of the time, they

want to talk about ways and means of getting "emergency passes" to travel. We also get information about some carefree society dwellers who are not serious about the lockdown, which is then relayed to the appropriate authority. There are also people who just want to talk to someone as they are lonely in the lockdown.

How is the district police keeping its own personnel safe?

We were early off the block with our safety gear. There were training sessions conducted by medical teams on safe practices along with guidelines for maintaining social distancing at police stations and mobile cars. Daily sanitisation of vehicles and offices is being carried out. The police are braving medical odds with steely resolve. But I think they should also be considered for some sort of insurance protection.

With the number of cases in NCR increasing daily, what will be the police strategy in the coming days with regards to possible containment efforts?

We are working very closely with medical and civil teams to identify, segregate and contain al possible primary contacts and places. It is our appeal for people to cooperate with police and government bodies to fight this.

How has the outreach been to the poor, senior citizens in the last few days?

The programme has been immensely popular as people perceived police as first and reliable responders to their basic needs of food medicines and hand-holding during medical emergencies.

CM Arvind Kejriwal during the online session on Saturday

3 test positive in Gurgaon, 8 in Faridabad health department, the fatherson duo from Gurgaon have been admitted at the isolation ward in Medanta-The Medicity. "They are

> dents of Agra and had incidentally travelled to Gurgaon. We have alerted authorities in Agra," said Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Jaswant Singh Punia. Officials said the third person who tested positive, a resident of Pataudi, claimed to have visited the Nizamuddin Markaz to drop

off an acquaintance last month.

His sample was collected after au-

thorities traced him. Of the 18

आधार पर परिचालन से संबंधित कार्य। **धरोहर**

1770.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित, **ई-पोर्टल पर**

निविदा अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं

पर सूचित की जायेगीं। क्रम सं. 7, निविदा

संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी- 19/20-

21:- विद्यत पारेषण खण्ड-द्वितीय मेरठ के

अन्तर्गत 220/132 के.वी. उपकेन्द्रों के

04/04/2020

राशि 20000.00, निविदा प्रपत्र



Contact tracing underway in Palwal district Saturday

cases recorded in Gurgaon so far, seven emerged this week. In Palwal, 13 more people

who had attended the Tablighi

the total number of cases to 17 in the district.

"A total of 70 samples have been collected in Palwal so far, of which 56 are of people who attended the Tablighi gathering. We have so far traced 94 people in the district who had attended the gathering," said Dr Brahmdeep Singh, CMO, Palwal.

Officials said nine villages in the district, declared a 'containment zone', and another 27 villages, identified as the 'buffer zone', have been sealed.

Faridabad also recorded new cases on Saturday, with officials saying a total of eight people had

अनुरक्षणार्थ सामग्री की आपूर्ति। **धरोहर राशि**

2000.00, निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य 590.00

gathering tested positive, taking tested positive, bringing the total number of cases to 14. "Five of them had attended the Tablighi gathering. Of the remaining, two are a husband and wife, while the third is the son of another couple who had tested positive last month," said a spokesperson of the district administration.

> Meanwhile, Commissioner of the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram Saturday issued directions to landlords of establishments where "workers, including the migrants" reside, to "not demand rent for one month". Meanwhile, in Ghaziabad, 10

more cases were reported in 24 hours.

In a first, drive through, roll down windows and get tested at this COVID-19 centre egy to respond to a pandemic, es-

SOMYA LAKHANI NEW DELHI. APRIL 4

STARTING MONDAY morning, Dr Dang's Lab, one of the private labs in the country allowed to test for coronavirus, will begin the country's first drive-through COVID-19 testing at West Delhi's Punjabi Bagh.

Dr Arjun Dang, CEO of Dr Dangs Lab, told *The Indian Express*, "At the central market in Punjabi Bagh, there is a 30-40 metre-long stretch that we have turned into the drivethrough premises; only one car is allowed inside at any given time. The guidelines to get the test are the same — a doctor's prescription for COVID-19 testing and the doctor's registration number; a government photo-ID such as Aadhaar card; and a patient pro forma request form. Apart from this, there are two more questions on the make and colour of the car, and the

number plate of the car." Dang said that the testing drivethrough will have four stations — at the first signage, there is a banner with the lab's name; at the second station, a trained personnel in personal protective equipment (PPE), who is manning the barricade, will check the registration number, the colour and the make of the car with



OPD Services have been closed at LNJP Hospital Saturday onwards. Praveen Khanna

the details filed with the lab. as well as the patient's ID.

"At all stations, there will be a signage that will say 'please keep your windows rolled up'. At the third station, 10 metres away, a signage will say 'please park your car inside the white box.' This is placed next to a temporary structure that has double-sided ventilation, where a medical officer will get confirmation of the patient's ID, wear the full PPE and will hold up a signage that will say 'please roll

down the window of the patient

only, tilt your head back'. After this two swabs will be taken, and from the fourth station, they can exit,"

said Dr Dang. Once the patient books an appointment for a drive-through testing, a PDF will be shared with details such as "only two patients per vehicle, patient to be seated on the right as the booth is one the right, and that no two-wheelers or taxis are allowed".

Dang said that as per a study by Stanford Medicine, "the drivethrough model is an effective strat-

Rajasthan looked frantically for es-

sential supplies. Sandeep Kotia (22),

who lives at the cluster, said, "Even

though we have been living here for

years, only the older people have

ration cards and they get the food.

But most of us here have not got

one made." Another resident

Vidyawati (60), who has a ration

card, said, "I have nine people in my

family but we get only wheat and

MLAs, including those affiliated to

In a video conference with area

rice as ration, no pulses."

pecially in order to prevent the spread by avoiding possible transmission both to patient and medical staff". As of now, private labs are test-

ing in two ways — home collections and at dedicated COVID-19 testing collection centres.

Dang said, "In home collections, patients are slightly apprehensive even though we use the highest level of infection control and PPE and have a separate team just doing COVID-19 collections... People still have apprehensions that the person coming to test must have gone to several houses to collect those samples."

The second option of COVID-19 collection centres, he said, come with their own problems. "The person coming in will touch the railing on the stairs, sit on a chair, touch the armrest... Even when you have judicious use of the disinfection protocols like the hypochlorite spray, the chances of residual COVID-19 infection when the patient entering any kind of premises is scary."

At the drive-through, 20 minutes has been set aside per vehicle with an 11-minute buffer period There are four trained medical officers, and the ability to test 30-50 patients daily from 8.30 am to 4.30 pm.

60% of 71 lakh people under PDS given ration, those without cards can fill forms

ANANYA TIWARI NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

THE DELHI government has distributed ration to 60% of the 71 lakh people who come under the Public Distribution System (PDS) so far, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind

Kejriwal said Friday. Kejriwal said the government has started accepting applications for special coupons, using which those not having valid ration cards will also be able to get 5 kg of wheat, rice and sugar, free of cost. "It will require a person to fill up a simple form. Around 40,000-50,000 people have already submitted. We are hoping to start the disbursal process for them by Wednesday or

Thursday," said Kejriwal. Many without ration cards in

At a ration shop in Dilshad **Garden.** Prem Nath Pandev

to easily access staples due to loss of daily wages.

the city have been suffering since the lockdown as they were not able

At R K Puram's Sona Camp JJ

cluster, migrant labourers from

BJP, Kejriwal said they should reach out to those without cards to help them register. Meanwhile, several Fair Price

Shop (FPS) owners said they had not received any information regarding distribution of ration to non-card holders. There are 2,028 Fair Price Shops across nine districts in the city. Officials said the mechanism was being worked out.

At one such shop in Timarpur owner Vinod Kumar Gupta said "Around 600 card holders have already taken their ration." He said due to the lockdown, many non-ration card holders had been visiting the store, hoping for supplies: "They show their Aadhaar cards but we cannot give them anything."

Among those who were turned away for not having a ration card was Rakesh Kumar (28), who runs an ice cream stall in Timarpur: "I tried asking for ration after showing my Aadhar card, but they aren't giving it to non-card holders."

While he usually manages to send Rs 6,000-7,000 to his wife and daughter back home in UP's Mathura, the lockdown has robbed him of his income.

पर सुचित की जायेगीं। **क्रम सं**. 2, **निविदा** संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी- 14/20-21:- विद्यत पारेषण खण्ड-द्वितीय मेरठ के अन्तर्गत 220 के.वी. उपकेन्द्र चरला के वार्षिक

समय 05.05.2020 सायं 05 बजे तक, **ई-पोर्टल** पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि (www.etender.up.nic.in) पर दो भागों में आमंत्रित की जाती है। भाग-1 में ई-निविदाओं के **एवं समय** 06.05.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक, **ई**-प्रपत्र निर्धारित शुल्क आर.टी.जी.एस./ पोर्टल पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने एन.ई.एफ.टी. एवं निर्धारित धरोहर राशि की तिथि एवं समय तदनुसार बेवसाइट पर आर.टी.जी.एस./ एन.ई.एफ.टी./ बैंक गारन्टी स्चित की जायेगीं। क्रम सं. 3, निविदा संख्या (अलग-अलग) के माध्यम से अधीक्षण एवं कार्य का विवरण टी- 15/20-21:-अभियंता, विद्युत पारेषण मण्डल, मेरठ के पक्ष में विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड-द्वितीय मेरठ के अन्तर्गत 220 के.वी. उपकेन्द्र चरला के वार्षिक आधार पर State Bank of India, Cantt Branch, अनुरक्षण से संबंधित कार्य। **धरोहर राशि** Meerut Account No. 11047201099, IFSC Code SBIN0000680 में जमा 20000.00, निविदा प्रपत्र का मुल्य 1770.00 करायी जायेंगी। बैंक जमा की साक्ष्य यथा योज्य जी.एस.टी. सहित, **ई-पोर्टल पर निविदा** यू.टी.आर. संख्या, पे-इन स्लिप मूल की प्रति अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय निविदा के प्रथम भाग के साथ संलग्न किये जाये। 05.05.2020 सायं 05 बजे तक, **ई-पोर्टल पर** निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं ई-निविदा के प्रथम भाग (यू.टी.आर. संख्या, पे-इन स्लिप प्रति, निविदा प्रपत्र, पैन कार्ड, इन्कम समय 06.05.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक, **ई-पोर्टल** टैक्स रिटर्न, जी.एस.टी. प्रपत्र की स्वयं प्रमाणित पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि छायाप्रति एवं तकनीकी अनुभव आदि) ई-पोर्टल एवं समय तदनुसार बेवसाइट पर सूचित की पर स्कैन्ड प्रतियाँ (PDF format) तथा ई-जायेगीं। क्रम सं. 4, निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य निविदा के द्वितीय भाग (प्राइजबिड) में दरें एवं **का विवरण टी**- 16/20-21:- विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड-द्वितीय मेरठ के अन्तर्गत 132 के.वी. नियम व शर्ते ई-पोर्टल (www.etender. up.nic.in) उपकेन्द्र कपसाड के वार्षिक आधार पर निम्नलिखित तालिका के अनुसार अपलोड की परिचालन से संबंधित कार्य। धरोहर राशि जायेगी। निविदा शुल्क, धरोहर राशि एवं अन्य 11000.00, निविदा प्रपत्र का मुल्य 1770.00 व्यवसायिक प्रपत्र हार्ड कॉपी में अथवा व्यक्तिगत जी.एस.टी. सहित, **ई-पोर्टल पर निविदा** संवाहक के माध्यम से इस कार्यालय में प्राप्त नहीं अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय 05.05.2020 सायं 05 बजे तक, **ई-पोर्टल पर** किये जायेंगे।ई-निविदा भाग द्वितीय (प्राइजबिड) खुलने की तिथि हेत् तदोनुसार वेबसाइट पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं सिचित की जाएगी। ई-निविदा का प्रथम भाग, समय 06.05.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक, **ई-पोर्टल** तालिका में अंकित दिनांक एवं समय अनसार पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि सार्वजनिक रूप से खोला जायेगा। ई-निविदा **समय** तदनुसार बेवसाइट पर सूचित की खुलने की तिथि पर अवकाश होने की स्थिति में जायेगीं। क्रम सं. 5, निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य ई-निविदा अगले कार्य दिवस पर निर्धारित समय का विवरण टी- 17/20-21:- विद्युत पारेषण तक स्वीकार की जाएगी एवं निर्धारित समय पर खण्ड-द्वितीय मेरठ के अन्तर्गत 132 के.वी. खोली जाएगी। ई-निविदाओं को बिना कोई कारण उपकेन्द्र कपसाड के वार्षिक आधार पर अनुरक्षण से संबंधित कार्य। धरोहर राशि 11000.00, बताए ई-निविदा/ ई-निविदाओं को अस्वीकार/ विभाजित करने का अधिकार अधोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता निविदा प्रपत्र का मल्य 1770.00 जी.एस.टी. के पास सुरक्षित रहेगा। धरोहर/ ई-निविदा राशि सहित. ई-पोर्टल पर निविदा अपलोड करने रिहत व सशर्त ई-निविदाएं स्वीकार नहीं की की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय 05.05.2020 सायं जाएंगी। कृपया विस्तृत जानकारी, डाउन लोड, 05 बजे तक, ई-पोर्टल पर निविदा का प्रथम अन्य संशोधनों एवं ई-निविदा प्रस्तुत करने के भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय 06.05.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक, ई-पोर्टल पर निविदा का दिनांक तक विस्तार आदि के संबंध में कृपया द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय www.etender.up.nic.in पर लॉग आन करें। निविदाओं का विवरण निम्न प्रकार है:-तदनुसार बेवसाइट पर सुचित की जायेगीं। क्रम क्रम सं. 1. निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का सं. 6, निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण **विवरण टी**- 13/20-21:- विद्यत पारेषण खण्ड टी- 18/20-21:- विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड मेरठ के -द्वितीय मेरठ के अन्तर्गत 220 के.वी. उपकेन्द्र अन्तर्गत 220 के.वी. उपकेन्द्र मोदीनगर पर चरला पर स्थापित 160 एम.वी.ए. परिवर्तक (मै. स्थापित 145 के.वी. एच.बी.बी. मेक आइसोलेटर सी.जी.एल. मेक) की गैरिकट बदलने से संबंधित के अनुरक्षणार्थ विभिन्न प्रकार के सामग्री की आपूर्ति। धरोहर राशि 2000.00, निविदा प्रपत्र कार्य। धरोहर राशि 12000.00, निविदा प्रपत्र का मुल्य 1770.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित, ई-पोर्टल का मुल्य 590.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित, ई-पोर्टल पर निविदा अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि पर निविदा अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि **एवं समय** 05.05.2020 सायं 05 बजे तक, **ई**-**एवं समय** 09.05.2020 सायं 05 बजे तक, **ई**-पोर्टल पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की पोर्टल पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की **तिथि एवं समय** 06.05.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तिथि एवं समय 11.05.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक, ई-पोर्टल पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग तक, ई-पोर्टल पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय तदनुसार बेवसाइट खोलने की तिथि एवं समय तदनसार बेवसाइट

जी.एस.टी. सहित, **ई-पोर्टल पर निविदा** अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय 09.05.2020 सायं 05 बजे तक, ई-पोर्टल प निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय 11.05.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक, **ई-पोर्टल** पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि **एवं समय** तदनुसार बेवसाइट पर सूचित की जायेगीं। क्रम सं. 8, निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी- 20/20-21:- विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड–द्वितीय मेरठ के अन्तर्गत 220/132 के.वी. उपकेन्द्रों पर विभिन्न अग्निशामक यंत्रों की आपूर्ति। धरोहर राशि २०००.००, निविदा प्रपत्र का मुल्य 590.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित, **ई-पोर्ट**ल पर निविदा अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि **एवं समय** 09.05.2020 सायं 05 बजे तक, **ई**-पोर्टल पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की **तिथि एवं समय** 11.05.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक, ई-पोर्टल पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय तदनुसार बेवसाइट पर सूचित की जायेगीं। क्रम सं. 9, निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी- 21/20-21:- विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड-द्वितीय मेरठ के अन्तर्गत 220/132 के.वी. उपकेन्द्रों पर विभिन्न इलैक्ट्रिकल सामग्री की आपूर्ति। धरोहर राशि 2000.00, निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य 590.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित, **ई-पोर्टल पर निविदा** अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय 13.05.2020 सायं 05 बजे तक, **ई-पोर्टल फ** निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय 14.05.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक, **ई-पोर्टल** पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय तदनसार बेवसाइट पर सचित की जायेगी। क्रम सं. 10, निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी- 22/20-21:- विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड मेरठ के अन्तर्गत 220 के.वी. उपकेन्द्र मोदीपुरम पर विभिन्न इलैक्ट्रिकल सामग्री की आपूर्ति। धरोहर राशि 2000.00, निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य 590.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित, ई-पोर्टल पर निविदा अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय 13.05.2020 सायं 05 बजे तक. **ई**-पोर्टल पर निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय 14.05.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक, ई-पोर्टल पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय तदनुसार बेवसाइट पर सूचित की जायेगीं। **क्रम सं**. 11, **निविदा** संख्या एवं कार्य का विवरण टी- 23/20-21:- विद्यत पारेषण खण्ड मेरठ के अन्तर्गत विभिन्न 220/132 के.वी. उपकेन्द्रों के अनुरक्षणार्थ सामग्री की आपूर्ति। **धरोहर राशि** 2000.00, निविदा प्रपत्र का मुल्य 590.00 जी.एस.टी. सहित, **ई-पोर्टल पर निविदा** अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय 13.05.2020 सायं 05 बजे तक, **ई-पोर्टल** फ निविदा का प्रथम भाग खोलने की तिथि एवं समय 14.05.2020 प्रातः 12 बजे तक, **ई-पोर्टल** पर निविदा का द्वितीय भाग खोलने की तिथि **एवं समय** तदनुसार बेवसाइट पर सुचित की जायेगीं। अधीक्षण अभियंता, विद्युत पारेषण 130-डी. ''पारेषण विक्टोरिया पार्क, मेरठ। ''राष्ट्रहित में ऊर्जा बचायें'' पत्रांक No. 952/ वि.पा.मं./ ETC MT/ TENDER, दिनांकः

THE () UTBREAK NATION





Debasree Chaudhuri

Minister booked for flouting norms

Kolkata: Union Minister of State for Women & Child Development Debasree Chaudhuri was booked on Saturday for allegedly flouting social distancing norms. An FIR was lodged after Raiganj municipality chairman Sandip Biswas filed a complaint against the Lok Sabha MP. According to the FIR, Chaudhuri allegedly distributed face masks along with other BJP party workers in Raiganj police station area. Sources said Chaudhuri had travelled from Delhi to Kolkata on March 23 and had been under home quarantine. However, she violated quarantine rules on the night of March 31, when she travelled from Kolkata to Raigani where she staved at her rented accommodation. On Thursday, she took part in an "awareness campaign" against coronavirus and distributed masks in Raiganj. Local politicians, including Raiganj MLA Mohit Sengupta, filed complaints against Chaudhuri with the District Magistrate and an inquiry was initiated. Chaudhuri allegedly prevented health officials from putting up quarantine notice outside her house, sources said. Denying the allegations, Chaudhuri said, "If

GITAM donates to CM relief fund

this notice was put up out-

side my house, others in this

flat would face difficulties."

New Delhi: M Sri Bharat, President of the Gandhi Institute of Technology Management, donated Rs 25 lakh to the Telangana CM's Relief Fund on Saturday. Sri Bharat met Telangana minister KT Rama Rao and handed over the cheque in the presence of Medak MP Kotha Prabhakar Reddy, GITAM Hyderabad Pro V-C N Siva Prasad and resident director DVVSR Varma, according to a statement. **ENS**

FOURTH CASE IN DHARAVI, BMC SCREENING CLINICS OPEN TODAY

Ramping beds to tests, BMC scripts COVID fightback

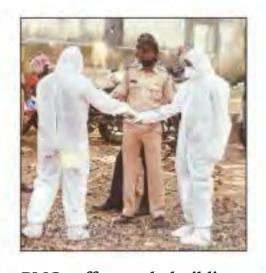
EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, APRIL 4

WITH ASIA's largest slum Dharavi recording its fourth COVID-19 case Saturday, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has started screening clinics in containment zones and densely populated areas in Mumbai. Ten such facilities began operations on Sunday.

The move follows a rise in cases in hotspots, especially near slum pockets. And is the latest step in the BMC's pushback from conducting the most number of tests in any city (over 9,500) to ramping up isolationbed capacity to 2,689 and quarantine to 1,119.

With Mumbai recording 330 positive cases nearly two weeks into the nationwide lockdown, the Corporation has deployed 200 teams with over 3,100 staff for door-to-door tracking.

This push is significant because any turnaround in the city will be key to whatever exit strategy that Maharashtra is looking at



BMC staffers seal a building at Worli police camp. Prashant

after the 21-day lockdown period. The state has conducted 12.859 tests so far, with 635 positive cases.

With the country's biggest and busiest international airport, Mumbai's first cases showed up on March 11 — an elderly couple from Dubai. BMC officials said that since then, 7,000 people have been put in home quarantine, with 2,133 having completed

MAXIMUM CITY, **MAXIMUM TESTING** Mumbai: 9,500+

Karnataka: 5,061 Delhi: 3,694 Tamil Nadu: 3,684 3,468 Telangana:

densely packed areas like Worli, Malad, Chembur and Ghatkopar seeing a rise in cases, each of the BMC's new screening clinics will have a doctor and nurse who will collect swab samples to be sent to Sion Hospital for testing.

Officials said three municipal zones will have two clinics each, with one each in the remaining four zones.

"Since zones 2, 4 and 5 have more than 15 cases of COVID-19 each, it was decided to set up one additional screening clinic there.

ganise a doctor and a nurse for the clinic while other logistics like PPE for staff will be arranged by assistant commissioners of each ward. The collection of swabs will be facilitated by Dr Sujata Baveja of Sion hospital and her team. The test samples will be transported by municipal vehicles to hospital," a BMC official said. Officials said these clinics will

be operational from 9 am to 1 pm, and health officers in charge will ensure that social distancing norms are followed. Five hospitals, meanwhile,

have been dedicated for symptomatic patients: Kasturba, Saifee, St George, Seven Hills and Nanavati. And seven others for non-symptomatic positive cases. Official data shows 28 per cent occupancy in isolation and 18 per cent in quarantine beds.

Referring to the beds available, a BMC official said: "This will help in efficient handling of elderly patients with co-morbidity who are positive for corondedicated hospitals."

Maharashtra considers relaxing curbs after Apr 14

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI. APRIL 4

MAHARASHTRA HEALTH Minister Rajesh Tope on Saturday said that the state government was considering some relaxations in the ongoing lockdown to curb the spread of COVID-19 after April 14, when the nationwide lockdown comes to an end. Earlier in the day, he had said

the state government may not lift the lockdown on April 14 if people did not observe discipline and the number of COVID-19 cases kept rising.

Tope said the relaxations could take place in a phased manner and would be determined by the willingness of citizens to follow social distancing protocols and rules laid down by the state government.

"People feel what will happen post April 14. The CM has just now said that post April 14

Speaking at a briefing on the

moval of lockdown in stages.

Some modalities on phased

manner of relaxing of the situa-

tion are being worked out at the

state level. At the national level,

a Central committee under

(Defence Minister) Rajnath

Singh is looking at the situation."

said that relaxation of the lock-

down would be subject to the

extent to which people in the

state adhere to the norms over

ported its fourth coronavirus-re-

lated death on Saturday, with a

75-year-old man succumbing to

lung failure within a day of ad-

Meanwhile, Karnataka re-

the next 10 days.

On Friday, Yediyurappa had



Health Minister Rajesh Tope

we are considering if some form of relaxation can be given in phases. That is possible only if we follow discipline," Tope

Earlier, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said the decision to relax the lockdown would depend on how people conformed to the state directive of maintaining social distancing and staying indoors.

"The lockdown will end on April 14 and what is to be done afterwards depends on the people and how strictly people follow the government directives,' Thackeray said while addressing the state through social media

platforms. Tope further said that 50 patients in the state had recovered from the infection. He also said that over 2.400 teams of health workers were now operating in containment zones set up across the state.

He said that there was no dearth of equipment for medical professionals and the state currently had 25,000 personal protective equipment (PPE) available, 2.5 lakh N95 masks and 25 lakh triple layered masks. He also said that 1,500 ventilators were available in government hospitals and another 2,000 ventilators would be available with private hospitals that are being

empanelled.

Gehlot forms task forces to draw up lockdown exit strategy

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE JAIPUR, APRIL 4

RAJASTHAN CHIEF Minister Ashok Gehlot has constituted two task forces for suggestions on withdrawing the lockdown in a phased manner and to bring the state back on track.

Orders in this regard were issued Friday. Gehlot formed these task forces after an appeal by Prime Minister Narendra Mod during a video conference with Chief Ministers on Thursday.

Additional Chief Secretary Home, Rajeeva Swarup will head the first task force that has 12 officers and experts. The Home Department will be the administrative department for the task force. Gehlot formed the second task force under the chairmanship of Arvind Mayaram, the Chief Minister's Economic Advisor Rajasthan Transformation Council. The Planning Department will be the administrative department of

suggestions on the lockdown,

Karnataka considers their 14-day isolation period. With over 200 designated avirus and admitted in the five The medical officer of the health department in each ward will orcontainment zones, and phased withdrawal **ICMR TO TEST PROTOTYPE** of corona lockdown

Rly unit first PSU to make ventilator

AVISHEK G DASTIDAR NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

WITHIN A week of receiving instructions from the government about "exploring the possibility" of making ventilators, the Railways' Rail Coach Factory (RCF) in Kapurthala on Saturday came out with a prototype that has an original design and will cost a fraction of what regular ventilators cost. The first such breakthrough

by a PSU, the prototype named Jeevan will now go for final testing at the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) before being put to production to aid the country's fight against COVID-19, the Railway Ministry decided Saturday. In-house medical professionals of the production unit have tested the unit and given it a go-ahead. "The cost will be under Rs

10,000 without the compressor. Overall, the cost will still be a fraction of what regular ventilators available in the market cost," Ravinder Gupta, general manager of the RCF and also the chief



The prototype has been named Jeevan. RCF Kapurthala

designer of the machine, told *The* Sunday Express. Gupta is a 1984batch Mechanical Engineering office of the Railways.

"It can be used as an emergency ventilator. Production is easy and can be done with locally sourced components," he

The heart of the device is the compressed air container to work the Ambu bag with air without any moving parts like servo motor or piston or link mechanism. "It is very silent. And it is not reverse engineering. This is an original design from scratch," he said. Behind the machine is a team

of 10 railway engineers and a group of medical professionals. The intellectual property rights relating to the ventilator belong to the RCF.

It has a microprocessorbased controller and the circuit has been designed by the RCF

One of India's premier production units that manufactures the German-design Linke Hoffman Busche coaches, RCF first looked within to source materials to start with. So the body is taken from a coach, the argon flow meter is from a laser welding machine and the compressor is from an air cooler. "If you open the box, it's a complex machine, but all under Rs 10,000," Gupta said.

The RCF needed to source two parts from vendors in Delhi and Noida. It sourced the valve from the Indian arm of Japanese engineering firm SMC Corporation based in Noida and the Contribution Controller from A Paul based in Okhla. Amid the lockdown, RCF used "emergency transit" services to get the two components by road and train.

The designers and engineers are preparing the technical documents for perusal of the ICMR. By next week, the prototype will be sent there for testing as per instructions of the Railway Board.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE BENGALURU, APRIL 4 THE KARNATAKA government is considering a phased withdrawal of the lockdown in the state, senior minister S Suresh Kumar said on Saturday, following a meeting with Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa and BJP legislators.

COVID-19 situation, Kumar said, 'Relaxation would depend "After April 14, we will examine on adherance of norms' the situation and decide on re-

mission to a government facility in Bagalkote.

Health authorities are yet to ascertain the source of the infection, and are looking to see if the infection occurred after he was visited by his son from Bengaluru. "He fell ill two days ago and went to a local Ayurveda doctor and then to two private hospitals. After doubts on Friday, he was sent to a designated hospital and died in the night. He was a heart patient and had a stent implant, high uncontrolled diabetes and hypertension. When he came to the hospital one lung was damaged," Kumar said.

and Deputy Chairman of the this task force. The first task force will give

while the second task force will make a strategy for improving the economy.

Lokpal member tests positive for virus, admitted to AIIMS trauma centre

ASTHA SAXENA NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

A RETIRED Chief Justice of Chhattisgarh High Court and presently a member of Lokpal, Ajay Kumar Tripathi, has been admitted to AIIMS trauma centre after he was tested positive for Covid-19.

Justice Tripathi was admitted to AIIMS main hospital on Friday night and was later shifted to the

A senior doctor said they are tracing his family members to understand the source of transmission

trauma centre.

A senior doctor from the trauma centre said, "We are monitoring his health condi-

tions. We are tracing his family members to understand the source of transmission. He had tested positive for COVID-19 when brought to the hospital."

Two patients confirmed with the virus have so far been admitted to AIIMS trauma centre.

The state Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme cell is tracing Justice Tripathi's contacts. Sources said his family members have been quarantined in their native state.

says hospital drove them off for being Muslim **DEEP MUKHERJEE**

JAIPUR, APRIL 4

THE FATHER of a newborn on Saturday alleged that doctors at the government hospital in Rajasthan's Bharatpur district turned them away after learning that they are Muslims and referred the case to Jaipur.

Irfan Khan. 34. said his wife delivered in the ambulance on way to laipur, but the newborn died even

as the staff at Bharatpur's RBM Jenana Hospital allegedly drove them away a second time when they returned in the ambulance.

Delivered in ambulance, newborn dies, father

Subhash Garg, Minister of State for Medical Education and MLA from Bharatpur, denied that the family was asked to go to Jaipur because they are Muslims and said an inquiry has been ordered into the allegation.

The Sunday Express reached out to Dr Rachna Narayan, principal of the medical college in Bharatpur which has jurisdiction over the hospital, but she refused to comment and said the Medical **Education Department Secretary** is the right person to comment.

Medical Education Secretary

Vaibhav Galriya said an inquiry has been ordered. Khan said that he suspects the staff attending on her expec-

tant wife thought they were connected to the Tablighi Jamaat. Vishvendra Singh, MLA from Deeg-Kumher constituency in Bharatpur and a minister, called it a "shameful" incident. In successive tweets, Singh wrote: "Pregnant Muslim Woman was refused medical attention...& was told to go to Jaipur given her religion.... Shameful.... The (Tablighi) jamaat most certainly has been hazardous...however, it does not mean citizens of Islamic faith are treated the way a pregnant lady was handled...'

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

LOCALISED, QUIETER ORGANISATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Under lockdown, BJP leaders focus on community kitchens, reaching rations

LIZ MATHEW NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

IN THE middle of a nationwide lockdown, BIP elected representatives and senior leaders, who otherwise criss-cross states on organisational work, are coordinating community kitchens and distribution of ration to the poor, and monitoring the pandemic over telephone and through conference calls and video-

conferencing. Soon after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the Janata Curfew on March 22, BJP president J P Nadda and general secretary (organisation) B L Santosh decided to shape and guide the party's course of action at least for a month.

Days later, each BJP officebearer and MP makes an average 80-90 phone calls each day, attend at least four video conferences and spends 10-12 hours in

coordinating various activities, party leaders told The Indian Express.

BIP general secretary P Muralidhar Rao told *The Indian* Express that all work of distributing food is done while maintaining social distancing. "There could be some minor aberrations to lockdown, but no compromise on social distancing," he said.

While Rao is coordinating party's community activities in the southern states, especially in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, fellow BIP general-secretary Anil Jain keeps track of these activities in Haryana and Chhattisgarh. For Jain, the day starts early with voga and puja, followed by telephone calls and video-conferencing with state ministers and district in-charges. "We collect daily reports from them and submit it to the central office. There is a meeting of general-secretaries with Nadda-ji at 7 pm every day on Skype," he said.

With instructions to launch a 'mask movement', Jain has outsourced making of these masks to an NGO run by his wife - they get clean old clothes, disinfect them and stitch masks. Being a doctor, he says such masks are not foolproof but they "also help".

In Bihar, where Assembly polls are due later this year, state BJP chief Sanjay Jaiswal is busy with community activities such as creating a helpline number for workers employed outside Bihar and returning during after the lockdown. "The helpline has already helped around 4,200 people in the last five days. We reach help and follow up on each call," he said.

Jaiswal, a heart surgeon, and his gynecologist-wife pack food for at least 100 people each day and distribute it at the local government hospital. They have also brought together a group of doctors from private hospitals for a 24-hour medical service cell. Jaiswal said he treats at least 8-10



Lok Sabha MP and Bihar's BJP state unit chief Sanjay Jaiswal doing echocardiography of a patient.

patients a day during the break. In Bhubaneswar, BJP vicepresident Baijavant Panda said he works 12-14 hours a day, as he coordinates party activities in Jharkhand. "I hold video-conferening every day with Union ministers Dharmendra Pradhan and

Pratap Chandra Sarangi; the BJP state president and core group members to take stock of the activities..."

Besides running community kitchen for at least 650 people and distributing dry rations, BIP MP from Ayodhya Lallu Singh

ensures that 20 kg gram is provided to monkeys at different places in Avodhva. His niece makes home-made hand sanitiser using spirit, aloe vera, neem leaves and camphor, and party workers distribute them among villagers. Singh's day starts with a puja and he watches *Ramayan* on TV with family members before meeting people at 11 am.

The leaders said despite the lockdown and the stay-at-home policy, they hardly get time to pursue any hobby. "I usually finish a book every week, but I just could finish what I was reading -10% Less Democracy: Why You Should Trust Elites a Little More and the Masses a Little Less (Garett Iones) — because there is so much to do," Panda said.

Jain has started Sixteen Stormy Days: The Story of the First Amendment of the Constitution of *India* by Tripurdaman Singh.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

Reading to Bollywood songs: what Cong leaders are doing ing his constituency, writing,

MANOJ CG NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

RAIYA SABHA MP and Congress leader Abhishek Singhvi has turned a singer during the lockdown. He has sung some old Bollywood numbers and uploaded them on his YouTube channel. The songs are for various moods and are titled "romance during corona", "the truth of life: which corona reminds us of", "camaraderie with corona or challenge to it?". "ephemerality of life...of which corona also reminds us", and "the Sargam of life and the sound of silence during corona".

Lok Sabha MP Manish Tewari is focusing on monitor-

and powers of the International Court of Justice, and the Rome Statutes. He has written two policy briefs, four articles, finished Jairam Ramesh's book on V R Krishna Menon and William Dalrymple's The Anarchy, and is now reading Crisis Point by US Senators Trent Lott and Tom Daschle and Hein G Kiessling's Faith, Unity, *Discipline: The ISI of Pakistan.* Lok Sabha MP Shashi Tharoor is devoting more time

meditation, kung fu, reading

the law on bio-weaponisation

to exercising, spending close to an hour and a half on keeping himself fit. He spends six to eight hours on COVID-related interventions for his constituency.

ON SATURDAY, states across the country reported 107 new COVID-19 cases and two deaths linked to the Tablighi Jamaat religious congregation, held in Delhi's Nizamuddin area.

TAMIL NADU

The state recorded two deaths and 73 new COVID-19 cases linked to the religious congregation in Delhi. Of the two deaths of COVID-19 patients reported in the state, a 51year-old man died in Villupuram medical college on Saturday morning.

The state health department said that the husband and the son of the 53-year-old woman who died in Madurai were also part of the team that travelled to Delhi for the congregation. In the state, 422 of the total 485 cases tested positive are directly linked to the congregation.

UTTARAKHAND

Six persons linked to Tablighi Jamaat tested positive on COVID-19 infection on Saturday. Among the new cases, five are in Nainital and one in Haridwar The total number of COVID-19 positive cases recorded in the state so far

Uttarakhand Police said 383 people from the state had gone outside to attend jamaats after March 1, and 26 of them have not returned yet. The remaining members have been put in either institutional or home quarantine.

KERALA

Kerala on Saturday reported 11 fresh cases of COVID-19, of whom three had participated in the Tablighi Jamaat event in Delhi. Officials said 157 persons from the state had attended the event, and with the fresh cases, a total of six have tested positive. for the virus. The total number of positive cases in the state touched 306.

Health Minister K K Shailaja told media that of Saturday's 11 new cases, five have a travel history of Dubai and two persons are primary contacts of patients tested positive earlier. A districtwise break up showed that six new cases are from Kasaragod, taking the total number of patients from that district to 137.

HARYANA

After Palwal district witnessed a spike with 13 Tablighis testing positive for coronavirus over the last 24 hours, Health Minister Anil Vij has ordered medical examination of all the Tablighis who have entered Haryana after March 1. Palwal has registered the maximum increase of COVID-19 patients in a single day.

The state has identified over 1,300 Tablighis across Haryana of whom over 510 had attended the Delhi congregation.

Haryana's total count of COVID-19 patients touched 70 on Saturday.

JAMMU & KASHMIR

Ten of 14 people who were found positive for COVID-10 in Kashmir on Saturday are connected with the Tablighi Jamaat congregation.

The total number of COVID-19 cases rose to 92 in J&K. As per the Saturday's media bulletin, there are a total of 68 cases of coronavirus in Kashmir.

KARNATAKA

Two fresh positive cases linked to the Tablighi event were reported in the state from the Dakshina Kannada district, taking the total number of patients linked to the Delhi event to 16.

A total of 16 fresh cases were reported in Karnataka on Saturday taking the total number of COVID 19 cases to 144, including four deaths and 11 discharges.

"We have collected 308 samples and results for 214 have been received, 198 are negative and 16 are positive. There were 19 foreigners in the group from from the Tablighi Markaz and all of them have tested negative for the virus," senior minister S Suresh Kumar said.

Shutting out family, moving to outhouse **GARGI VERMA** RAIPUR, APRIL 4 HEALTH **CHHATTISGARH** Secretary Niharika Barik says she hasn't entered her house in nearly a month. The 49-year-old IAS officer has been living in the outhouse to minimise contact with her aged

IAS officer Niharika Barik has been living in the outhouse to minimise contact with her aged parents and teen daughter.

Price they pay to keep the virus away:

the personal cost.

"The Health Minister and our team had started preparing to tackle the outbreak in Januaryend. I decided to move out of my home in the second week of March, before the lockdown was announced. I can't quarantine myself. I meet several people, including doctors, and I can't minimise those interactions. But since other members of my family are in age groups that are more at risk, I took this decision," she says.

took charge as the state's top health official in 2018, spends most of her day in the "war room" created by the Health Department, where she carries her own meals. "I have sent my entire staff at home on leave, and there's just one help who lives with my family. She manages the household since I can't enter," says Barik. "I don't let anyone else wash

The 1997-batch officer, who

or clean for me. I leave my uten-

THE C RONA **FIGHTERS AN EXPRESS SERIES** sils near the door, where I've kept

a small table. The help leaves food and water there, which I carry with me to the workplace or to my room," she says.

"The hardest part is not being able to interact with my daughter. She might feel troubled, too, knowing that her mother is not accessible physically. This is a difficult decision, it takes a lot of resolve. But unlike many others, I have the privilege of isolating myself at home," she says.

In Raigad, SP Singh says he has been following similar norms to protect his wife, two children, and aged in-laws who have moved in to tide over the lockdown. "I have two young children, and the youngest is barely a year old. I have to go out on the streets, meet

2 more top officers in MP's

COVID spl teams test positive

people, and might also have to go near those possibly infected, due to the nature of my job. So, I have isolated myself and don't interact with my family, unless it is from a distance," he says. The 2011-batch IPS officer

says his children don't understand why their father won't play with them, and often cry. "My youngest wants to come to me and sometimes crawls towards me. But I keep my door closed," he says.

Singh says he's at work for more than 12 hours every day. "My cook leaves the food outside the door...I wash my utensils myself. The only time I see my children is while leaving for work, when they stand near the door. I hope that when they grow up, they will remember that I did this because I was a responsible father," he says.

"Now, other officers have similarly isolated themselves. It is difficult, as everyone wants to be able to relax with their families after work. But this is our way to ensure that the disease doesn't come home with us," says Singh.

Ram Vilas Paswan

Paswan lauds FCI employees for ensuring supply amid lockdown

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI. APRIL 4

UNION MINISTER for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Ram Vilas Paswan on Saturday appreciated the role of Food Corporation of India (FCI) employees in ensuring supply of wheat and rice throughout the country amid the lockdown. He also urged state governments to ensure the prompt supply of foodgrains to beneficiaries under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna

In a series of tweets, Paswan said, "All the State Governments are urged to ensure lifting and distribution of their quota of 5 kg foodgrains/beneficiary under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana for this month as soon as possible so that all beneficiaries get foodgrains on time."

"Thanks to all FCI employees including depot level and regional level officers and 80 thousand labourers who are working day and night to ensure the supply of foodgrains throughout the country and due to their hard work foodgrains are reaching to 81 crore beneficiaries," Paswan said in a separate tweet.

Meanwhile, Paswan's son and president of Lok Janshakti Party Chirag Paswan has appealed to people to support the Prime Minister's call for lighting candles or lamps at 9 pm on April 5 to show solidarity in the

Jamshedpur: 5 held for spreading online rumour on Tabligh event

ABHISHEK ANGAD RANCHI, APRIL 4

FIVE PEOPLE have been arrested in Jamshedpur over the last two days for allegedly posting social media messages that are offensive, inflammatory messages and flame religious hatred, the police said on Saturday.

parents and teenaged daughter.

Every day, she steps out into the

garden to interact with her daugh-

Santosh Singh remains alone in

the front room while at home.

The toughest part, says the 37-

year-old police officer, is when

his infant son crawls towards

him, and he has to shut the door

lockdown on March 22 two days

before the national move, has re-

ported nine cases so far. And, Barik

and Singh are at the forefront of

the state's battle to contain the

coronavirus. But like thousands of

others like them across the coun-

try, from government officials to

medical professionals, they are

struggling to come to terms with

Chhattisgarh, which went into

on his face.

Over 250 km away, Raigad SP

ter, who stands on the terrace.

The messages were attempts to spread rumours by citing the Tablighi Jamat congregation in Nizamuddin, Delhi, in mid-March, the police said. Those arrested have been

identified as Rakesh Sahu, Baldev Singh, Ramnarayan Singh, Mumtaz Khan and Khalid Majid. They were booked under IT Act and under IPC Sections of 40 people who had ostensibly 188, 295(A) and 120(B).

Jamshedpur SSP Anoop Birtharay said: "After reports that many people who attended the Nizamuddin congregation have tested positive for coronavirus, some people are posting inflammatory messages and spreading rumour on social media. We have arrested five people. We are tracking social media posts very closely and will put all such persons into jail."

Jharkhand Chief Secretary Sukhdev Singh said they are yet to ascertain the number of people from the state who attended the Nizamuddin congregation.

On March 30, the state police's Special Branch had sent out a list

Despite coronavirus threat, rise

taken part in the Nizamuddin congregation and had returned to Jharkhand. But after many district officials said many people in the list had not moved out on the given dates, senior officers later conceded that the list was not

completely accurate.

In some districts, deputy commissioners (DCs) have used that list to identify people who had visited Nizamuddin. East Singhbhum DC Ravi Shankar Shukla said: "From the list we contacted people, who claimed they have not visited. But we got details from him (one person in the Special Branch list) about others who had gone. We did contact-tracing and have put 58 people in quarantine." **MILIND GHATWAI** BHOPAL, APRIL 4

TWO MORE senior government officials, including a Principal Secretary-level IAS officer, tested positive for coronavirus on Saturday. This makes three people out of four members of one of the special teams, formed by the Madhya Pradesh government to fight the pandemic, have tested positive for the virus.

The special team was tasked with looking after drugs, equipment and logistics to fight the pandemic in MP.

An IAS officer of the 2011 batch, who had no foreign travel history, had tested positive on Thursday. A subsequent test on

the infection. After the 2011-batch officer tested positive, more than a

the officer on Friday confirmed

dozen IAS officers quarantined themselves after giving their samples for tests. Samples of two officers returned positive on Saturday, including the Principal Secretary-level officer. All these officers interacted with and attended meetings ad-

dressed by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who is now relying more on video conferences. Seventeen people in state

capital Bhopal have till date tested positive for the virus. With three more deaths re-

ported in the last 24 hours, the state has so far registered 11 deaths related to COVID-19. fight against COVID-19.

PCI advisory against AYUSH

claims of curing COVID-19

4 militants killed, had role in civilian killings: J&K Police

ADIL AKHZER SRINAGAR, APRIL 4

FOUR HIZBUL Mujahideen militants were killed in an encounter in Jammu and Kashmir's Kulgam district on Saturday morning. J&K Police said the militants were behind recent killings of civilians in south Kashmir.

Joint forces launched a cordonand-search in Hardmand Guri in Manzgam area of Kulgam district after receiving inputs about the presence of militants in the area, police said. During the operation, militants fired on the security forces, triggering the encounter

around 5.45 am, police said. Four militants were killed and weapons recovered from the site, said Srinagar-based Defense Spokesperson Col Rajesh Kalia.

A police statement issued on Saturday night identified the slain militants as Shahid Sadiq Malik, a resident of Kulgam, Mohd Ashraf Malik alias Sadam, a resident of Anantnag, and Waqar Farooq, a resident of Hanan Chawalgam. The identity of the fourth militant is yet to be ascertained.

J&K Police spokesperson in Srinagar said the group had killed four civilians over the last 12 days. "A Hizbul Mujahideen group of 3/4 terrorists was killing civilians over the last 12 days. 4 such killings were done by them in South Kashmir. Police was able to track them down and an operation was launched this morning by Police, SF, Army in which 3 of them have been neutralized," J&K Police tweeted. The fourth death was later confirmed by the police.

in ceasefire violations on LoC **SUSHANT SINGH** NEW DELHI. APRIL 4

NOTWITHSTANDING THE fact that both India and Pakistan are in a state of lockdown to combat the spread of COVID-19, the guns on the Line of Control (LoC) have not fallen silent with 411 ceasefire violations recorded in March.

There was a slight rise in the number of ceasefire violations last month compared to the first two months of this year. There were 367 such violations in January and 382 ceasefire violations were recorded in February on the LoC.

Both India and Pakistan have more than 2,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19. India is in the middle of a three-week nation-

wide and the provinces in Pakistan have enforced their own lockdowns to avert a spike in COVID-19 cases.

The number of ceasefire violations so far in this year also show a very significant rise from the numbers recorded during the same period last year. In the first quarter of 2019, there were only 685 ceasefire violations, compared to 1160 such violations recorded between January

"Despite the threat of COVID-19, a rather desperate Pakistan army is trying to keep the LoC hot and active. That is why the ceasefire violations are not coming down. But we are also giving a fitting response," a senior military official said.

and March this year.

Two Army soldiers were injured on the LoC in shelling by Pakistan army in Balakot area of Poonch district on Thursday. Another ceasefire violation in the same sector had taken place on Tuesday evening. The Pakistan army had initiated another unprovoked ceasefire violation firing

Officials said Pakistani soldiers also suffered heavily in the "befitting response" given by the Army. "The situation has been particularly hot south of Pir Panjal and as the snow melts with the onset of summer, the LoC will become hotter in the north also.

mortars in the Nowshera sector of

Rajouri district on Wednesday.

We can see early signs of that," the official said. "The ceasefire violations are

directly linked to infiltration attempts. We already have the first set of infiltration attempts in Keran sector," he added.

Official sources said that there was an "ongoing contact" with a group of infiltrating militants in the Keran sector on the LoC, for the past two days. These militants have been unable to escape towards the Pakistani side of LoC because of the snow and bad weather.

Even though no infiltration attempts on LoC were officially recorded in March, the military official felt that "all the indications are for a very hot summer in Kashmir this year". Seven militants were killed and three militants apprehended by the security forces in Kashmir last month.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

THE PRESS Council of India has issued an advisory to newspapers to not publish any advertisement for AYUSH-related claims regarding treatment of COVID-19.

"Press Council of India advises the print media to stop publicity and advertisement of AYUSH-related claims for COVID-19 treatment in order to prevent dissemination of misleading information about AYUSH drugs and services...," said the statement.

The advisory was based on an order of the AYUSH ministry on similar lines. The order had mentioned that "it is imperative to apply and implement various

measures for maintaining public safety in all aspects and to control dissemination of misleading information about AYUSH drugs and services".

The order was marked to the Union Information and Broadcasting Ministry and to the Press Council, among others.

However, on Saturday, the Railway Board issued instructions to general managers across zones regarding the "immunity boosting measures" developed by AYUSH Ministry.

The notification comes soon after Minister of State for AYUSH Shripad Naik's claim that ayurvedic treatment cured the UK's Prince Charles of coronavirus was rejected by a spokesperson for Prince Charles, saying that he had "followed the medical advice of the NHS in the UK".

FROM PAGE ONE

Use mask: Govt

COVID-19 positive cases reported across the country so far, 8.61% are in the 0-20 years age group, 41.88% in 21-40 years, 32.82% in 41-60 years, and 16.69% above 60 years. (According to the 2011 census,

about 40.71% of the population fall in the 0-19 years age group; about 31.93% in 20-39 years; about 18.41% in 40-60 years; and about 8.57% over 60 years.)

Currently, there are 58 critical cases, mostly from Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Delhi.

The ICMR has also issued an advisory for the use of rapid antibody tests in "areas reporting clusters (containment zone) and in large migration gatherings/ evacuees centres". The results of the antibody test can either be confirmed using RT-PCR - the DNA-based test - or the antibody test can be repeated after 10 days of home quarantine.

And, in the first sign that the "all-patients-in-hospital" rule is being relaxed, it said: "If symptoms worsen, refer to designated COVID-2019 hospitals. When home quarantine is not feasible, consider facility-based guaran-

In its late night advisory on Friday, the Health Ministry said: "It is suggested that such people who are not suffering from med-

ical conditions or having breathing difficulties may use the handmade reusable face cover, particularly when they step out of their house. This will help in protecting the community at large. This face cover is not recommended for either health workers or those working with or in contact with COVID-19 patients or are patients themselves as these categories of people are required to wear specified protective gear." The government also said

Ayushman Bharat beneficiaries can opt for testing and treatment for COVID-19 free of cost at private laboratories and empanelled hospitals. "Testing and treatment of COVID-19 is already available for free in public facilities. Now, more than 50 crore citizens, eligible under the health assurance scheme, will be able to avail free testing through private labs and treatment for COVID-19 in empanelled hospitals," said the National Health Authority, which implements Ayushman Bharat.

Lav Agarwal, Joint Secretary, Health Ministry, clarified that the ministry had not changed its earlier position on the use of masks.

"The earlier guidelines remain; medical masks are to be used when someone is sick, when caring for an ill person; the new guidelines are for homemade face or mouth cover, not masks per se. This is a way of in-

creasing personal hygiene. These are cloth coverings that can be used in densely populated areas when going out, a barrier approach. that is not meant for health workers. Also, these should not be shared. If there are four people in a family, they should have their own individual ones, ideally two each so that they can be washed and used," he said. In the US, the CDC issued a

similar recommendation. "CDC is additionally advising the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others. Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, voluntary public health measure," it said. The WHO said while it sup-

ports such calls, based on the level of transmission and resources available in a country, there is "clear evidence that wearing a mask in public places does not protect you."

WHO Executive Director Dr Mike Ryan also emphasised that surgical and medical masks such as N95, FFP2 and FFP3 respirators are for the medical system and must be prioritised for use by frontline health workers. Meanwhile, with 11,182 samples being tested in the last 24 hours, 79,950 samples have been tested across the country so far. The ICMR said 3,113 positive cases had been detected till now. The government has decided

to cover testing and treatment for COVID-19 under its Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY). While it is already free in public facilities, those covered by the scheme can now avail free testing in private labs and treatment in empanelled hospitals.

On Saturday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired a joint meeting of the 11 empowered groups on COVID-19. "PM. reviewed countrywide preparedness regarding availability of hospitals, proper isolation and quarantine facilities as well as disease surveillance, testing and critical care training," the PMO handle tweeted. He directed the "concerned

groups and officials to ensure sufficient production, procurement and availability of all essential medical equipment such as PPEs, masks, gloves and ventilators," it said. Modi is also scheduled to hold

a video conference with floor

Varanasi station It has been 13 days, so by now

April 8.

law in the Ganga.

"My husband's clothes got stolen. We had left them to dry. We were not carrying so many clothes with us here," says Yogita Adkine from Nanded, Maharashtra, who had arrived in Varanasi with her two children, husband and mother-in-law to

Amid all this the threat of COVID-19 looms. Multiple times every day, the

immerse the ashes of her father in

station officials sanitise the waiting hall and the bathrooms. Officials have enforced a minimum distance between people. Everybody has been given two face masks. "I have my wife, aged parents

and children at home. They keep asking every day when I will come home. I tell them to not worry. The government has taken good care of us. Police come every day to ask how we are doing," says Narendra Singh Bhakre, an advocate from Ujjain who had visited Varanasi "for a day's work". Like millions of others, he, too, had thought the Janata Curfew was a one-day affair. So he stayed put in a hotel on Sunday and even stood at the window at 5 pm.

leaders of political parties on "Very quickly, all transport options vanished for me. It is after all some 20-24 hours journey from here to Ujjain," he says. The civil administration in

Varanasi has standing instructions in place for taking care of the stranded. "Food packet is distributed every day. The law enforcement officials check on them. People of the city also contribute with packs of food," says Kaushal Raj Sharma, District Magistrate of Varanasi.

It's a diverse group that speaks a diverse set of languages. Station staff say it's the same set of questions, asked in different languages: Will the lockdown end on April 14? Will trains come to take us home?

Uddhav

and communal hatred. If anybody circulates fake news or videos with inflammatory content such as notes being smeared with saliva, law will catch up with them. They will not be spared. Don't do this even for fun,' Uddhay said while addressing the state through social media.

Maharashtra has so far recorded 635 cases of COVID-19, of which at least seven have been traced back to a Tablighi Jamaat gathering at Nizamuddin in Delhi in mid-March. The state has also recorded 32 deaths from coronavirus. "We have the support and

blessings of all the people, including all religions and political parties... So, I won't allow any attempt to divide our unity in the fight

against coronavirus," the CM said, adding that he was in touch in with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Congress president Sonia Gandhi and NCP chief Sharad Pawar. Saying that the lifting of the 21-day lockdown would depend on how well people complied with government directives, Uddhav said, "The lockdown will end on April 14 and what is to be done afterwards depends on the people and how strictly they follow government directives."

During a recent video conference with CMs, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said that states should lift the lockdown in phases.

The CM also said no permission would be given for public events in the state. "Till further notice, no permission will be given for cultural, religious and sporting events in the state. Big festivals such as Gudhi Padwa, Ram Navami have been celebrated inside houses. Similarly, people from other religions should also

celebrate their festivals indoors." Uddhav said that during the video conference with the PM, some CMs had expressed fears of a "Delhi-like event" (the gathering at Nizamuddin Markaz) happening elsewhere.

"The permission for a similar event was denied in Maharashtra. said. The names of the people who attended the Delhi event is being

shared with us daily by the Centre and all have been traced. They have been isolated and quarantined in government facilities. People should come forward to inform us if anyone has been left out," he added.

Uddhav also advised people to

go only to dedicated COVID-19 hospitals if they show symptoms of fever, cold or pneumonia.

to Brazil's President Jair Messias

Modi, Trump On Saturday, Modi also spoke

Bolsonaro and Spain's PM Pedro Sanchez Perez-Castejon. Modi and Bolsonaro stressed upon the significance of close cooperation between the two countries, bilaterally and in the multilateral institutional framework, to mitigate the grave crises caused by COVID-19. They agreed on the need to forge a new human-centric concept of globalisation for the post-COVID world.

With Spain's PM, the two

leaders agreed on the importance of international cooperation for fighting the global health crisis. "The Spanish Prime Minister agreed with Prime Minister's observation that the world needed to define a new, human-centric concept of globalisation for the post-COVID era," the statement

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

New York: Crude futures surged for a second day on Friday, with both US and Brent contracts posting their largest weekly percentage gains on record due to hopes that a global deal to cut crude supply worldwide will emerge early next week. **REUTERS**

EASING WORKING CAPITAL REQUIREMENTS FOR BUSINESSES HIT BY COVID-19

Centre relaxes e-way bill deadline, defers restriction of input tax credit

AANCHAL MAGAZINE

NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

THE GOVERNMENT has retrospectively extended the validity of e-way bills under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime that would have expired between March 20 and April 15 to April 30. Also, in a move that will ease the working capital requirements for businesses, the government has deferred the implementation of 10 per cent restriction on availing input tax credit during February-August, which would then be cumulatively adjusted in September.

With hundreds of trucks getting stranded across the country since March 15, when states started to lock their borders down culminating into a national



since March 15, when states started to lock their borders. PTI

lockdown announced by the Centre, The Indian Express reported on April 2 about transporters raising concerns over potential penalties arising from expired e-way bills. Truckers were having e-way bills for goods in transit or in godowns, which

were getting expired and could not be renewed on due dates.

"... where an e-way bill has been generated under rule 138 of the Central Goods and Services Tax Rules, 2017 and its period of validity expires during the period 20th day of March, 2020 to 15th day of April, 2020, the validity period of such e-way bill shall be deemed to have been extended till the 30th day of April 2020," the Finance Ministry said in a notification late Friday. The Ministry also notified other compliance-related relaxations, which were announced earlier.

According to notified e-way bill rules, every registered supplier requires prior online registration on the e-way bill portal for the movement of these goods. The rules also specify that the permits for conventional cargo (other than over-dimensional cargo) are valid for one day for the movement of goods for 100 km, and in the same proportion for following days. Tax officials have the power to scrutinise the e-way bill at any point during transit to check tax evasion.

In October last year, the GST Council put a cap on input tax credit at 20 per cent of the eligible credit for buyers whose suppliers did not upload invoices, which was then further curtailed to 10 per cent in the GST Council meeting on December 18.

Abhishek Jain, tax partner, EY said. "The relaxation for allowing cumulative reconciliation via-a-vis month on month reconciliation for availing input tax credit was an imperative one to obviate higher cash flows and to reap the benefit of the relief provided through extended timelines for filing of GST returns".

Virus, lockdown take toll on mental health: Stress, anxiety, insomnia rise as people fret over future

PRABHARAGHAVAN NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

NOIDA RESIDENT Preeti (name changed) has not slept for four days because she has been experiencing "paralysing" anxiety. The nationwide lockdown has aggravated her paranoia over COVID-19 and intensified her depression and anxiety.

It doesn't help that she can't get the face-time she needs with her counsellor. To make up for this, they speak multiple times a day over the phone. The thought that goes over repeatedly in Preeti's mind is — "When is this going to

The pandemic and ensuing lockdown in India have exacerbated symptoms like anxiety in those with existing mental health conditions. The isolation and uncertainty has also prompted some to seek professional help for the first time. Issues range from fears about the virus to worries about job security and manifest in different ways across states and classes.

Delhi-based consultant neuropsychiatrist Dr. Umang Kochhar estimates a 20 per cent increase in the number of patients during the lockdown period. This includes those who may have sought his help in the past, were "stable", but now see a "spike" in symptoms. "Sleep is one thing that has been impacted the most," he said.

Last week, the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences launched a national COVID-19 psychosocial helpline in conjunction with the Health Ministry. On the first day, they received 1,000 calls. On the second— 3,000.

"Many states have also started regional language helplines," said NIMHANS director BN Gangadhar.

Other long-standing mental health organisations have had to find new ways to be accessible during the lockdown.

For instance, Mumbai-head-

Around half the calls to mental health organisations concern rising tension over **COVID-19**, increasing domestic violence and the effects of the lockdown on jobs

quartered psychosocial helpline, iCALL, announced three new numbers after the lockdown prevented its counsellors from reaching the office helpline. The new numbers were "flooded" with calls, but iCALL has only been able to cater to 55-60 a day instead of its usual 75-80 because of a shortage of counsellors. It is adding more counsellors.

Around half the calls concern rising tensions over COVID-19, increasing domestic violence and the effects of the lockdown on jobs and personal finances. "The calls are not only coming from upper or middle-class people, but also daily wage workers who do not know where they will get their next day's pay from," said iCALL programme coordinator Tanuia Babre. West Bengal-based activist

Ratnaboli Ray, founder of mental health rights organisation Anjali, explained that mental health issues take on different shapes for those living in poverty. "Poor people who had been reintegrated in the community and were leading a meaningful life are feeling resourceless and their anxiety levels have gone up. They are worried they will have to die out of hunger, or how they will access the medication they are on."

"The effect is going to be large, widespread and in a sense, perhaps, long-lasting," said Sitaram Bhartia Hospital consultant psychiatrist Dr. Alok Sarin. "At the moment, everybody has a sense of fragility. Anxiety is now the new normal," he elaborated.

BRIEFLY

Govt puts curbs on export of diagnostic kits

New Delhi: The government Saturday put curbs on exports of diagnostic kits with a view to discourage shipments amid the coronavirus outbreak. "The export of diagnostic kits (diagnostic or laboratory reagents on a backing, preparation diagnostic or laboratory reagents)... is restricted with immediate effect," the Directorate General of Foreign Trade said.

'More time to individuals to file TDS exemption'

New Delhi: The Income-Tax Department has allowed individuals to submit Form 15G and 15H for the current fiscal after June 30 for claiming exemption from TDS on interest income to mitigate the hardship of people amid the COVID-19 crisis. Forms 15G and 15H are filed by persons, whose incomes are below the taxable threshold, to seek exemption from TDS on interest income. PTI

ITC partners NGOs to deliver food supplies

New Delhi: ITC has joined hands with three NGOs in building a network to deliver essential food supplies to those severely impacted by the current lockdown, as per a release. Child Rights and You, SOS Childrenâs Village India and another eminent NGO will help implement this initiative. This program will be implemented by the respective volunteers of the NGOs in each state. **ENS**

107 cargo flights ferried over 138 tonnes of PPEs, enzymes, medical gear

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU NEW DELHI. APRIL 4

MORE THAN 138 tonnes of cargo comprising COVID-19-related reagents, enzymes, medical equipment, testing kits, personal protection equipment like masks and gloves and other accessories have been transported through the country in 107 cargo flights operated between March 26 and Friday. These flights, flown by private

carriers IndiGo and SpiceJet, in addition to Air India, Alliance Air and Indian Air Force, have been operated under the Ministry of Civil Aviation's Lifeline Udan scheme. The Ministry has established a

BRIDGE

♠ KJ6

♥QJ3

♦ 92

♣KQ6

WEST

Pass

Dealer East, nil vulnerable

WEST

♦ 10742

♦ 87543

105

♣K7

3NT

West leads the H10. Plan the play

play go after West has led the ten?

tive of how the heart play goes.

the defenders with no answer.

SOUTH

AQ

₩AJ6

NORTH

Pass

1

Pass

♣KQ9643

Dealer East, both vulnerable

♦ A86432 ♦ KQ

NORTH

♥53

WEST

Pass

Pass

plan the play?

★ K852

NORTH

hub-and-spoke model to distribute various essential items across the country, wherein these commodities sourced from various parts of the country are first brought to various hubs such as Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru and Hyderabad.

Thereafter, these goods are distributed to different state capitals or other towns as per requisitioning by state governments. Additionally, an "air bridge" between Shanghai and Delhi has been established by Air India, which will operate its first cargo flight to the Chinese city on Sunday, in addition to other dedicated scheduled cargo flights for uplifting of critical medical equipment from China.

SOUTH

♠ A O 5

₩ A72

♦ AJ10

♣J953

SOUTH

Pass

EAST

◆983

♦ KQ6

♣A2

EAST

INT

Pass

We can see that, with the king conveniently sandwiched be-

tween the solid queen-jack and the ace, North-South will win

two tricks out of the first three for one lost, but how does the

We can see three spade tricks, two hearts, at least one diamond,

probably two as the honours are likely to be well placed under

our tenace, and thus the long clubs will need to be established

for three tricks after the ace and king have been knocked out.

Again, which defender wins these top club tricks will be cru-

cial. The first point to realize is that, if East has both ace and

king, there is no hope as the defenders are a move ahead. On

winning his first club, East will knock out our second heart

stopper and, on winning his second club, he will be able to cash

three more hearts for down one and this all applies irrespec-

The critical case thus arises when West has one of the club ho-

nours and is able to win the first round of that suit while his

partner's entry is kept intact – in other words when the clubs

are breaking 2-2 as above. If West is able to lead a second heart,

then the contract will be set. However, if he has been exhausted

of hearts before taking his club trick, we are a move ahead and

So we see that, in situations where the declarer won the first

trick, the defence prevails and vice versa. However, we can in-

sist on losing the first trick, while still keeping our double stop-

per intact, by playing a small card in both hands. This leaves

EAST

Pass

Pass

West leads the H7 to the H3 and East's HQ. How do you

our clubs will come in first, allowing us nine tricks.

♥K986

Low crude prices, fall in imports, rise in value of gold help forex reserves surge

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

DESPITE THE continued outflow of funds by foreign portfolio investors in March, foreign exchange reserves saw a jump in the week ended March 27, as it rose by \$5.7 billion to hit \$475.6 billion. While low crude prices continue to help the cause, in the week ended March 27, India witnessed a rise in the value of its gold reserves and a rise in foreign currency assets.

The rise in reserves come after two consecutive weeks when the reserves came under pressure. While they had hit an all time high of \$487.2 billion on March 6, they fell \$17.3 billion over the following two weeks to \$469.9 billion on March 20. The



THE SHARP decline in crude oil prices over the last one months has helped India's cause as crude oil import accounts for almost 20 per cent of total import bill.

decline in reserves coincided with FPI outflow that amounted to \$15 billion till March 19, 2020.

During the week ended March 27, while the value of gold reserves jumped by \$3 billion, the foreign currency assets rose \$2.5 billion. On the other hand, the net outflow by FPIs from debt and eq-

uity markets between March 20 and March 27 amounted to \$3.5 billion. Experts say forex reserves are

benefitting from falling imports. "Whenever global growth slows down, our current account deficit looks better. While the exports also decline, the imports fall more since we are net importers and that results into a rise in foreign exchange reserves," said DK Pant, chief economist, India Ratings.

The sharp decline in crude oil prices over the last one month has helped India's cause as crude oil import accounts for almost 20 per cent of total import bill. Earlier, India's foreign exchange reserves had a smooth run for nearly six months as they rose week-onweek between September 20, 2019 and March 6, 2020.

Sunday April 5

You're on top of the world, or at least you should be. If you have a weakness, it's your inability to see how well off you are. If you have a special strength, it's your ability to work hard to improve your lot.

Monday April 6

Events which take place today could foreshadow opportunities of the next two weeks. It's a moment for quiet thought and

You might feel as if you've been here before. But this time round you should have much more control. That's good because you'll have a better idea of what to do about monetary matters.

Wednesday April 8

If you've got the figures right then spare no expense when it comes to home entertaining. You can either invite the whole gang over or have a quiet, intimate dinner.

Thursday April 9

It's a dynamic time, full of potential for positive experiences. You can either give in and go under, or you can meet the challenges and obstacles head on.

Friday April 10

You've got plenty of good ideas, the ability to put them into practice and the faith in the future. The worst thing you can do now is start to feel sorry for yourself.

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20) LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

Monetary matters

seem to be causing a few problems, although it is difficult to see whether it is partners or you who are to blame! It is reassuring to note that your longterm celestial influences are very prosperous indeed. Romantic prospects are also set to continue

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21) You seem to have

balance, perhaps by someone who no longer understands your best interests. However, over the next few days you may pull yourself together and assert yourself ever more than in the past. You can expect dramatic improvements

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

than one-to-one meetings. Perhaps that is because you wish to avoid the complications that may arise out of intimate encounters. Money developments may be off

new role in your financial life.

the agenda until the end of the

week, when the Moon begins a

be Thursday and Friday, when the Moon, the planet responsible for your emotions,

passes through a sympathetic region of your chart. Even better, other people will genuinely understand your hopes and needs, which should make you feel happier and more confident.

from the Sun's current motion. All of you

with grand ambitions will experience some sort of difficulty, and long-term hopes. But what is your creative talents, rather than blindly submitting to a routine

> Misunderstandings are likely around the time of the Solar alignments in the

middle of the week. Have you by any chance considered making more of an effort to explain yourself? If not, do so now! Also, please see to it that all travel plans are set out clearly and without ambivalence or ambiguity.

You'll have a little support from the Moon at the beginning of the week, which is a sure sign that you'll feel good about your home situation. Yet a financial crisis, hopefully a brief one, is bound to flare up on Wednesday or

Thursday, when the Sun and Pluto get into top gear. SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23) This is no time for weak-kneed compromise.

Instead, you must be tough and unyielding, as only a Scorpio can. You will gain an enormous amount of satisfaction from pursuing your own goals, so don't feel guilty about being selfish. Fascinating

news may arrive at the end of the week — so that should stir things up. SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 23) It's a week for plots,

> You'll also discover increased opportunities for spreading a little goodwill, helping people worse off than you and generally adopting a charitable outlook.

rumours and gossip.

You should be liberated from a tight financial corner by the end of the week. CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

The Sun continues to help you, which is surely good news. Take a closer look at

a number of your engagements, especially social responsibilities and see if there are any that can be safely abandoned. Do what you can to create the right conditions for a more carefree existence.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19) The emphasis on close partnerships is still very strong, you'll be communicating at a

although it looks as if distance, via letters and telephones, rather than through personal meetings. The one percent of you who have fax machines will be receiving strange messages.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20) You can be much too ready to



other people. Now you may presented by helpful lunar patterns to push yourself

the answer for the given quip.

CESUNS DRAEE **BEIRR ATUUGS**

__, think of the consequences. - Confucius (5,5)

Answer: When anger rises, think of the consequences. - Confucius SOLUTION: EARED, BRIER, CENSUS, AUGUST

1984 sci-fi thriller (10) Beauty powder (4)

SUNDAY CROSSWORD 2263

QUICK CLUES ACROSS

- Give strength (10) Chess piece (4)As_ : in perfect health?
- Southeasternmost hill of Rome

16. Erudite - academic (7)

- 17. Many(7)19. Associate (7)
- Not used to (12)Samoan seaport (4) 23. 24. Cranial nerves (10)
- 25. Slave or serf (4) In a very large number (1,5,4)
- **DOWN** Nerd(4)
- Be jealous of (4)Grandeur or splendour (12)

Drape (7)

Hazard(7)

Adversaries, antagonists or rivals

Leaving or giving up completely

- Difference of opinion (12) Amass (10)
- 14. Enticement (10) 18. Feed bag (7)19. Overflowing(7)
- 21. Italian volcano (4) 22. Sight (4)

CRYPTIC CLUES

- Cheer a group of whales, with more moving into place for ancient pursuits (10) Raises containers for part of lock
- Have fun etc.; I'm in effect very generous (10)
- Article written by sailor in Scarlet O'Hara's former residence (4) No more one might tell a
- successful bidder (5,4,3) Stuffy idea to get involved with

(3,4)

- the nur. (7)
- 16. Suspect calls about debt (7) A small quantity of Latin? (7)
- Are greetings adapted for giving guidance?(8,4) International development

How rare to injure battle legend

agency students were initially

Meaty parts for bad actors (4)

ocean)(10)

Yearn to find the colour one's lost Don't quote me, but it's taken from the album (3-3-6)

Surprising old boat in backward

Mediterranean island (French

Sounds like the opposite of ayes

rent-payers who have tenants of

and on the dot when on it (4)

Bes result's available by these

- Detailed to appear in court again Wealthy doctor and needy
- eccentric(7) Not quite clearing it, coming
- Tourists may go to see something
- get after the feller (6-6) U-boat raid results in surrender
- cheekily displayed by ladies (6,4) Something warm to put on and
- towards the end (6,4)
- 14. What chocolate eaters do on bicycle (6,4)
- Bought off, 14 Marble, 16 Goes out, 19 Lugsail, 21 Points, 23 Colostrum, 25 Jiffy 26 Elijah, 27 Petrarch, 28 Slacks, 29 Einstein. Down: 1 Roquet, 2 Press gang, 3 Ictus, 4 Trouble, 6 Parcheesi, 7 In i go, 8 Graffito, 11 Jung, 15 Bean stalk, 17 Out of true, 18 Slackers, 20 Lark, 21 Pompeii, 22 Python, 24 Leila, 25 Jerks.

Fellow with the unlined gold cloak(7)

Bird behaving like a dog?(7)Competent Hollywood star's no

good(4)Male bridge partners being

females (4) Solutions to 2262

QUICK CLUES Across: 1 Adequacy, 5 Odessa, 9 Rattling, 10 Assent, 12 About, 13 Enamoured, 14 Recant, 16 Student, 19 Antonym, 21 Creepy, 23 Metallica, 25 Calve, 26 Elixir, 27 Agrarian, 28 Stings, 29 Criminal. Down: 1 Abroad, 2 Extrovert, 3 Unlit, 4 Congest, 6 Dissolute, 7 Steer, 8

Antidote, 11 Mars, 15 Annulling, 17 Expulsion, 18 Harmless, 20 Main, 21 Charger, 22 Kernel, 24 Trini, 25 Claim. CRYPTIC CLUES Across: 1 Repaints, 5 Spring, 9 Question, 10 Troika, 12 East's, 13

If it's your Birthday

discreet agreements. **Tuesday April 7**

For someone who is supposed to be so humble, you certainly have a great deal to achieve. Great times lie ahead if you are prepared to lay your reputation on the line.

Saturday April 11

JUMBLED WORDS

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

SOUTH

3NT

every digit from 1 to 9 nine vertical columns, in SUDOKU rows and in each of the nine boxes. Difficulty Level 1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy;

Genius

Difficulty Level 5s

Instructions To solve a Sudoku puzzle, must appear in each of the each of the nine horizontal

3s = Medium; 4s = Hard;

5s = Very Hard; 6s =

3 9 6 5 3 2 2

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4169

on a high note.

been knocked off

by the end of the week.

Group events promise to be more satisfying

CANCER (June 22 - July 23) Your best days should

LEO(July 24 - Aug 23) Professional Leos have most to gain

mainly a clash between shortterm domestic responsibilities important is that you develop

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

imposed from outside.

seize the opportunity

forward and make other people understand just how much you have to offer. There is no turning back, as I am sure you realise perfectly well.

THE () UTBREAK SUNDAY STORY

The Recovered

Hidden behind the grim statistics of death and mounting cases of COVID-19 is another heartwarming number: of those who tested positive, yet battled the virus and more, and came out winning. The Sunday Express tells their stories — from a choreographer in Bengaluru who can't wait to get back to her dance studio to a student in Surat who used her time in isolation to reflect on life, family and friends

'We always think system will betray us. But care I got reinstalled my faith'

DIYA NAIDU | 36

CHOREOGRAPHER, BENGALURU

In hospital, waiting for second test to be cleared

AMRITA DUTTA

T BEGAN as a loss of sensation — both taste and smell. Diva Naidu had returned to Bengaluru from Switzerland a week ago and thought something was _amiss. "I read up online to see if that was a symptom of COVID-19 but at the time, not many had reported it. My friends, who were doctors, said it might be sinus," she recalls.

But it niggled at the 36-year-old choreographer, nevertheless. She had returned from a work trip on March 9, nervous about whether she had to isolate herself. "But at that time, there was no quarantine protocol in place for people who had returned from Switzerland. Only travellers from China, Singapore, Iran and Italy had to isolate themselves. There was a

helpline we had to call, but no one answered," Naidu recalls. "The friends and colleagues I had met in Switzerland had also gone back home and were leading normal lives. That's what I did too."

She had self-reported to a private hospital, when doctors told her she could not be tested for COVID-19 yet — she had not travelled to the countries on the list, and had no symptoms. When the tastelessness persisted, she returned. "By that time, travellers from other countries too were being screened. So they called me over, and I had a throat swab done," she said. It was positive.

Within half-an-hour, a medical officer had arrived at her house to take her to a hospital in Indiranagar, where she waited for four days before the results of confirmatory blood tests came in. "I was not conscious of the fact that I was afraid. But I could see I was shivering slightly. From the moment you get that call, you start thinking, 'Who all did I meet? Did someone I meet go and visit their grandmother? Did I put them at risk?" she recalls.

Till she was diagnosed, Naidu had gone



"The nurses would come in with their PPEs and hazmat suits, but they were very kind. Even if they come in for 30 seconds, they try to joke a bit. The healthcare workers' dedication is extraordinary"

about her life as usual. An artist who lives alone in the city, she met friends, attended a concert and visited the dance studio she works at. "Immediately after I got to know I was positive, I put out a Facebook post, so

that everyone who had come in contact with me would get alerted. I also made a WhatsApp group of whoever I had met and informed them," she recalls.

Six days ago, Naidu's isolation at the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Chest Diseases, where the city's COVID-19 patients are housed, came to an end — when she was wheeled into a room with another patient who had tested negative after a round of treatment.

Though Naidu presented with very few symptoms – neither fever, nor cough – it has been a trying time. "It feels like a big wave has hit you and you are trying to stand up," she says. "Once you go into isolation, you tell yourself you are ill and you need to stay alone. I did yoga for an hour to keep myself sane. The nurses would come in with their PPEs and their hazmat suits, but they were very kind. Even if they come in for 30 seconds, they try to joke a bit. The healthcare workers' dedication is extraordinary. It's the outside stuff that messes with your head," she says.

While people trolled her for not going into isolation on her return, her landlord asked her to move out even while she was in hospital. "Strangers on my Facebook post called me a cold-blooded murderer, and called for my arrest. It's come to this that if I test negative again, I could be discharged in two days and I don't know where to go," she says. "But if people don't refrain from hating patients, the next person who suspects she is infected will hide it."

In all this, it has been the quiet efficiency of the government officials that has helped

Naidu keep the faith. "In India, we always think the system will betray us. But the level of efficiency, strategy and care with which the officials have worked in Karnataka has reinstalled my faith," she says.

Several of her days in isolation were spent over the phone, talking to officials of the police, the municipal corporation and the state surveillance department, who painstakingly went over her every movement in the week she spent outside the hospital.

"From a list of the Ola cab drivers, food delivery people I had interacted with, to the places I had been to and the studio I had worked in. They checked CCTV footage and clinically tracked down my primary contacts. I had gone late at night to a grocer's, I was wearing a mask so they could not recognise me. But they cross-checked with the clothes I was wearing, traced my bank transactions and made sure the shop was shut down. Luckily, none in the list of my primary contacts has tested positive," she says.

What she really wants to do is return home and her life as a dancer, though both seem difficult for now. "It will take a lot of courage, and more time before we can all take to the dance floor together, or watch a concert together."

For now, a friend has offered their vacant office as a place to stay when she is discharged. "Even after getting discharge, I have to quarantine myself for another fortnight. If all COVID-19 patients are going to be treated like this, then we have a big problem on our hands... and I am not talking about the virus...."

T value my life a lot more now. It's a rebirth'

RITA BACHKANIWALA | 21

MANAGEMENT STUDENT, SURAT Discharged on March 29

KAMALSAIYED

THE FOUR chairs around the dining table at the Bachkaniwala home have been placed at least six feet apart to ensure proper social distancing. The family has been very cautious since Rita came home on March 29, after being discharged from New Civil Hospital (NCH) in Surat.

Rita tested positive for coronavirus on March 19, days after she reached Surat from London, where she is pursuing an undergraduate degree in International Business Management at Brunel University.

"After my university was shut down, I remained mostly indoors... I might have picked the infection from either Heathrow airport or the Mumbai airport," she says on the phone from her home in Surat's Piplod area.

Soon after arriving in India, the 21-yearold came down with a fever and cough. The coronavirus diagnosis, she says, "did not come as a shock as I had prepared myself for it". Her parents Nimish and Anjana, and brother Janak, were also quarantined at the Surat Municipal Corporation (SMC) quarters at Vesu, though they tested negative.

But it was her days in isolation that tested



Rita (left) is a student at a university in London

"I would talk to my parents, cousins and friends. I couldn't even do video calls because there was no Internet. But it helped me stay away from all the alarming news around COVID-19"

her resolve. "I was prescribed oral medicines and injections. I became weak and was also given IV fluids. The hospital staff monitored me five times a day, measuring my blood pressure, my body temperature and my breathing. The most painful part was when the doctors took swab samples from my nose," she recalls. After getting discharged Rita put up a video on her Facebook page thanking the doctors at NCH and urging people to trust government hospitals. "They were very helpful," she smiles.

Being away from her family was tough, says Rita, adding that all through her days in isolation, she saw them only once — through a glass separation. "There was no television in my ward and my phone was my only connection with the world outside. I would talk to my parents, cousins and friends. I couldn't even do video calls because there was no Internet. But it helped me stay away from all the alarming news around COVID-19," says Rita, adding that she managed to finish three novels during her stay at the hospital — *Gone* with the Wind, Inferno and Vanished.

"When I got tired of reading, I played Subway Surfers on my phone. I was also carrying my economics textbook and studied whenever I got a chance," says Rita. Her exams are due later this month.

After getting discharged from hospital, Rita was moved to a flat of the Surat Municipal Corporation, a little distance from where her parents were kept. On March 29, the family's quarantine finally came to an end and they moved back to their house.

"The first thing I did on reaching home was to bow before the portrait of our family guru, Swami Nijanand. My mother got a call from Chief Minister Vijay Rupani. He asked her about our well-being and urged us to follow the post-hospitalisation protocol," she says.

Looking back, says Rita, the COVID-19 experience "has taught me to value life more". "The isolation gave me time to reflect on my life, my relationship with my family and friends, things that I would overlook earlier... I value my life a lot more now. It's a rebirth for me," she says.

Fortunately, life had other plans... Happy to be with family'

MAULANA ASAD QUASMI | 43 RELIGIOUS PREACHER, MUMBAI

Discharged on March 30

LAXMAN SINGH

"WHEN I was in hospital, rumours of my death would spread every day. People would call me to check if I was alive. Even my family members would get such calls. It was very disturbing," says Maulana

Asad Quasmi, 43, a preacher at a local mosque in Mumbai's Govandi, a large slum pocket on the city's eastern suburbs. With over 300 infections,

Maharashtra has the highest number of COVID-19 cases in the country, and with the virus now finding its way into the densely populated slums of Mumbai, where social distancing has its challenges, the state's health administration has a tough task on its hands. A maulana for the past 20 years, Quasmi

had visited Sri Lanka, Bangkok, Cambodia and Malaysia, before returning to Mumbai on March 17. On March 22, he tested positive for coronavirus and was admitted to Kasturba Hospital for Infectious Diseases

"After returning from my travels, I developed fever. When my condition did not improve for a few days, I went to the hospital. When I heard that my results were positive, I thought it was the end of my life," he says, adding, "One day, when I was returning to my bed from the washroom, I had a break-

down. I was scared, I didn't know if I would see my family again. The stress of being infected with the coronavirus took a big mental toll on me. I have diabetes and my sugar levels would also increase because of the stress... Fortunately, life had other plans."

On March 30, after two consecutive negative tests, he was discharged from hospital and asked to stay in self-quarantine for the next 14 days.

For the past few days, Quasmi has been spending his days in a 10x15 room on the first floor of his house, while his

wife and four children live on the ground and second floor. His room has a few utensils, his clothes, and a bed.

"I have been reading the Quran Sharif and a book on the life of Prophet Muhammad. Sometimes my children sit outside the room and we chat. I am happy to be back with my family," he says.

Quasmi is also relieved that unlike many of the re-

ports he had been reading, neither he nor his family faced any discrimination in his neighbourhood. "Most of my neighbours were concerned about my health and never blamed me for bringing the virus to the area. Even when I came back from hospital, many people came to meet me but I sent them back as I am still in quarantine," he says. "Since I am a preacher, people respect me."

As he now waits for his quarantine to end, Quasmi says he is relieved that all his family members tested negative for the virus. "After my isolation ends, I will visit the mosque and thank Allah for everything. I came back from the dead."

No one will know I was the girl who had COVID-19'

SHAMBLI | 22

MBBS STUDENT, NOIDA

Discharged on March 26

ANKITA DWIVEDI JOHRI

THE 'ANGRY BIRDS' game on her phone and a copy of Chetan Bhagat's The Girl In Room 105 have been Shambli's companion through her days of quarantine — both in hospital and now at home. "I have no idea of when the sun rises or sets. I have just been holed up in my room," says the 22-year-old MBBS student on phone from her apartment in Noida.

On March 14, Shambli, a third year MBBS student at Tbilisi State Medical University in Georgia, returned to Delhi from France, where she was on a holiday with friends.

While she headed straight to the flat in Noida that her family owns, Shambli — whose parents live in Pakur, Jharkhand says she felt weak, and had a running nose, dry cough and headache.

"I immediately booked an Ola cab and went to the Government Institute of Medical Sciences in Greater Noida. On March 17, I tested positive," she says.

At the hospital, for the next three-four days, she continued to have fever and some "side-effects" of the medicines she was on. "I was vomiting, I had breathing issues... But honestly, at no point did I think



"I don't want to complain about the conditions at the hospital, but everyone seemed scared. The doctors and nurses were worried about taking the infection home"

I was going to die. It was just like any viral fever," she says.

"I don't want to complain about the conditions at the hospital, but everyone seemed scared. The doctors and nurses were worried about taking the infection

home," she adds

On hearing of her hospitalisation, Shambli's parents arrived at her Noida flat only to be put under home quarantine.

They also had to face taunts from others in the apartment complex, who accused their daughter of not being careful enough. "They were overreacting. They didn't deserve an explanation because I had taken care to self-report and not meet anyone. I told my father to ignore the taunts and only interact with the Chief Medical Officer of Gautam Buddha Nagar district. Even on March 26, when I came back home from hospital, the head of the Resident Welfare Association raised a few questions, but nothing came of it. After all, I had come back to my own house," she says.

At home now, while her parents are through with their 14-day quarantine, she continues to be restricted to her room. "My parents only get me food, there is no other interaction. For our supplies, we make orders online, and it is delivered to the apartment gate. My father goes and picks it up... I mostly play games on my phone or read. I like reading novels," she says.

For now, Shambli has decided not to inform her university about her condition. "Anyway, the college is closed. I am now waiting for the online classes to start. I hope that happens soon. I don't want to waste my year because of the pandemic,"

Does she worry about having to deal with any kind of stigma in the future? "No... No one recognises me here. Even if I go and stand in the lobby of my apartment, no one will know that I am the girl who was diagnosed with COVID-19," she smiles.

Happy I am alive, but I fear discrimination once I return home'

65-YEAR-OLD

RAIPUR, CHHATTISGARH Discharged on April 2

GARGI VERMA

SOMETIME IN the third week of March, the 68-year-old developed a cold and cough. "It seemed normal, like any ordinary illness... But then one day the ASHA didi came to our house to inquire if anyone was ill, and we told her about our father," recounts his 36-year-old son.

In the next 48 hours, the family of 15 was uprooted from their two-room house in Raipur's Ramnagar area and moved to a government-run quarantine facility in the city. On March 25, the 68-year-old tested positive for COVID-19 — the third case in the state.

"This case was different because the patient did not have any history of foreign travel," said a senior health official, adding, "After he tested positive, he was moved to AIIMS Raipur. Fourteen other members of his family, including his two sons and their children, were placed in quarantine and

tested. Fortunately, they were all negative." After undergoing treatment for nearly 10 days, the 68-year-old was finally discharged on April 2, and joined his family at the quar-

mess.com

antine facility. They have to spend another fortnight there before moving back home.

At the quarantine facility, the 15 family members are housed in four rooms where the children spend most of their time playing games on the phone. "The authorities also arranged for a few books, and my sons teach the children sometimes. But I can't wait to go out for a walk," says the 68-yearold. Adds his younger son, "Sometimes, we talk to people in the adjacent rooms through the walls, but that gets boring too."

The 68-year-old has another concern on his mind. "I am happy that I am alive and well. But now, when I go back, people will treat our family as untouchables. No member of my family showed any symptoms, but because of me, all of them suffered," he says on the phone from the quarantine facility.

The family has another worry: the impact of the lockdown on their transport business. "Fortunately, we own our house and our tempos, so at least we will have shelter and some help," says his eldest son.

As they spend their days in quarantine, cut-off from the world, the family admits that they wonder how their father picked up the infection. "We don't know what happened, but we are glad that he is now cured. Babuji theek hai, filhaal to usime santosh hai (my father is healthy now, we are happy with that for now)," says the 38-year-old son.

total number of patients who have recovered across 19 states

STATE	RECOVERED
ANDHRA PRAI	DESH 1
CHHATTISGAR	Н 3
DELHI	15
GUJARAT	14
HARYANA	24
HIMACHAL PR	ADESH 1
JAMMU AND K	ASHMIR 3
KARNATAKA	12
KERALA	41
LADAKH	3
MAHARASHTE	RA 42
PUDUCHERRY	1
PUNJAB	1
RAJASTHAN	21
TAMIL NADU	6
TELANGANA	1
UTTARAKHAN	D 2
UTTAR PRADE	SH 19
WEST BENGAL	. 3

'Have six-month-old child at home, not sure if I want to return to work'

37-YEAR-OLD

LAB TECHNICIAN, GURGAON Discharged on April 1

SAKSHI DAYAL

THREE WEEKS ago, the 37-year-old, a laboratory technician at Civil Hospital, Gurgaon, was filling up forms and ascertaining the travel history of suspected COVID-19 patients. On March 20, she joined the growing list of positive cases herself, fighting a battle that was "more mental than physical".

"I gave my samples after developing a sore throat and diarrhoea. The results came on March 20. The next day, my son and husband were also tested. I was placed in isolation at Medanta — The Medicity," says the mother of a sixmonth-old boy.

The 10 days in isolation, she admits, were very difficult, "especially because I was away from my baby, who is just six months old". "The only thing I could do was to stay in touch with my family on a daily basis. The support from my department also gave me strength," she told *The Sunday* Express on April 2, hours after being reunited with her family.

Although the samples of her husband and son returned negative, the family had to fight another battle back home, where a few hostile neighbours demanded they move elsewhere.

"Some of them really harassed my husband. They wanted us to leave. We finally had to call the PCR to counsel our neighbours," she says, adding that there were also people who were "extremely supportive", sending food to her husband, who did not know how to cook. "Since my husband was in self-isolation and could not leave the house, some people also got him essential items."

All through her treatment, the family remained in touch through phone and video calls. While in quarantine, she would watch religious shows on television or read news reports on COVID-19.

On April 1, after 10 days in isolation, she was finally discharged from hospital when two of her samples returned negative. Back home now, she says she wants to focus on her home and family, and is unsure about returning to work immediately. "I have been allowed home rest for one week now because I still have some nausea and a little heaviness in my abdomen because of the medication. I also been away from my son... I don't know if I will re-join my team any time soon," she says.

Fifth

COLUMN

TAVLEEN SINGH

More than

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The most powerful human on earth (so they say) US President Donald Trump helplessly watched as the number of infected persons in his country crossed 213,600 on April 3 (highest in the world). The number of deaths, it was predicted, will be between 100,000 and 240,000. The 'most powerful military in the world' is unable to do anything. Not all the wealth commanded by the richest country of the world seems to be of any use. The dollar has appreciated, but a 'strong' dollar is as powerless as a 'weak' euro or yuan

Now, everyone is in prison

ACCORDING TO WHO, 205 countries are affected by coronavirus or COVID-19. A virus is a submicroscopic infectious agent that replicates only inside the living cells of an organism. Viruses can infect all types of life forms including bacteria. That's enough about viruses for the purpose of this column.

COVID-19 is the name given by WHO to an infectious disease caused by the new virus. It was first noticed in a patient as caused by a 'new' virus by a Chinese doctor, Li Wenliang, in December 2019. He was hounded by the Government of China, made to sign a confession, caught the infection, and died on February 7, 2020 at the age of 33. (The authorities apologised after his death.) The new virus that he had noticed has spread rapidly throughout the world in less than 100 days.

COVID-19 cannot be stopped at the borders of a country, it respects no national borders, and it does not discriminate on grounds of religion, caste, race, sex, and place of birth. In a perverse sense, the virus respects Articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution of India.

POWERLESS LEADERS

The most powerful human on earth (so they say) US President Donald Trump helplessly watched as the number of infected persons in his country crossed 213,600 on April 3 (highest in the world). The number of deaths, it was predicted, will be between 100,000 and 240,000. The 'most powerful military in the world' is unable to do anything. Not all the wealth

commanded by the richest country of the world seems to be of any use. The dollar has appreciated, but a 'strong' dollar is as powerless as a 'weak' euro or yuan.

Yet, several heads of government, elected or usurpers, want to rule their countries, not govern with the consent of their citizens. As Bruce Springsteen said in 'Badlands', 'And a king ain't satisfied Til he rules everything'. How hollow their actions and instruments seem today? Diktats, lifelong power, rubber-stamp parliaments, crony courts, pliant agencies, spies, and the most widely misused tool, throwing political opponents in prison for months or years without a charge, are all hollow.

OPPRESSOR & **OPPRESSED**

You should remind the oppressors: is it not ironic that the whole world has turned into a prison and the oppressors and the oppressed find themselves in the same prison?

Since you are locked down, here is a game you can play. Download a map of the world on your laptop or phone. Ask any family member to identify the countries one by one. And ask one question: does that country throw people in jail without a charge?

Here is what you will find, and these are only examples. Start with South America.

Venezuela: Thirty Opposition leaders were stripped of their parliamentary immunity by President Nicolas Maduro's puppet judiciary and are either in exile or jail.

Turn to Africa, and the picture is worse. Ethiopia: Mr Abiy Ahmed became prime minister in 2018, made peace with Eritrea and won the Nobel Prize. Through 2019, the Internet was switched off. An NGO has documented 64 extra-judicial killings and at least 1,400 cases of arbitrary detentions.

Tanzania: President John Magufuli has arrested Opposition MPs and journalists, shut media outlets and passed laws to muzzle dissidents.

Europe presents a mixed picture. There are robust and celebrated democracies, there are also:

Hungary: Prime Minister Viktor Orban has aligned the executive, legislature and judiciary. His government forced the closure of Central European University and imposed the first internet tax. On March 30, Mr Orban got passed emergency legislation that gives him the right to rule by decree as long as he deems fit.

Russia: President Vladimir Putin pushed through a constitutional amendment that reset his term to zero. In Moscow, when thousands of protesters filled the streets, the authorities responded with batons, over 2,000 were detained, dozens were beaten, and several had criminal cases opened against them. Arrest of political opponents, violence by police officers, detention of children, and threats to parents have become commonplace. There are over 200 political prisoners in the country.

Asia: Degrees of freedom vary from

country to country. Some cannot be described as democracies.

Thailand: The new government of Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha assumed power in 2019. There have been physical assaults on political activists, forced disappearances of human rights defenders, and the criminal code's provisions are de facto threats to free speech.

Cambodia: The 2018 polls were held in a severely repressive environment that offered voters no meaningful choice. The main opposition party was banned, opposition leaders were in jail or exiled, and independent media and civil society outlets were curtailed. The ruling party won every seat in both houses.

HUMANITY WILL WIN

Before you despair, ask yourself, why is every strong leader unable to 'arrest' the spread of coronavirus? Will humanity ultimately triumph over the epidemic? The tallest living Tamil poet, Mr Vairamuthu, thinks so, and has penned a beautiful poem on coronavirus (here is a free translation of a part):

Tinier than the atom Deadlier than the atom bomb Enters without a sound Destroys without a war Man will annihilate The Corona too He will conquer the pandemic

When humanity wins this war against coronavirus, I hope humanity will also win its freedom from dictators and tyrants as also from those who aspire to be so.

gestures needed now

NO POLITICAL crisis from days of yore or elections past has been a harsher test of Narendra Modi's leadership than this Chinese virus. So, I waited for the Prime Minister to speak before sitting down to write this. Like you, I will tonight turn the lights off in my house for nine minutes at 9 pm and light a candle to show nationalist solidarity in the war against this invisible enemy. I must add, at the risk of having the BJP once more ask for this column to be shut down,

that I had hoped for more.

The Prime Minister has a view of the battlefield that is more panoramic than we have under curfew so I would have liked to hear him tell us whether his strategy to win the battle against COVID-19 is working. I would have also liked to hear his views on how he plans to mitigate the terrible economic crisis that already looms. Those who survive on daily wages openly admit that their choice is to die of hunger or die of the virus. India faces the same problems in this extraordinarily terrifying moment in time as every other country, but the difference between us and developed western countries is that more than 80 per cent of our economy is in what is called the 'unorganised sector'. We know that in the US nearly ten million Americans have already registered as unemployed, but we have no way of knowing how many Indians have become jobless and are likely to remain jobless till this virus is defeated.

Political leaders everywhere face the ultimate test of their leadership today, but Modi's test will be harder not just in trying to save us from economic collapse But, also in trying to destroy this ruthless killer because all he has are primitive tools. As I write this come stories from Mumbai about people testing positive in Dharavi. In normal times foreign visitors are taken for poverty tourism to Dharavi as it is famous for being Asia's largest slum. In normal times it does indeed have a grotesque sort of charm but now it has become so dangerous a place that those who live in fine buildings in the city are ordering their drivers, maids and other domestic employees to stop coming to work. They are terrified that if they come they will bring the virus with them from the slums in which they live. If they avoid getting it in their crowded, windowless tenements they will surely pick it up on the trains.

It is very, very important to stop the virus from spreading exponentially but is this even possible? If its trajectory follows the pattern that we have seen in Europe and the United States, how will we cope? If the most efficient health services in the world are running short of ventilators and masks how will our public hospitals manage where even soap is a luxury and where dangerously sick patients will have to try and survive in filthy, crowded wards. We thanked our frontline corona warriors in advance on the day of the Janata Curfew by ringing bells and banging our 'thalis' but can we now ensure that they have the protective equipment they desperately need?

Speaking of our frontline warriors I have to say that the most dreadful story last week was of healthcare workers being beaten up by mobs in Indore, Hyderabad and Bengaluru. Those who did this should be jailed as should the head of the Tablighi Jamaat when he is caught and charged with criminal negligence leading to mass murder. Islamic preachers are the worst enemies of the Muslim community always but this time they have endangered all of us. From the Tablighi Jamaat I received in my mailbox a missive explaining the reasons why the preachers' convention had gone ahead despite WHO declaring a

pandemic on March 11. It was a meaningless attempt at whitewashing a grave crime since Maulana Saad's speeches, that I have listened to carefully, indicate in the clearest terms that he encouraged his flock to keep going to congregations in mosques. He assured believers that if they died at prayer in a mosque they would go straight to paradise and those 72 virgins. Views of similar stupidity have been expressed by Muslim preachers from Gaza to Lahore. And, the PM of Pakistan. It horrified me to hear Imran Khan say that what would save Pakistanis from COVID-19 was their faith.

Our Prime Minister has said more

than once that our religious teachers must guide people in the right direction but so should he. In these days of curfews and uncertainty he needs to lead from the front. Instead of deputing lowly officials in the Health Ministry to hold a daily briefing, this is something he should do himself. It is something that must also start being done daily by our chief ministers. There is not much reassurance they can give against this unseen enemy but it might in some measure make ordinary Indians confident that there are people at the very top who have taken charge and that everything that can be done is being done to ensure that we win this war. Turning off our lights at 9 pm tonight for nine minutes and lighting candles is a good gesture of solidarity but that is all that it is. A gesture.

The caste factor in social distancing



THE MEASURES to handle the COVID-19 rected at everyone. It was up to respective

pandemic proposed by the WHO were dicountries to introduce regulatory measures to encourage physical distancing. The Indian government got far too excited and hastily implemented "social distancing" by force, leaving a heavy-handed police to enforce an overnight curfew that left thousands stranded. Plus, social distancing in India comes

with an edge, of caste. Unsurprisingly, the moneyed, whether it's here or in the US, profited. In India, prices of sanitisers soared. In America,

The total lack of the Congress passed a \$2 trilempathy of the lion stimulus bill largely rescuing corporates. However, middle class while it is important to take towards migrants is care of the economy and seated in their place healthcare of a country, let's not lose sight of the cultural in the labour and political after-effects that hierarchy, which is coronavirus will leave. right at the bottom One of the images that

with them engaged

in low-paying jobs

came out of India last week was of a girl child of about 6 years of age walking with her worldly possessions tied in a

small piece of cloth on her head. Parents trekked with infants, even the elderly — all devastating evidence of the government's inability to govern. Perhaps, surrounded by cronies, the premier is unaware of this horror show.

Unlike China and South Korea, India had the advantage of time and lessons from other countries to prepare. But, even as the pandemic was building up, it was caught up in the machinations in Madhya Pradesh.

What makes the injustice to migrant workers even more acute is the fact that many of them are Dalits or Adivasis. Of the 395 million inter-state migrants in India, 62 million are estimated to be Dalits and 31 million Adivasis. They moved to cities from their homes precisely on account of caste violence, atrocities, poverty or loss of ownership over forests and land. Post-COVID-19, they have been left again at their mercy of violence and exploitation.

The total lack of empathy of the middle class towards migrant workers is seated in their place in the labour hierarchy, which is right at the bottom, with them engaged in low-paying jobs as masons, helpers or cleaners. The women work at construction sites laying bricks or labouring in farms, or as domestic helps. Many are reduced to begging on the streets with their children.

While those belonging to the dominant castes undertake migration for upward mobility, the Dalits and Adivasis are unable to gain benefits as the system further disadvantages them in the urban spatiality, according to a research published in 2019 by S Chandrashekhar and Arup Mitra.

We need solid social welfare programmes. A country can't claim any value if it doesn't protect its weakest sections. The recent exodus of migrant workers is the outcome of an inefficient administra-

tion and the insensitivity of policy advisors, including the Prime Minister, towards the poor, Dalits and Adivasis.

Images of many of them who returned to villages kept quarantined in abysmal quarters is reminiscent of "cordon sanitaire" or "putting the impure people inside a barbed wire, into a sort of a cage", as Ambedkar described in his magisterial treatise The Untouchables. The latter live in permanent segregation.

The ramifications of coronavirus will outlast the pandemic's threat. Bigots may get scientific validation to adjudicate untouchability.

The administration should make immediate arrangements for the rehabilitation of displaced migrants and create opportunities for them to survive.

Crisis tests humanity in its worst form. Not just the poor, even the minorities have been targeted by those trying to give COVID-19 a communal colour. Let's hope this pandemic unites us beyond the vestiges of caste divides and class hatred. If we are able to overcome the pandemic by burning down the regime of caste, we will have truly defeated coronavirus. After all, this pandemic has successfully made us across the world untouchables of modern times.

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

History HEADLINE **AVISHEK G DASTIDAR** avishek.dastidar@expressindia.com_

down included.

THE THING about being 167 years old is that few things surprise you. No matter what comes your way, you've probably experienced it before, maybe even more than once. Surviving a nationwide lock-

For the country's Railway system, described with the beaten-to-death cliché "Lifeline of India", shutting itself down indefinitely and directing its vast machinery to keep only the essentials running required just a flipping back of a few pages.

Take the small example of running parcel trains. The Railways has started some 20 trains to exclusively carry parcels - perishables, grocery items, e-commerce consignments etc which would ordinarily go by trucks — to major centres of the country. In the age of a lockdown, faced with the threat of a deadly virus, it's no easy task. Putting together the necessary staff and the whole paraphernalia to load and unload and then stick to a schedule would unnerve the best player in the business. But for the Railways, it's a bit of a walk in the park. Its experience of running services despite constraints goes back some several decades.

Around the time when India was waking up to the need for a network of modern highways and was just about passing a Highways Act in 1956, Indian Railways, in the late 1950s, began dedicated parcel trains called Quick Transit Service (QTS).

Mainly taking essential commodities of everyday use from the then industrial/business hub of Calcutta to other major centres such as Delhi, these QTSs were major money spinners. In those days, when few government services were certain, the Railways guaranteed timely delivery through QTS or refunded a surcharge to clients.

Pulled by steam engines that required servicing a few times and even replacing along the way, the successful run of the QTS tapered off a decade or so later only when Railways started faltering on its promise of timely delivery. Then came the age of the "Super Goods" trains.

These were similar in concept, "superfast" in speed, but had mixed success. They ran well into the early '80s, even though not much in vogue, getting intermittently interrupted during the Naxalite movement in the '60s and '70s and, of course, during the famous Railway strike of 1974.

It was the 1974 total strike of the

Once upon a time, when trains stopped in their tracks



The Railways is running trains to transport parcels to various parts of the country

Railways that first showed India what life was without trains — much like in March-April 2020.

Mobilised by the young trade union leader George Fernandes, the strong railway unions of India played hardball with Indira Gandhi, no less.

When the then Prime Minister remained unshakable to the demand for fixed working hours for train drivers and an across-the-board pay raise, a chakka *jam* became inevitable.

For around three weeks in May 1974, no trains ran. Because there was no one to run them — drivers, station masters, guards, track staff and many others.

In a single swoop, the government locked up all union leaders. Railway lore has it that when George Fernandes was picked up from Lucknow, Mrs Gandhi gave an earful to her Railway Minister Lalit Narayan Mishra. "You want to make a hero out of Geroge?" she is said to have told him.

But Mrs Gandhi ensured one exception — much like Modi has in the face of the current outbreak. Goods trains carrying essential industrial supplies such as coal and others could not be included in the strike. And, she made the unions agree that strike or not, at least one passenger train should run on the trunk routes.

So the Kalka Mail ran from Howrah to Delhi, the Frontier Mail (now Golden Temple Mail) ran from Bombay and so on. That was the PM's decree.

Oldtimers still recall how difficult it was to ensure that. "There was virtually

no staff. They were on strike and angry. We had to scramble for resources every day to put together that one service. But then the playbook of railwaymen says, no matter what, if a train has to run, it will run," said Shri Prakash, a 1971-batch Indian Railway Traffic Service (IRTS) officer who retired as Railway Board Member (Traffic) in 2009.

There are other instances of the Railways stepping up in trying circumstances. How, during the 1971 war with Pakistan, railwaymen worked 24 hours at a stretch for five days to ensure India's military capability remained well-supplied at the Eastern and Western fronts. The thousands of backroom boys who worked to make that happen don't brag, even today.

Take the days of the Babri Masjid demolition, for instance. How an unknown cub officer of Railways took out a train full of people from Ayodhya — a firebrand woman leader of the BJP hitching a ride in the driver's cabin — through a rampaging sea of people, is a story only a few in the system know.

So in the age of an unprecedented lockdown, to the thousands of people working every day to ensure food items reach the godowns, the power plants have coal, some 20,000 coaches turn into isolation wards and vehicle workshops churn out hand sanitisers and masks, the novel coronavirus will seem like, well, just another lemon.

And when you are 167 years old, you know what to do with the lemons life gives you.

Out of **MYMIND MEGHNAD DESAI**



IN THE middle of the corona crisis, French President Emmanuel Macron has decided that his most urgent need is to have a new PR person who can spread his fame around the globe. The coronavirus has put the leaders in a race. Who will turn out to be the best? The contest is more like a golf tournament with no time limit. We are still getting scores each day — how many tested, how many positive, how many died, is the country in lockdown, social distancing or social isolation? We are (at least six feet apart from each other) wait-

ing for the end.

Without exception, every leader has

Amid a pandemic, race for the 'best'

to realise and then publicly admit that Wuhan had coronavirus infection. President Xi Jinping cared more for his reputation than to admit a crisis. It may not be over yet but until recently, China had the highest positives and highest number of deaths. American President Donald Trump has rescued Xi from looking bad. Trump believes that he knows best even as he changes his mind. So after a lot of false optimism and blaming everyone but himself, he is taking it seriously. America may still head the league in number of positives and deaths.

We know what works. Testing. South Korea showed it. German Chancellor Angela Merkel also managed to keep infecwas an efficient health sector and a disciplined public service. They don't need PR. The weakness of health infrastruc-

tures of many countries has been exposed. Number of hospital beds per capita, number of qualified health professionals, availability of testing equipment are what counts rather than Dow Jones or Sensex. The precarious ways in which people make their daily living, the inadequate housing and public facilities, the contrast between what government personnel (elected and bureaucratic) enjoy by way of perks and pensions and the rest of the citizens tells you where all your tax money goes. How many homeless can fit into a Lutyens bungalow?

Round the world, leaders are like rabbits caught in the car headlights. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, being a biographer of (Winston) Churchill, fancied himself as a war leader when the crisis broke. But he had no idea of what to do nor could he take expert advice seriously. The Health Service has been starved off funds for years to afford tax cuts for corporations. Days were lost while Johnson got his act together. It is British people as usual who are coming forward. Seven lakh people have volunteered to help the Health Service. Doctors and nurses have come back from retirement.

As a late comer to this race, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has a lot to learn about what to avoid and what

works. India has a totally inadequate health infrastructure except for the very expensive private hospitals. The overall structure of administration — the Iron Frame — is corroded and not fit for purpose, but impossible to reform as Modi has found out. The BJP may have crores of members as must the other political parties but they are useless except for rabble rousing.

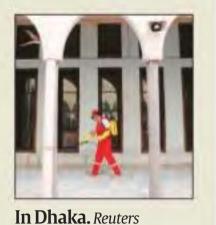
Citizens may turn out to be the best bet for helping if Modi can communicate to them their duty. India had a great tradition of voluntary social service before independence. We need servants of India back.

Vasudhaiva kutumbakam (the world is one family)? Just India would do.

been caught unprepared. China took days tions and deaths low. What these two had

10 THE () UTBREAK THE WORLD

PANDEMIC WATCH



BANGLADESH Govt extends shutdown to April 11

Dhaka: Bangladesh on Saturday extended the nationwide transport shutdown till April 11 as the country recorded its biggest single-day increase of COVID-19 cases with nine new positive tests, taking the country's total to 70. The country reported two more deaths, taking the total fatalities to eight, according to data. The tally of infections increase to 70 after nine more people, including two children aged under 10, tested positive. This is the biggest jump in positive tests over a 24-

SINGAPORE

Sixth COVID-19 death reported, cases top 1,100

hour period since

Bangladesh announced

its first cases on March 8

Singapore: Singapore on Saturday reported its sixth death from the coronavirus as the confirmed cases rose to 1.114, the health ministry said, a day after Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong announced home-based learning for schoolchildren and closure of most workplaces to curb the spread of the disease. Lee, during a televised speech to Singaporeans, said he was worried that unless "we take further steps, things will gradually get worse or another big cluster may push things over the edge".

AUSTRALIA Sikh community delivers food to

those in need

Melbourne: The Sikh community in Australia is working tirelessly to deliver free meals and groceries to people struggling with self-isolation and financial hardship amid the coronavirus crisis. The Sikh Volunteers Australia (SVA) has called upon families in Victoria to reach out to the group for free meal deliveries. The group, which has over a dozen of delivery vans and only 20 volunteers, deliver more than 800 meals a day. "The initiative was started three years ago in South East part of Melbourne and we have been serving free food packs to those in need..." SVA member Manpreet Singh said on Saturday.

US reports highest 1-day toll of 1,480

Americans should wear face masks while outside, recommends Trump — then says he won't

AGENCIES APRIL 4

THE UNITED States recorded nearly 1,500 deaths from COVID-19 between Thursday and Friday, according to the Johns Hopkins University tracker, the worst 24hour death toll globally since the pandemic began.

With 1,480 deaths counted between 8.30 pm (0030 GMT) Thursday and the same time Friday, according to the university's continuously updated figures, the total number of people who have died since the start of the pandemic in the United States is now 7,406.

President Donald Trump has recommended Americans to cover their faces with scarves or homemade cloth masks while going outside to curb the spread of the coronavirus though he would not wear one himself.

Citing the US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Trump urged people to wear face coverings like scarves or homemade cloth masks, and to keep medical-grade masks available for the health workers.

"The CDC is advising the use of non-medical cloth face covering as an additional voluntary public health measure," Trump told reporters during a press briefing at the White House on Friday.

"The CDC is not recommend-



A protest to call for the release of detained immigrants in Colorado, citing the pandemic. AP

ing the use of medical-grade or surgical-grade masks. Those needs to be used for medical people working to save lives of Americans," he said.

However, Trump said he will not follow that guidance. "I just don't want to wear one myself, it's a recommendation." he said.

"Somehow sitting in the Oval Office behind that beautiful Resolute Desk, the great Resolute Desk, I think wearing a face mask as I greet presidents, dictators, kings, queens, I don't know, I don't see it for myself," he said.

Effect of redrawing official guidelines may be limited

WHILE GLOBAL bodies have so far advised use of masks by ordinary citizens only in cases when they are sick or coughing. Some in the Trump administration were reportedly uncomfortable with changing this. They called for the directive to apply only to the worst-hit areas. Others felt wearing masks would lead to people neglecting social distancing, which is still seen as the most effective measure. With experts feeling that Trump undercut the CDC advisory by saying he would not wear one, it is unclear if the move will yield the desired impact.

U.S., RUSSIA SPAR **OVER DELIVERY OF RELIEF MATERIAL**

AN ODD new front in the **US-Russian rivalry has** emerged as a Russian military cargo plane bearing a load of urgently needed medical supplies landed at JFK airport

RUSSIA CAST it as magnanimous aid supply to a struggling country. Trump referred to the

shipment as "aid," and said it was "a very nice offer" from Putin **THE US** State Department

insisted that the delivery was a mere commercial transaction: that the US had paid Russia for the supplies it needed, albeit at a discount, and that it wasn't a gift



New York state pleads for aid as death count soars

ALAN FEUER NEW YORK, APRIL 4

NEW YORK, the increasingly battered epicentre of the nation's coronavirus outbreak, on Friday reported its highest number of deaths in a single day, prompting state officials to beg the rest of the United States for assistance and to enact an emergency order designed to stave off medical catastrophe.

In the 24 hours through 12 am on Friday, 562 people — or one almost every two-and-a-half minutes — died from the virus in New York State, bringing the total death toll to nearly 3,000, double what it was only three days before. In the same period, 1,427 newly sickened patients poured into the hospitals — another oneday high — although the rate of increase in hospitalizations seemed to stabilise, suggesting social-distancing measures may have started working.

Despite the glimmer of hope, the new statistics were a stark reminder of the gale-force strength of the crisis that is



threatening New York, where more than 102,000 people nearly as many as in Italy and Spain, the hardest-hit European countries — have now tested positive for the virus. The situation, as it has been for weeks, was particularly dire in New York City, where some hospitals have reported running out of body bags and others have begun to plan for the unthinkable prospect of rationing care.

"It is hard to put fully into words what we are all grappling with as we navigate our way through this pandemic," Vicki L. LoPachin, chief medical officer of Mount Sinai Health System, wrote in an email to the staff on Friday. "We are healing so many and comforting those we can't save — one precious life at a time." **NYT**

China pushes for quiet burials amid death toll questions

AMY QIN & CAO LI APRIL 4

LIU PEI'EN held the small wooden box that contained his father's remains. Only two months ago, he had helplessly clutched his father's frail hand as the elderly man took his last breath, and the pain was still raw. He wept.

But there was little time, or space, for Liu to grieve. He said officials in Wuhan had insisted on accompanying him to the funeral home and were waiting anxiously nearby. Later, they followed him to the cemetery where they watched him bury his father, he said. Liu saw one of his minders taking photos of the funeral, which was over in 20 minutes. "My father devoted his whole

life to serving the country and the party," Liu, 44, who works in finance, said by phone. "Only to be surveilled after his death."

For months, the residents of Wuhan had been told they could not pick up the ashes of their

loved ones who had died during the height of China's coronavirus outbreak. Now that the authorities say the epidemic is under control, officials are pushing the relatives to bury the dead quickly and quietly, and they are suppressing online discussion of fatalities as doubts emerge about the true size of the toll. As China tries to control the

narrative, the police in Wuhan, where the pandemic began, have been dispatched to break up groups on WeChat, a popular messaging app, set up by the relatives of coronavirus victims. Government censors have scrubbed images circulating on social media showing relatives in the city lining up at funeral homes to collect ashes. Officials have assigned minders to relatives like Liu, to follow them as they pick burial plots, claim their loved ones' remains and bury them, grieving family members say.

"Where is the dignity after death?" Liu asked. "Where is the humanity?" **NYT**



Workers observe silence in Hunan on Saturday as China holds mourning for those who died of COVID-19. Reuters



SAYING THANK YOU

A child next to a mural in tribute to the NHS in Pontefract, Britain, on Saturday. Britain is unlikely to lift its stringent lockdown rules until the end of May, a government adviser said on Saturday as the death toll rose by 708 in 24 hours. Reuters

Spain's daily toll falls for 2nd day in row

REUTERS MADRID APRIL 4

THE DAILY pace of new coronavirus infections and deaths in Spain slowed again on Saturday as Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez was expected to announce a new extension to lockdown measures that have confined most Spaniards to their homes for three weeks.

The total death toll rose to 11,744 - the world's second highest - on Saturday from 10,935 the day before, the Health Ministry said, representing a 7% increase

Afghan forces arrest IS leader

behind attack on gurudwara



Neighbours chat from their balconies in Madrid. Reuters

in total deaths after a 9% rise on Friday. That is less than half the pace of the around 20% increase registered a week ago. A total of 809 people died

from the disease over the past 24

and Thursday's daily record of 950, the figures showed. Meanwhile, the total number of registered infections rose to 124,736 on Saturday from

117,710 on Friday, when Spain overtook Italy in the total number of infections for the first time.

Some of Madrid's most famous tourist sites, such as the Royal Palace and Las Ventas bullring, stood eerily quiet on Saturday, as Spaniards readied

themselves for a fourth week living under one of Europe's strictest lockdowns.

Only employees in essential sectors such as health are free to hours, down from Friday's 932 travel to and from work. Restaurants, bars and shops are shuttered, and social gatherings are banned.

> In a press conference on Friday, Health Minister Salvador Illa said premier Sanchez would call opposition leaders following a meeting of his coronavirus task force on Saturday to let them know his decision on extending the lockdown from the current end date of April 13.

Probe if virus manmade, trace origin: Pakistan lawmaker to UN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ISLAMABAD. APRIL 4

A PAKISTANI lawmaker has appealed to the United Nations to form a commission to probe if coronavirus is a man-made or a naturally grown virus and also trace its origin, according to a media report.

Former interior minister and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Senator Rehman Malik, in a letter to UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, suggested the proposed commission on COVID-19 under UN Convention on Biological Weapons, 1975 might comprise of virologists, scientists, professors, researchers, analysts and experts in microbiology and virology, the *Dawn News* reported.

"Many claims, speculations, conspiracy theories and misinformation about the disease have found their way into the international print and electronic media, blurring distinction between real and fake news," he said.

He said that he was not blam-

ing any government or a group or levelling any allegation or endorsing any media report. However, he added, he had drawn Guterres' attention to apprehensions being shown by the international media.



In Peshawar, Saturday. AP

OTHER TOP GLOBAL STORIES

France: Knifeman kills 2 in attack on passersby

ASSOCIATED PRESS PARIS. APRIL 4

A MAN wielding a knife attacked residents venturing out to shop in a town under lockdown south of the French city of Lyon Saturday, killing two people and wounding others, prosecutors said.

The anti-terrorism prosecutor's office told The Associated Press the attack took place at 11 a.m. in a commercial street in Romans-sur-Isere. The alleged attacker was arrested by police nearby. Prosecutors did not identify him. They said he had no documents but claimed to

born in 1987.

be Sudanese and to have been

Prosecutors said other people were also injured but couldn't confirm media reports that there were seven other casualties, of whom one is in critical condition. They also did not confirm reports that the man had shouted "Allahu akbar" (God is great) as he carried out the attack.

The office said it is evaluating whether the attack was motivated by terrorism, but that it has not launched any formal proceedings to treat it as such.

Like the rest of France, the town's residents are on coronavirus-linked lockdown.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE KABUL. APRIL 4

AFGHAN FORCES have arrested the leader of the country's Islamic State group affiliate and the mastermind behind the attack on a gurudwara last month that killed 25 worshippers, authorities said Saturday.

The National Directorate of Security (NDS) said in a statement that Aslam Faroogi, also known as Abdullah Orakzai, had been arrested along with 19 other men in a "complex operation".

Speaking on condition of anonymity, an NDS official told



At least 25 people were killed in the attack. Reuters/File

AFP Farooqi was the mastermind behind an IS-claimed attack on a Sikh temple in Kabul last month that killed at least 25 people. Known as Islamic State in the

Khorasan (IS-K), the Afghan IS branch has been on its back foot in recent months. In November, Afghan officials said IS-K had been completely defeated in Nangarhar, one of the key eastern provinces where they first sought to establish a stronghold in 2015.

In the years since, they have claimed responsibility for a string of horrific bombings across Afghanistan.

In its statement, the NDS said Farooqi had admitted to having links with "regional intelligence agencies" — a clear reference to Pakistan, which Afghanistan routinely blames for supporting jihadists and helping the Taliban.

Trump fires intel official with key impeachment role

Washington: President Donald Trump has announced he was firing a senior intelligence official who had a central role in the complaint last August that sparked his impeachment trial.

In a letter to the Senate Intelligence Committee on Friday, Trump said he had lost confidence in Michael Atkinson.

Atkinson reviewed and transmitted an anonymous whistleblower's complaint in August that alleged Trump had sought personal political favors from Ukraine in violation of US law. The complaint became the basis for Trump's impeachment, which i ncluded a trial for removal in the Senate in January. AFP

UK: Keir Starmer emerges new leader of Labour party

ADITI KHANNA LONDON, APRIL 4

KEIR STARMER, the former shadow Brexit Secretary, on Saturday emerged as the winner of a three-way race to replace Jeremy Corbyn as the Leader of the UK's Opposition Labour party.

The 57-year-old was elected after he defeated Rebecca Long-Bailey and Indian-origin MP Lisa Nandy, who were a distant second and third respectively in a postal ballot of party members, trade unionists and registered supporters.

In his video victory message, Sir Keir Starmer said his



task was to "lead this great

party into a new era, with confidence and hope". "We will shine a torch on crit-

ical issues and where we see mistakes or faltering government or things not happening as quickly as they should we'll challenge that and call that out," said Starmer, the MP for Holborn and St Pancras in London, who had fought on a "unity" platform. PTI

THE SUNDAY EXPRESS MAGAZINE



Manjula Padmanabhan

o TIME for tears! Roshan scolded herself, even as her eyes welled up. She pulled the knot of her long black hair tight behind her head and called to her eight-year-old son, "Tuktuk!" Her voice was muffled by her mask. "The van will be here any minute." They lived in Garden Estate, which was the closest point to the Millennium Medical Centre, far to the south of New Delhi. She guessed they'd be the last to be collected on the early morning run.

She snatched up the house keys and hurried towards the front door, pausing by what used to be the guest room. "Ash?" she called to her husband. "We're going now." She was about to add, "It's alright, don't come out", but he did, anyway.

His face was grey, unshaven. He hadn't changed out of his pyjamas in days. He met her gaze and whispered, "What you and Tuktuk are doing is ... God's work." Then his voice cracked and he turned away, weeping. The room was in darkness. But Roshan could see, on the floor behind him, the golden mound of marigolds still laid out on a white sheet, in the shape of a small body. There was, of course, nothing beneath the flowers. Mourning families were not allowed even a last goodbye.

She and Tuktuk rushed out of the flat. The young boy looked like an astronaut, in his shiny white suit, gloves and boots. His curly black hair framed the blue face-mask. It had translucent breathing tubes curling out from the nostrils. Roshan wore regular clothes: black slacks, pearl-grey turtleneck jumper, black puffy jacket. It was early in the year and the air was icy.

They ran down three floors. Sure enough, the white transport had just drawn up, with the flashing red light on its roof. They scrambled in through the rear door. They were the last to be collected. Four other parents and their children were already strapped in.

The vehicle raced through the broad, empty avenues of Gurgaon with the siren whooping. The sky was black, encrusted with stars. The towering buildings on either side were dark and lifeless, all the residents and offices having closed after successive lockdowns. There was no traffic: the siren was meant to alert checkpoints along the way that a transport was coming through and must not be halted.

The Centre was believed to be the most advanced medical facility ever created. It was visible from afar, blazing like a permanent dawn over the horizon. The structure, when it came into view, resembled a glittering honeycomb made of plate-glass. The van

cleared through the check-

As history and contagion literature have shown, even the darkest of nights is followed by day. In this short speculative story, a video gamer is determined to change the course of a pestilence

points without triggering any alarms. Then it plunged into the depths like a white bee returning to base.

Tuktuk had been silent all the way. But when the two of them got out and were walking towards the ZeeZee Hub alongside dozens of others, he clutched Roshan's gloved hand with his own smaller one.

"Mumma?" he whispered, into the microphone in his helmet.

She wore earbuds and a discrete mouth-mic. "What is it, sweetie?"

"What happens if I can't?"
She knew what he meant.
"Sweetie, you'll be fine,"
she said, hoping she

sounded sincere. "Yes, but —"

There was no time to stop. Around them, walking with the same air of steely purpose were other parents and children. All the children were dressed just like Tuktuk. There were girls, with their hair in long plaits or ponytails. Some boys had shaven heads. Some had turbans.

Roshan said, "Whatever happens, there's no danger to you. No danger at all."

"But —"

Ahead of them, they could hear a wordless murmuring. There was also an undercurrent of bings, chirps and booms.

The corridor widened gradually, so that the transition to the enormous underground Hub was not too abrupt. As the murmurs and dings grew louder, tall figures wearing deep blue helmets and matching uniforms began to appear. They called themselves ZeeZee Hosts. Their faces were hidden, yet they seemed to be smiling with their whole bodies, as they greeted the young warriors and their parents.

Then the first ZeeZee stations came into view. Roshan heard Tuktuk gasp in amazement. Each one looked like a huge bubble made of frosted glass. Many were lit from within. They glowed and flashed in multi-colours, accompanied by muffled sound effects.

"Hello!" said someone. One of the blue-uniformed figures. She bent forward, addressing Tuktuk first, then Roshan. vision began to fill with speckles of light speeding towards him. 'Incoming!' cried Tuktuk. 'Enemy fighters!'

The engines roared to life

and, immediately, the field of

"You're ..." a tiny pause as her helmet scanner read information from the boy's face

mask. "... Tuktuk! Your first time? Welcome!

I'm Mimi. Follow me?"
All around them, other parents and their children were trotting obediently behind their individual hosts. Tuktuk clutched his mother's hand even tighter. Roshan clutched back. But she no longer felt anxious. The place had an unexpectedly festive air. Mimi led them through the maze of occupied stations until she came to a halt beside a darkened one.

"Here," she said. "This one's for firsttimers." The door slid back at her touch and she stood aside, letting the other two in. As soon as the door slid shut behind all three, the interior lit up. It revealed a cockpit bristling with twinkling instruments inside a child-sized spaceship. The details were a cleverly designed video projection curving

around the raised and padded commander's throne. The only physical equipment was, in fact, the throne. The cubicle filled with the thrum-

ming sound of a spacecraft idling in space, as the star-strewn blackness of the cosmos surrounded them on all sides.

Roshan suppressed a smile behind her gloved hand.
"As soon as I strap you in here, Commander Tuktuk," Mimi was saying, "your ship will power up. Okay with that?"

round mouth would be open and his eyes wide with wonder and delight. "Yes," he said now, his voice sounding clearly in her ears. "Yes! Of course!" He jumped up and into his seat as readily as if he'd spent his entire young life

Roshan couldn't see her son's

face, but she knew that his small

doing nothing else.
For the next 20 minutes, Mimi guided the boy through the rudiments of commanding a fully-weaponised space vehicle, equipped to destroy enemy fighters. He was so eager to begin his first solo mission that he refused the offer of a chocolate slurpee. Leaning forward in his seat, he called out, "Secure all decks!" in clear, piping tones. Mimi had taught him the start sequence. "Raise shields ... ENGAGE!"

The engines roared to life and, immediately, the field of vision began to fill with speckles of light speeding towards him. "Incoming!" cried Tuktuk. "Enemy fighters!"

Mimi straightened up. Turning to Roshan, she gestured towards the rear of the cubicle. There was a narrow bench there, just enough for two. She drew down a transparent partition to reduce the audio. Then she removed her helmet. She wore a face-mask underneath. "One more warrior launched, I think!"

she said, her eyes smiling.

Roshan smiled back. "He didn't even turn to look at me!" They both laughed. "So: tell me. How does this work? What connects these little warriors to the viruses?"

Mimi said, "It's a simulation linked to patients, via the medical centre's HyperNet." She directed Roshan's attention back to the display. "See those enemy fighters? They're make-believe. But once your son hits enough of those practice enemies precisely, he'll be connected by remote links to an actual patient, in the medical wing upstairs. Tuktuk's movements will be scaled down to the microscopic level until they can act on instruments too tiny to be seen. They're minute machines that we've constructed and positioned inside the patient's lungs. Like minuscule missiles. Each missile carries molecules of virus-busting fluid —"

"Wait! There are no drugs against this virus!" exclaimed Roshan.

Mimi nodded. "That's right. No drugs. We're using molecules of soap." She smiled again. "The virus has a thin outer shell of fatty tissue. Soap breaks up the tissue. That's why hand washing is so important: it really does disable the virus. Without its outer coating, the virus loses the tiny prickles it

uses to hook onto human cells!"
No hooks, no infection, no
death. "We need effective vaccines. But until then, this is the
best we can do," said Mimi. "It's extremely desperate! Using children as warriors, for goodness' sake! What's more desperate than that?"

Roshan watched Tuktuk, now swaying and rocking in his seat as dozens of spiky objects came whirling and twisting towards him. Boom! Got one. And another — BOOM! Pom. DING! Whee —

"Kids!" said Mimi. "For them, it's just video games. Each virus is worth a thousand points. They compete against one another and earn money as they go — 10,000 points is one rupee. They can keep at it for hours — oh! See the little glowing blob? That's the real thing — a real coronavirus. He's been assigned a patient!"

Both women leaned forward in excitement. Tuktuk swung the electron beam of his ship's primary canon this way and that, sending out shattering blasts of green light until, with an abrupt boom, he hit the blob. It burst open. Thousands of wriggling fragments shot into the void, faded and died.

"Zee-Zee-Zee!" shrieked the virus as it collapsed. "Zee-Zee-Zee!"

ollapsed. "Zee-Zee-Zee!" Roshan felt a radiant joy awaken within

Yes, she thought. We will win this war.

Manjula Padmanabhan is an author, playwright and cartoonist. Her novel *The Island of Lost Girls* is set in a brutal future world. She lives in the US, with a home in New Delhi

Love in the Time Corona



BY SUDEEP SEN

I don't believe in God, but I'm afraid of Him. - Gabriel García Márquez, Love in the Time of Cholera

In the dark times, will there also be singing? Yes, there will also be singing. About the dark times.

Bertolt Brecht

Faint indigo tints in the greys of your hair evoke memory — Krishna's love for Radha,

its perennial longevity, its sustained mythology, its blue-bathed lore — such are life's enduring

parallels. Fourteen years — yet my heart flutters, infatuated like first love. My hands fidgety,

palms sweaty, pulse too fast to pick – I am not allowed to touch your face.

Cyber-flurries of emoji-love fail to assuage fears of corona criticality. I don't believe in God.

In thousands, migrant workers march home —

hungry footsteps on empty highways accentuate irony — 'social distancing',

a privilege only powerful can afford. Cretins spray bleach on unprotected poor, clap,

the voodoo — *karuna*'s karmic score, infected. Mood-swings in sanitised quarantine — self-

bang plates, ring bells, blow conches to rid

isolation, imposed — uncontained virus, viral.

When shall we sing our dream's epiphanies?

City weather fluctuates promiscuously, mapping my bipolar temperature-graph —

tropic's air-conditioner chill, winter's unseasonal hailstorm, sky's pink-blue spring.

Blue-grey will moult into salt-and-pepper, ash-grey to silver-white, then to aged-white.

My lungs heave, ingratiating metallic-crackles struggle to escape the filigreed windpipes —

I persist in my prayers. I'm afraid of Him.

Hope, heed, heal — our song, in present tense.





It takes courage to live with adversity

We need to keep moving forward, to be compassionate without discrimination and to not let adversity define us. No matter what



BY SHELJA SEN

ORONAVIRUS has made us aware of the fragility of our lives. We are learning that despite the dead ends and detours, we need to move forward. As we navigate this unchartered territory, one thing that can guide us through the worst storms, roughest terrains and darkest times is our Courage. Courage is an acronym I use to highlight seven core practices we will need in this unprecedented journey. Because as American novelist Anais Nin put it, "Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage."

C: Change the channel

One of the biggest challenges that the corona panic is posing is that it is making us feel helpless and hopeless. It is shrieking and crowding our minds with the worst-case scenarios. No wonder we are feeling frazzled, exhausted and on edge. Corona's voice of doom is tough to tune out. It has already terrorised our economy, taken thousands of lives, and now it is ready to tyrannise our minds. Not much of a surprise considering all the horror stories we are feeding our minds all the time. It is becoming a fertile ground for fear to breed. Imagine if we stood up to fear-mongering propaganda and took active steps to do all things that give us peace and joy. Through my co-research with children, we have developed a simple trick to stop corona panic in its tracks: **A**lert to the voice of corona panic churning away its stories of doom and gloom, Breathe out (imagine you are a dragon blowing a feather on

your hand) and get up and Change the channel (from corona worry to joy channel through dancing, art, music, gardening, knitting, cooking, yoga etc.).

O: Owning our light

JK Rowling described "dementors" as — "get too near a Dementor and every good feeling, every happy memory will be sucked out of you". Corona panic is doing precisely that to all of us. As our jobs become uncertain, our future bleak, we grapple with insecurities, selfdoubts and inadequacies, "Will I be able to go to college?" "Will I lose my job?" All the dreams and aspirations for the future might seem meaningless. A 23-year-old young man who had invested a lot of time and effort in making films told me despondently, "I used to be passionate about working with children with disability, but it seems so futile now."

That is what corona panic does — it distracts us from what truly matters to us by pumping in a lot of obsessive paranoia. Therefore, it becomes all the more important to hold on to what you value the most no matter what the corona panic tries to convince you of.

U: Us against corona

Corona panic has a devious knack of splitting people up through "othering". The recent spate of vicious racism directed at people from the Northeast is a typical example of this. There is no "us and them" here, we are all in this together. "Humanity needs to make a choice. Will we travel down the route of disunity, or will we adopt the path of global solidarity? If we choose disunity, this will not only prolong the crisis, but will probably result in even worse catastrophes in the future." These words by historian Yuval Noah Harari really resonate with a lot of us as we grapple with the intercontinental journey of the virus sweeping across borders. I loved the way this was explained so simply by a 13-year-old who told me: "If each team player plays for himself, then the team will lose. It is our match with corona too, and we are losing until we become strong team players."

R: Remain compassionate

Being quarantined is a privilege. That is something that is becoming obvious to all of us. From the comfort of our homes, we talk about the joy of slowing down, savouring moments with our families, loitering through the day aimlessly and posting pictures of gratitude. However, the trauma to the marginalised and the most vulnerable is something we will only get to understand in the months and years to come. Activists around the world are talking about the rise in domestic violence and abuse during the lockdowns. Think: there are 18 million street children in our country alone. Where do they go, who takes care of their meals, who looks out for them when adults who are supposed to protect them become predators? It is also heartening to see efforts being made by so many organisations to step up. We have to make compassion go viral in the coming months so that together we weather the storm and build our interconnected lives back.

A: A day at a time

The lockdown has disrupted our daily rhythm, especially for young people in the age group of 15 to 21. There is nothing much to do, nowhere to go and nobody to meet. A 19-year-old described it as a "weird sense of vacuum", a sentiment echoed by many others. This void can spiral into depression and other mental health problems if left unchecked. In my co-research I have found that what helps people is finding at least three anchors through the day which brings in stillness (yoga, meditation, walks), cultivating joyous moments and connection with people we love.

G: Growing our tribe

"We are all in this together," is popping up everywhere and people are rebuilding unique bridges in unique ways. Forgotten friends, relatives are being remembered and connections are being made. As a 21-year-old explained to me, "Structures of individualism and neoliberalism have to give way to structures of empathy." It reminded me of A letter to the UK from Italy by the writer Francesca Melnadri, "Old resentments and falling-outs will seem irrelevant. You will call people you had sworn never to talk to ever again, so as to ask them: 'How are you doing?"

E: Enduring adversity

Victor E Frankl, Jewish psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor, expressed it beautifully in his brilliant book, Man's Search for Meaning, "Everything can be taken from a (wo)man but one thing: the last of human freedoms - to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's way." Fear is inevitable in the present time but, courage and fear can go hand in hand. Andrew Solomon, author of *Far from The Tree*, talks about how crucial it is for us to take our adversity and forge some meaning out of it. Think of one person you admire deeply, who changed the world for the better. It could be Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa, Mahatma Gandhi, Dalai Lama. In all these amazing people's lives, adversity has been a catalyst for them to find meaning in their life and bring about the change. As Solomon so eloquently explains it, "If you banish the dragons, you banish the heroes." Hats off to all the heroes across the world who have been slaying the corona dragon.

Courage is not a trait or a quality; it is a *practice* — to keep moving forward, to choose one's attitude, to be compassionate without discrimination, to not let adversity to define us and live our lives as close to what we value the most. No matter what.

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DGTAL NATIVE



Nishant Shah

Nishant Shah is a professor of new media and the cofounder of The Centre for Internet & Society, Bengaluru

Viral Trap

The surfeit of news on corona must not make us oblivious to those fading into the darkness

WOKE UP the other day with a strange feeling that I am losing my memory. As I was going through the morning rituals of scrolling through news feeds and social media updates, I felt that I could not remember the world before corona — BC, if you will. It was a strange feeling. I am almost certain that three weeks ago, before the pandemic was announced, before the shutdowns were implemented, before social distancing and physical isolation became the bywords, there must have been other things that were on my mind and in my information streams. Try as I might, I could only come up with vague recollections about events, people, places, and plans that must have occupied my attention.

The feeling of preternatural amnesia was complemented through the rhythms of the day. At "work", I sat at my desk in a dress-shirt and pyjamas, making an attempt to make only the camera-visible parts of me workpresentable. We joked how we have forgotten to wear work clothes. The virus had rendered us sartorially catatonic. The news feed was making me sick because the news channels were concentrating on the state of befuddled buffoonery in global governance of this pandemic. So, I shifted to other channels, only to find that they, too, were talking about everything in the context of corona: dating, mating, eating, meeting, cooking, creating, housekeeping and pet-keeping, all in the times of corona.

Unable to take this contagious onslaught, I moved to Netflix to watch a reality TV show, but had to stop midway through the first episode because every time I saw people touch, hug, or sit close to each other, my spidey senses tingled. My newfound pathology of touch and space could not tolerate these people existing in a pre-corona world, vegetating in one another's germy exudation.

It is understandable that with such a global threat to our species, a lot of our attention is being taken by the emerging calisthenics of epidemiology as new epicentres of contagion emerge. However, our single-handed focus and viral information stream of the virus has trapped us. When our physical universe shrank, at least for those who could afford it, the reassurance was that digital access will liberate us from our isolation. Instead, we found and are practising digital shrinkage, where our entire informational universe is being shaped and concentrated on just this one factor that binds and restricts



We will meme in darkness of the darkness, not paying attention to those who shall fade into it

us. Before we got infected and immobilised by this virus, we had already been bound and bagged by the information circles of the virus — where endless WhatsApp groups and never-ending news cycles keep us immersed only in this one landscape, ignoring the other critical, curious, and creative things that make us human.

There are two alarming consequences of this information saturation of the corona crisis. One, it takes its toll on our collective well-being, where we get addicted to the updates which give us a constant stream of traffic without giving us any new information. It intensifies our feelings of being trapped, amplifying our isolation as the only defining condition so that we let it deepen our sense of precariousness and danger even when it is not materially warranted. This would account for people, who can afford to work from home, flooding the interweb with memes, dark humour, political pontification and social commentary, about their tough negotiations with reformulating their lives.

The second, more sinister consequence of this informational cloistering is that we turn the focus of our existence only on ourselves. Now that we all experience a threat that is only reflected in all our informational practices, we get so ensconced in our over-exaggerated inconveniences that we forget to recognise those who are going to suffer the most in this changing world order. Our filter bubbles are going to ensure that we worry about where we will find our favourite brand of olives or cans of pet food, and stock pile on groceries, while millions are going to be left to fend for their rights to life and security. We will meme in darkness of the darkness, not paying attention to those who shall fade into it.

While the media attention cycles will continue to force corona stories down our throat, it is up to us to develop a new information hygiene routine, where we do not let this landscape of alarm and breaking news immobilise our emotional and social landscapes. Just as we practise social distancing and hand hygiene in the physical world, we need to develop new routines of informational distancing from the corona-centric stories and offer our helping hands to those who do not have the privileges and protections that you and I, and everybody else reading this column, can take for granted.

Curriculum for a Crisis

A list of books to school even the most educated on the ways of the natural world



Ranjit Lal Ranjit Lal is an author, environmentalist and bird watcher

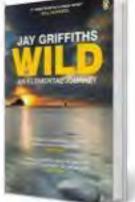
NOW THAT Mother Nature has the whole world by the throat, it's time we took another good hard look at our relationship with her – and how we've reacted to this monumental crisis. Judging by some of the WhatsApp forwards doing the rounds in India, it seems the magnitude of the crisis has been completely overshadowed by the magnitude of the ignorance of our "educated" class. While the poor Italians and Spaniards went out into their balconies to cheer and sing for their beleaguered medical workers, we, in India, did so to "spiritually cleanse" the country of the virus! Apparently, the chanted prayers (and clattering pots and pans) of 1.3 billion Indians, "matched the resonant frequency of the diurnal multipath propagation over the Indian subcontinent." Further, "scientists" say that it would definitely have created a ducting effect in the lower troposphere, which would

either trap the virus in a "continental duct"

or would have columned the virus towards the stratosphere". And hey presto, in a week, all the viruses would be ducted away!

To counter this astonishing "scientific balderdash, here's a brief list of books I would strongly recommend. First, a good mindclearing dose of Richard Dawkins. You could start off with his book, *The Magic of Reality* (2011). It's been written for young readers but that makes it even easier to understand. Dawkins takes various questions — who was the first person? Why are there so many different kinds of animals? What are things made of? — and answers them in two ways: first, he mentions some of the traditional explanations that have been given by people all over the world and counterpoints this with the scientific explanation of the phenomenon. Since we're dealing with nature in this column, read the chapter on evolution to start with — it has been wonderfully explained and Dawkins's diamond-hard logic is impeccable. You may be loath to believe that our ancestors were fish, or centipedes or even chimpanzees — but Dawkins has a clear and simple way of showing us that this is, indeed, the case. Hopefully the book should go some way in "ducting" the wooliness in our heads into the stratosphere!

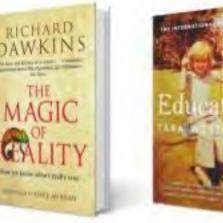
The second book I'd recommend is Jay Griffiths' Wild (2006). Griffiths is a British journalist who spent years among tribal and native people around the world. She drank psychotropic potions with the shamans of the South American rainforests, interacted with cannibals in New Guinea (amongst the kindest people she encountered) and the Inuit of the icy polar regions, amongst others. Now, I do have reservations about the practices of





RECOMMENDED READING Books by (from left)

Jay Griffiths, Richard Dawkins and Tara Westover can help counter unscientific beliefs and arguments



"medicine men" and "witch doctors", but the overarching theme of this book is that all of these tribes lived as a part of and in tune with nature — and did not treat her as their main adversary, to be trampled upon, cut down, drowned, conquered, and exploited. And that, no matter how "civilized" we pretend we are,

deep down, the wild spirit remains. Another major takeaway from this book is the fact that what the bat or pangolin has done to us is exactly what the European did to native tribes all over the world: subject them to viruses (and addictions) that they had no immunity against, so they died in droves, enabling them to take over their lands or enslave them. Today, a furious Mother Nature is showing us what goes around comes around and we're not enjoying it. Apart from this, Griffiths is an incandescent, kaleidoscopic writer who writes with her heart and absolutely doesn't hold back.

The third book I'd recommend is Tara Westover's Educated (2018). Tara Westover was brought up in a Mormon family and her parents believed in and lived according to rigid traditional ways and customs. Her father had a pathological suspicion of authority — and

refused to send his children to school or avail of modern medical facilities. He converted his house into a virtual bunker and stockpiled everything — food, guns, petrol, traditional medicines — in vast quantities. Everything that happened, good or bad, was because the Lord willed it, so and nothing could be done to change that. Familiar, isn't it?

But, ah, you may say, maybe that's what's needed now: a harking back to the old, "natural" ways. Not really, because there are serious illnesses those "traditional" medicines cannot cure — and which, in this case, put her and her family — in serious danger. This book is also a revelation as to what a lack of proper education can lead to: and that has been displayed so prominently today by messages on social media. We are literate, maybe, educated, certainly not.

If reading is not for you, here's another way of getting "educated". Every morning, go out into your balcony or garden and stand and stare. There's a lot to discover: every plant has a miniature ecosystem humming around it: translucent crab spiders waiting in ambush, butterflies paying fleeting visits, hoverflies standing still in midair. Also, people everywhere have suddenly discovered birdsong like never before. Even in big cities, you can pick up the songs and calls of at least 20 species in just five minutes. Ah, but I'll let you in on a small secret. The birds haven't come from the hinterland in great flocks to entertain us in this time of crisis! They've always been there, singing, squawking and arguing. We just never heard them over the incessant roar of traffic and the ill-tempered blaring of horns. And, yes, of course, the disharmonious beating of pots and pans!

ARTS etc

'We learn from each new outbreak, but not enough'

Writer Laura Spinney on the impact of the 1918 Spanish Flu on India and the mostly unchanging response to each new epidemic

Sushant Singh

N HER much-acclaimed 2017 book, Pale Rider: The Spanish Flu of 1918 and How it Changed the World, Laura Spinney recounted the story of a forgotten pandemic, which left between 50 and 100 million people dead worldwide. The Paris-based writer and science journalist's work, which shows how the pandemic was shaped by the interaction of a virus and the humans it encountered, has special relevance today in the time of COVID-19. Excerpts from an interview:

Why was the 1918 flu pandemic called the Spanish Flu? Was it directly linked to the Indian soldiers in the Great War?

The story of the misnaming of the 1918 pandemic is well-known. World War I was on in 1918, and the belligerent nations censored their press, not wanting to damage their populations' morale. Spain, however, was neutral in that war, and when the first cases of flu occurred there, they were widely reported. Incidentally, it was called the 'Naples Soldier' in Spain, after a catchy tune that was being played in local music halls at the time. The disease had already been in the United States for two months, and in France for several weeks at least. That information was, however, kept out of their newspapers. So the world came to see the disease as coming out of Spain. This was also encouraged by propagandists in other countries, whom it suited to shift the blame.

There was no particular link to Indian soldiers, though, of course, they were affected and they probably unwittingly helped spread it too, as they travelled. It, however, clearly shaped the pandemic and the Indian experience of it.

Did the 1918 pandemic alter the course of India's independence movement in a significant way?

I think you can argue from the historical evidence that it did — and I am not the only one to have done so. The devastation wrought by the disease exacerbated social tensions in India, contributing to an eruption of violence and significantly strengthening the independence movement. By 1918, Mahatma Gandhi was being seen as a future leader of the nation, but he lacked grassroots support. That spring, in Gujarat, he had organised two satyagrahas, but these were followed by thousands of people, not hundreds of thousands. When the flu returned that autumn, he fell ill, along with other members of the independence movement who shared his ashram. Armistice in World War I was signed in November 1918, but the Rowlatt Act followed in India, which imposed the martial law. That led to a call for a satyagraha by a very weak Gandhi, and, eventually, the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy. What

POES THE LEADER WHO CLAIMS TO BE LIKE ME, SEE ME



HORRORS REVISITED

(Above) A Spanish Flu victim in St Louis, USA; Spinney

followed in 1920 was a special session of the Congress in Calcutta, where Gandhi promised self-rule within a year if Congress followed his *satyagraha* model all over India. By 1921, thanks in no small part to the freedom fighters who provided relief to millions of Indian during the flu, Gandhi had secured massive grassroots support.

Was the art and literature of the time in India reflective of the pandemic and the tragedy?

Again, I think you can argue that the pandemic had an impact on Indian literature. For example, Munshi Premchand who became the self-styled "chronicler of village life" around 1918, and the poet (Suryakant Tripathi) Nirala who wrote about the tragedy in his memoir, *A Life Misspent* (1939). This argument is necessarily speculative, since the writers are no longer here for us to question them, but this does pose some interesting research questions for future historians.

Despite being such an immense tragedy, why was the 1918 pandemic erased so

WHERE IS THAT

WORLD WHERE !

GET TO DO THAT ?

quickly from public memory in India? Do wars attract more attention than disease?

There are many reasons, but in India's case, I think, a contributing factor was that, for a very long time, Indians did not have an accurate sense of the scale of their loss. The dead had simply not been counted. Economist Siddharth Chandra's work in 2012 (The evolution of pandemic influenza: evidence from India, 1918–19, published in BMC Infectious Diseases) estimated that 18 million was a reasonable estimate for the death toll in India as a whole, which is roughly 6 per cent of the population of the undivided subcontinent at that time. And, I do think that wars attract much more attention from writers than epidemics or pandemics.

The world has faced many epidemics more recently, such as Ebola in 2014-16 and H1N1 in 2009. In what ways has the human response not changed?

We tend to swing from panic, when the pandemic strikes to forgetting and complacency when it passes. We learn from each new outbreak, but, perhaps, not enough.

ANYTHING ?

A Humane Heart

A writer's role in an anxietyridden world

Parvati Sharma

EING A writer is half as much the "being" as the writing. I remember at 14, spending more time imagining myself an ink-stained Jo in her attic, or a salty Joseph Conrad on the high seas at 24, than producing actual stories. Like all clichés, these two, of solitude and adventure as essential to literature, are founded in truth. You do need to think in order to write; and you do need experience to write about. On the other hand, I realised over the years that it's perfectly possible to write in a crowded office — thinking happens in your head, after all, nobody needs an empty hillside for it — and that adventures don't have to involve tossing waves. Friendship is as much an experience as love; reading about the past can be as thrilling as diving into the present.

Still, if it weren't for that adolescent craving for a writer's life, I wouldn't write at all. At 14 and 40, the idea of an attic of my own and a leading role in a Historical Moment held an irresistible, propelling romance. But what did I know? Now I'm 42, the world is hushed and every moment is history — and I can't write a word. Staying in is hardly conducive to productive thought, after all, when going out is prohibited; the urgency of a historical moment is also its anxiety.

As I write this, 22 migrant workers have died trying to get home across north India, almost as many — 29 — have succumbed to the dreaded virus across the country; and a government order has decreed that stadiums become — not hospitals — jails. The American president wants to end his country's lockdown because the stock market's unhappy. In Columbia, death squads are using the opportunity to kill homebound activists; and Hungary has become the EU's first corona-inspired dictatorship. A global pandemic on the one hand, governments revealing their most malevolent aspects on the other — the fear has sucked the writing right out of me.

Nor can I read with much concentration, but I have been staring in glazed manner at Daniel Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year* (1722), his account of the Great Plague of London in 1665. Some bits catch my eye, for example: "I could not prevail upon my unsatisfied curiosity to stay within entirely myself..."

It is tempting, as the world threatens to collapse around us, to collapse, in turn, upon ourselves. To spend more hours in bed. To become obsessive about disinfecting doorknobs and stocking the fridge, when the news becomes too much, to keep the dangers of the world at bay.

But Defoe is a writer. It's the bar he stocks — "I bought malt, and brewed as much beer as all the casks I had would hold" — and he ventures into the world. It's a "very, very, very dreadful" world, not just because of the plague but also because of madness and crime, mis-



Staying in is hardly conducive to productive thought, after all, when going out is prohibited

management and fear; and every time Defoe goes out he returns "[t]errified... and resolve to go out no more".

Thus, wandering the streets of London, he writes of being transfixed by the sight of the rich leaving the city, "a sight which I could not but look on from morning to night"; he writes of the "[m]aid-servants... and men-servants" going to fortune-tellers to ask if they would be abandoned by their employers, "Oh sir... what will become of me? Will my mistress keep me, or will she turn me off?" He writes of the tears in his eyes at the story of a boatman working day and night for the wife and children he can no longer meet; they are infected. He writes with black humour of a sleeping piper almost buried in a mass grave, and with anger of the city's terrible care for its sick and its poor — "as if they had had no warning, no expectation, no apprehensions, and consequently the least provision imaginable was made..."

Defoe doesn't let his spirit be contracted by fear nor does he let himself be overwhelmed by the exigencies of the self. He is as concerned about his brother's hat factory — where he finds the neighbourhood women helping themselves to its unguarded ware — as he is about the consequences of a general lockdown in a city built on daily labour: "I say, let any man consider what must be the miserable condition of this town if, on a sudden...labour should cease, and wages for work be no more." Able to engage with the present and speak to the future, Defoe is the ideal writer.

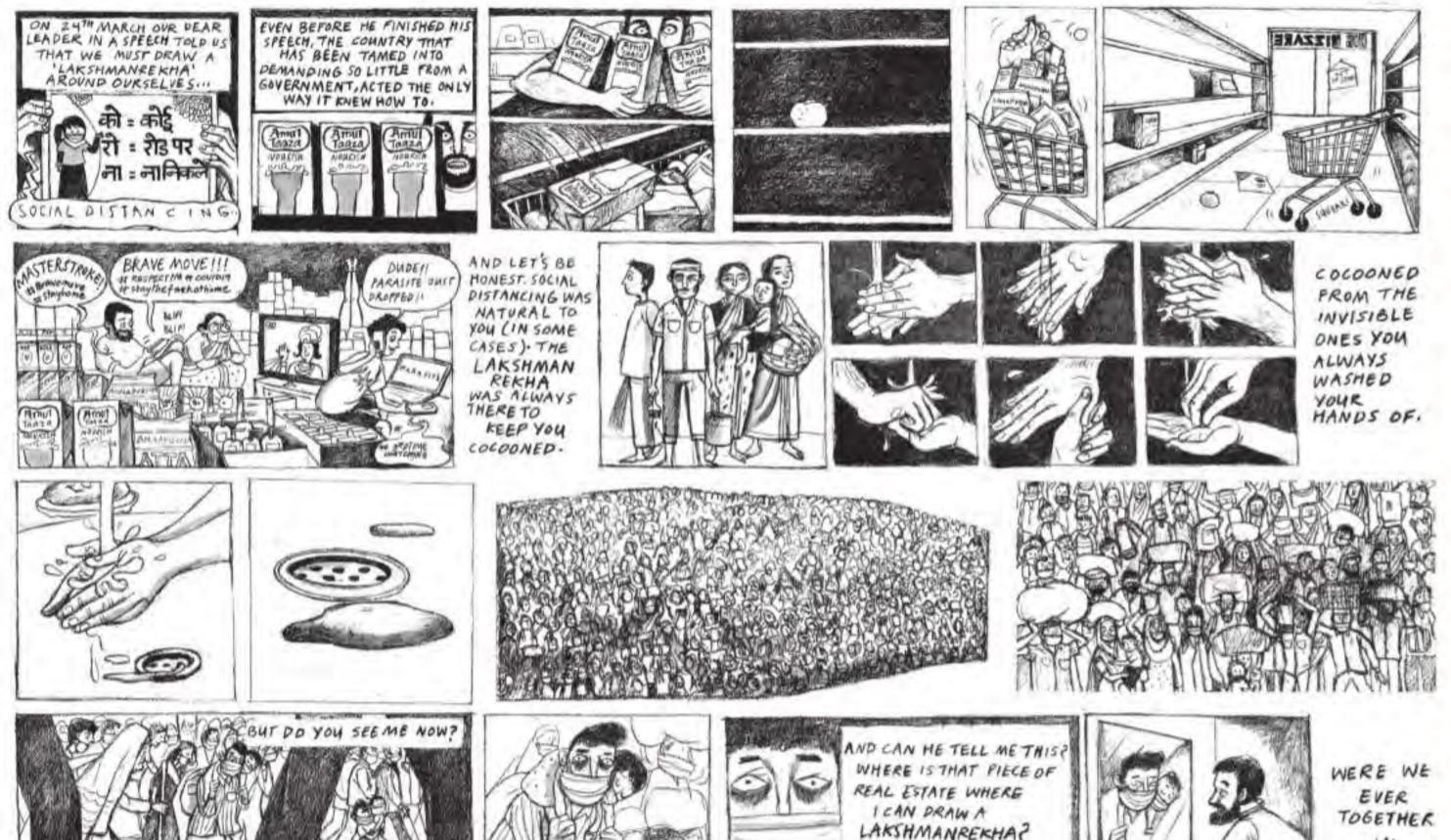
And — of course — he is fiction. Defoe was a child in 1665; his "journal" is a novel, though possibly based on a relative's experience of the Great Plague. And the writer his narrator represents, jotting down the socio-political horrors of the day while swigging homemade ale — that may be as much a fantasy as any I harboured in my adolescence. As someone exclaimed on Twitter recently, "A pandemic is not a writing retreat". Maybe it isn't possible to write when you're locked up and afraid of what the world is becoming.

But Defoe's idea of the writer — curious, courageous, empathetic — his idea of the writer's life as a writer's duty — unable to stay entirely within oneself, questioning the world as if responsible for it — this offers something to aspire to, more compelling, even, than the solitary genius with a bagful of sailors' tales.

Parvati Sharma is a Delhi-based writer

LAKSHMAN REKHA

BY PRIYA KURIYAN



Priya Kuriyan is a Bengaluru-based illustrator, animator and comic-book artist



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KP WANTS 'CONDENSED' IPL

Kevin Pietersen has proposed a 'condensed' IPL without fans, saying he 'truly believes' the tournament should take place. He added it could be held at three venues that will be safe for players.

Virus fallout: FIFA postpones women's U-17 World Cup in India



India's under-17 women's team was set to make its debut in the World Cup. which was to be held from November 2 to 21 this year. File

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

THE FIFA Under-17 Women's World Cup to be held in India in November was on Saturday postponed by football's governing body due to the worsening COVID-19 pandemic across the globe.

The women's age group showpiece was to be held at five venues in the country —Kolkata, Guwahati, Bhubaneswar, Ahmedabad and Navi Mumbai — from November 2-21. The tournament was to be competed among 16 teams, with hosts India being automatic qualifiers. It was to be India's maiden appearance in the U-17 Women's World Cup.

The decision was taken by the FIFA-Confederations working group which was recently established by the Bureau of the FIFA Council to address the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. The working group recommended the Bureau of FIFA Council to "postpone the FIFA Under-20 Women's World Cup Panama/Costa Rica 2020 - originally scheduled for August/September 2020 - and the FIFA Under-17 Women's World Cup India 2020 - originally scheduled for November 2020." "New dates will be identified," FIFA said in a statement.

It was also decided "to create a sub-work-

ing group on the women's international match calendar to consider potential changes to the calendar and dates of postponed FIFA final tournaments".

The All India Football Federation said the postponement was on expected lines.

"Just like other sports events which were postponed due to this dreaded disease, it (postponement of U-17 World Cup) was to happen. We have to accept the decision," AIFF General Secretary Kushal Das told PTI. "The qualifying events in Europe and Africa and other confederations are yet to be held and so the decision was on expected lines."

He said the tournament will most likely be held next year. The working group of the world body which took the decision includes the FIFA administration and Secretary Generals and top executives from all confederations. It unanimously approved a series of recommendations following its first meeting, which was organised via conference late on Friday. While the tournament itself is five months away, only the qualifying event for Asia has been held so far from which Japan and North Korea have made the cut.

Five remaining qualifying events -- that of Africa, Europe, Oceania, South America, and Central, North America and Caribbean -- have not been held due to the global health crisis which has affected more than a million

While the tournament itself is five months away, only the qualifying event for Asia has been held so far from which Japan and North Korea have made the cut.

people. Over 50,000 deaths have been caused by the deadly outbreak so far.

The official schedule of the tournament was announced in February and Navi Mumbai was to host the final. The Local Organising Committee (LOC) said it supported the decision though it was looking forward to host the tournament in November as scheduled.

"We agree that this has been made with the highest regard for public health, and the participating teams, host cities, staff and visiting fans, and keeps the best interests of everyone in mind," the LOC said in a statement.

All international games deferred

Reuters: The working group also recommended the postponement of all international matches due to be played in June -- a formality as Euro 2020, the Copa America

and the month's World Cup qualifiers have already been called off due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The recommendations still have to be approved by the FIFA Bureau, a reduced

version of its decision-making Council. "FIFA also reiterates that health must always be the first priority and the main criteria in any decision-making process, especially in these challenging times," said FIFA.

The group proposed discussions with continental confederations to finalise a revised schedule for 2022 World Cup qualifiers, after matches this month and in June were postponed. The age limit for the Tokyo Olympics men's football tournament could be raised so that players who were eligible in 2020 will not miss out following the postponement of the Games until the following year, FIFA said on Friday.

Olympic football is usually restricted to under-23 teams for the men's tournament, with three overage players allowed per team. However, a working group set up by global soccer's governing body FIFA recommended on Friday that the competition should remain open to players born on or after Jan. 1 1997, as originally planned, FIFA said in a statement. This would effectively raise the age limit by one year, as requested by both South Korea and Australia. There is no age limit for the women's tournament.

India was supposed to start its four-month countdown to the Olympics this moment. But forced into an unprecedented, grim lockdown as the world battles the Covid-19 outbreak, sport is staring at unfathomable despair. Indian athletes though have given the country reasons to rejoice in the past. The Indian Express looks back at a bunch of these memories.





After countless false dawns and years of a fractured hockey team putting up sub-par performances, India pulled together as a unit at the Asian Games in 2014 to reclaim continental glory after 16 long years, beating arch-rivals Pakistan. Sardar Singh, the talismanic captain and India's finest midfielder of the era, looks back

TUSHAR BHADURI

OVER HIS long international career, Sardar Singh often left hockey lovers gasping with his skills with the stick. His peripheral vision, sixth sense about where a teammate would be, the blind pass, and uncanny tackling ability ensured he was part of numerous All-Star XIs.

However, hockey is a team sport and the midfielder par excellence had precious few moments when he tasted triumph as part of the national team. India, during his playing days, would often promise much before faltering in crunch situations, be it conceding lastminute goals or squandering gilt-edged scoring opportunities.

Honourable exception

However, the 2014 Incheon Asian Games was one occasion when everything fell into place and India not only secured its third gold medal but also a direct berth for the 2016 Rio Olympics.

"It was our first gold in 16 years and is one of the happiest memories of my career," Sardar looks back. "It was the result of complete unity of purpose in our batch. Everyone's thinking was the same."

Laying the foundation

Hockey India has often been flayed for its hire-and-fire policy of coaches. Hardly any head coach, especially foreigner, stays in the job for a significant length of time, which also breeds confusion among players.

But the arrival of Australian Terry Walsh, a silver medallist at the 1976 Montreal Olympics with successful coaching stints in the Netherlands and his home country, was a step in the right direction, feels Sardar, the captain at that time.

"We had Roelant Oltmans as the high performance director and with Terry's arrival, we

had a great combination of coaches. I always believe that whosoever is selected to play for the country already knows hockey. Only proper direction is needed," he says.

Preparation JUNE-JULY, 2014

players went through.

The hockey competition in Incheon was scheduled from September 20-October 2. The training camp before the tournament was held at New Delhi's Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium, and Sardar remembers the toil the

"It was peak summer in North India and the stadium had big stands on every side so there was very little air circulation. It was a 40day camp and several friendships developed there. But the training sessions were so intense that we often felt that we would collapse.

"When Walsh joined us, we were in Bhopal. He decided to lay special emphasis on fitness. We had to complete 400m sprints in groups within a particular time, and used to be left gasping at the end. The coach also made us swim at the Talkatora Stadium pool."

It's not that the technical skills of the game were ignored. "We had days earmarked for a particular aspect. For example, one full session was dedicated to the slap shot," Sardar recalls.

No detail was left to chance and the team reached Incheon 10-12 days before the competition. "We had seven or eight training sessions at the venue and acclimatised properly. We were full of confidence when the tournament

Early setback

SEPTEMBER 25, 2014

India were in the same pool as Pakistan and it was always going to be the key clash. Sri Lanka and Oman were swept aside easily before the contest against the neighbours.

After a goalless first half, Pakistan went ahead through Muhammad Umar Bhutta.

Nikkin Thimmaiah netted the equaliser but Muhammad Waqas scored what turned out to be the winner a minute later. "It was a case of a few small mistakes that decided the outcome," the captain remembers. "We were disappointed, but not disheartened. We knew we were still in the tournament. We had a team bonding session late in the evening and looked forward to the next game."

What helped matters was that it was quite an experienced bunch of players. "Guys like Gurbaj Singh, Dharamvir Singh and Danish Mujtaba had a lot of games behind them and knew what needed to be done," Sardar says.

India needed to beat China in their last group game to make sure of a semi-final spot and after another barren first half, VR Raghunath and Birendra Lakra struck in quick succession to settle matters.

Taking down the hosts **SEPTEMBER 30, 2014**

By finishing second in the group, India had made matters tougher for themselves as they had to take on hosts South Korea in the semifinals. The East Asians had advanced with a perfect pool record, scoring 25 goals and conceding just one.

"Playing against the home country is always tough, with the whole crowd behind

"It was our first gold in 16 years and is one of the happiest memories of my career. It was the result of complete unity of purpose in our batch."

their favour as there were no video referrals there. We conceded a penalty corner when I knew the ball had struck my hand and not the foot. But we were determined to keep our shape and discipline and avoid any cards. Our focus was rewarded as we kept the Koreans at bay and Akashdeep (Singh) scored the only goal of the match," Sardar reminisces.

them. Marginal decisions also usually went in

'Just another game' **OCTOBER 2, 2014**

fore any other game.

On the morning of a big final against the arch rivals, one expects players to be super-excited with butterflies in the stomach. But the midfield general of yesteryears provides a different perspective. "We were not emotional or nervous, but calm. We knew we had done our homework and were expected to be in the final. The preparation was like what we had be-

"Our plan was to play with energy from the start and execute our strategy, so even when Pakistan took an early lead (through Muhammad Rizwan senior in the third minute), we didn't panic. I told my players that there was a lot of time left and we needed to play with discipline and stick to the plan.

"Pakistani fans are always very abusive and it was no different in this match. But we knew it would happen and were determined not to react," Sardar gives a glimpse into the team's mindset.

Before the half-hour mark, Kothajit Singh had restored parity. There were no more goals in the match, but no dearth of action either. The skipper made a special mention about his custodian, who came to India's rescue on more than one occasion. "(PR) Sreejesh was our rock. His body language too was such that it unnerved advancing attackers."

Shootout decider

Head coach Walsh was prepared for this

scenario as well. "He had decided on the players to be entrusted in the high-pressure scenario. I had a 50-50 record in training sessions, and was left out," Sardar recalls.

When Akashdeep converted the first attempt from the 25-yard line and Abdul Haseem Khan didn't, it put the Indians in front. Even though Manpreet Singh missed the third attempt, Sreejesh again rose to the occasion against Bhutta. All it needed now was Dharamvir to find the target, and he put the finishing touches on India's campaign.

"It was a very proud moment for me as the captain," Sardar looks back. "It was particularly significant as there were a few youngsters in the team playing their first Asian Games and they had a taste of victory," he adds.

Ask about the celebration after the final and he replies wryly: "You know these foreign coaches. They are very professional and don't allow you to let your hair down too much. We were given a bit of free time, had a team get-together before we had to pack our bags and prepare for the return home."

Alchemy

Indian hockey teams over the past few decades have seldom pulled in the same direction, and it has often pulled them down. The 2014 Asian Games squad was a team in every sense. What was the secret? "All the players bonded very well," Sardar reflects. "At the Games village, 8-10 players shared a large room. There was discipline and strict rules about mobile usage. Nobody used to stay awake late as a good sleep was crucial. Recovery and proper diet were looked into."

"Also, whenever we went out, even to a restaurant, the whole squad went together. When the other teams saw us moving together even off the ground, it exuded a different kind of feeling," Sardar feels. And to think that the Aussie architect of India's golden hour was gone a little over a month later.

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