TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2020, NEW DELHI, LATE CITY, 12 PAGES

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DAY 12: TELANGANA SAYS NO WEAPON OTHER THAN LOCKDOWN AGAINST CORONAVIRUS

States in no hurry to ease lockdown

On their table after April 14: Permits, sealing hotspots, curbs

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI. APRIL 6

AT LEAST seven states, which together have reported 1,367 coronavirus cases — almost one-third of the 4,281 cases across the country so far — indicated Monday that they would continue to have some restrictions in place even after the 21-day national lockdown ends on April 14.

While Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao said he was in favour of extending the lockdown in his state, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, UP, Assam, Chhattisgarh and Iharkhand indicated that they would not fully lift the restrictions after next Tuesday.

Assam, which has reported 26 cases, is planning a registration system to regulate those who wish to enter the state after the lockdown.

Maharashtra, which has recorded the maximum number of cases (748) so far, is likely to extend the lockdown in the Mumbai and Pune regions, as well in other hotspots. UP officials said that following the rise in number of cases in the state linked to the Tablighi Jamaat gathering in Delhi (159 out of 305), "there is now uncertainty over lifting of the lockdown".

Rajasthan (274) is working on a "staggered" exit strategy with curbs in "high risk zones", while

BUSINESS AS USUAL By UNNY



Chhattisgarh (10) Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi against lifting interstate travel over worries the outbreak will spread.

Only Madhya Pradesh (165) struck a different note, as Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that wheat procurement will begin from April 15.

Speaking to reporters in Hyderabad, Telangana Chief Minister Rao said: "We do not have any other weapon than the lockdown to control the spread of the virus. I appeal to the Prime Minister to extend the lockdown, I wholeheartedly support it. Our economy may recover after six months or one year but if lives are lost, they cannot be brought back."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

PM says long battle, asks ministers to ready plans

LIZ MATHEW NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Monday asked his council of ministers to prepare a "business continuity plan" for their ministries, with a list of 10 priorities for the period after the lockdown is lifted.

Modi also asked them for suggestions to make the pandemic an opportunity to boost India's domestic market, while reducing the dependence on other countries.

The council of ministers discussed ways to help farmers in the harvesting season, which is in crisis due to the lack of labourers.

The PM suggested harnessing technology and encouraging the exploration of innovative solutions such as the use of truck aggregators to connect farmers with mandis, on the lines of appbased cab services.

During an interaction with chief ministers last week, Modi had suggested that states should formulate a "common exit CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

istry's latest update on Monday,

the total number of COVID-19

cases stood at 4,281 (319 cured,

111 deaths) compared with

were tested till Monday 9 pm,

the ICMR said. Dr R R

Gangakhedkar, Director of

Epidemiology, ICMR, said the

Council was capable of conduct-

ing 25,000 COVID tests per day

"if we start working double

shift". About five lakh testing kits

have been ordered.

A total of 1,01,068 samples

3,577 the previous day.



A train coach converted into a coronavirus isolation ward being disinfected at Tikiapara railway car shed, Howrah. Partha Paul

cases from 31 districts that get most migrants

NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

est number of migrants.

Express shows that of the total 4,281 positive cases across 284 districts reported till Monday, 1,486, or 34.71 per cent, come from these districts, spread across the country.

The data is interesting given the number of migrant labourers who left for their homes immediately after the 21-day nationwide lockdown was announced on March 24 by

Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The 31 districts that attract the most migrants in the country, as per the Economic Survey 2016-17, are all the 11 districts of Delhi; Gautam Buddh Nagar in Uttar Pradesh; Gurgaon in Haryana; Mumbai, Mumbai Suburban,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

KRISHN KAUSHIK

ONE-THIRD of the total COVID-19 cases in the country as of Monday morning are from 31 districts which receive the high-

An analysis by The Indian

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

76% of infected are male, 63% of dead over 60 years old: Govt tive cases till Monday afternoon. **ABANTIKA GHOSH** According to the health min-

NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

OF THE total 109 COVID-19 related deaths in India till Monday afternoon, 63 per cent were of people over 60 years. Further, 86 per cent of those who died had co-morbidities (additional medical conditions), such as diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, etc.

An analysis of 4,067 COVID-19 cases by the health ministry has revealed that more men than women contracted the disease, and died too. Among the COVID-19 positive cases re-



cent of the 4,067 COVID-19 posi-

ported, 76 per cent are men; of the dead, 73 per cent were men.

While amongst the dead, senior citizens accounted for 63 per cent, they comprise just 19 per

Army: Among 10 killed in hand-to-hand combat in J&K, 5 commandos, 5 militants

ADIL AKHZER SRINAGAR, APRIL 6

THE ARMY Monday said five personnel of the Para (Special Forces) were killed in "hand-tohand" combat with militants near the Line of Control (LoC) in Kupwara district.

A day earlier, the Army had said five militants and three sol-

diers were killed in a gunbattle. This was the first major operation near the LoC in Kashmir this year.

Confirming the death of five of the elite para commandos, Srinagar-based defence spokesperson Colonel Rajesh Kalia said: "Four soldiers under the command of a Junior Commissioned Officer from one of the most professional Para SF units were air-dropped near the

LoC after information on the infiltrators was received. An intense hand to-hand battle ensued and all five terrorists were

eliminated." The operation began on April 1 when Army personnel deployed on the LoC intercepted a group of militants in Jamgund forest in Kupwara and a brief exchange of fire took place.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

INSIDE



HOSPITALISED MOST CASES IN STATES HIGH ON HEALTH INDEX

HALF OF BHOPAL'S CASES OF HEALTH **OFFICIALS**

PAGES 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10

Jharkhand double ration promise mostly on paper, village struggles to stay afloat



ABHISHEK ANGAD RANCHI, APRIL 6

LIFE HAS never been easy, but April threatens to be especially dire for the seven-member Lohra family in Sukruhuttu panchayat in Kanke block of Ranchi district.

While Kaleshwar Lohra, 55, a daily-wage labourer, has been



Manoj Lohra, 36, waits for disability pension. Abhishek Angad

bedridden for the last three months with an "infection" in both his legs, his daughter Sandhya, who worked as a household help in Ranchi city, 10

km away, is now home and without work. The family is entitled to 35 kg

of rice at Re 1 per kg per month under the Antyodaya Anna

Yojana. In the wake of the COVID-19 containment lockdown, the Jharkhand government had announced "double ration" for April. That would have meant 70 kg rice for the Lohras. "But the ration dealer always takes a cut. This time, he gave 60 kg and said it's for both

April and May," said Sandhya. Her kitchen has an LPG cylinder, which the family got under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojna, but it's empty and Sandhya says now there's no money for a refill. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement of Rs 500 to every woman Jan Dhan account holder has not enthused Sandhya either. "The bank is far, how will we go to check? CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

One-third of Staff test positive, Wockhardt shut, top hospitals face sealing threat

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, DELHI, KOLKATA, APRIL 6

IASLOK HOSPITAL became the second top private hospital in Mumbai to be sealed Monday after 10 more of its staff members, including doctors and nurses, tested positive for coronavirus. Samples of over 1,000 staffers have been sent for testing. Earlier



All patients of Wockhardt, Mumbai, moved out. Express

in the day, Wockhardt Hospital was shut by Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation after the number of positive cases among its staff members rose to 54 and all its patients were moved out.

In Delhi, two hospitals have been partially shut due to COVID-19 cases among staff members. Kolkata also saw partial shut-down of a government hospital.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

30% cut in salaries of MPs, PM; 2-yr pause in **MPLADS**

KRISHN KAUSHIK NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

TWO WEEKS into the 21-day lockdown, as the country prepares for the economic fallout the Union Cabinet on Monday cleared a 30 per cent salary cut for all Members of Parliament (MPs), including the Prime Minister and Union Ministers.

In addition, the government also decided to suspend all (Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme) funds under which each elected MP gets Rs 5 crore annually for development work in his/her constituency — for two financial years starting April 1. The money from the MPLADS funds nearly Rs 8,000 crore — will go to the Consolidated Fund of India, which, the government said, will be used in the battle against COVID-19.

The government said the President, Vice-President, and state governors have also decided to take a 30 per cent salary cut for a year. According to the ordinance to

amend the Salary, Allowances **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**





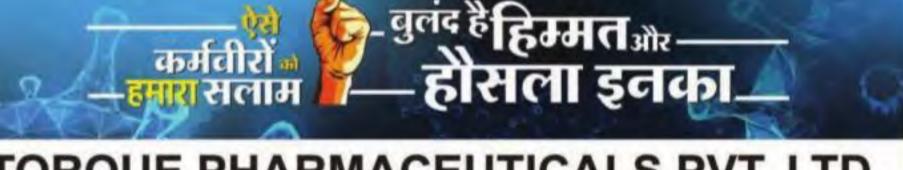


EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

कोरोना जैसी वैश्विक महामारी से लोग जब डरे हुए हैं तब डॉक्टर दिनया भर में सेवा में लगे हुए हैं। कई देशों में डॉक्टर लोगों का इलाज करते करते अपनी जान भी गर्वा चुके हैं। पूरी द्विया इस वक्त कोरोना के कहर से गृहा रही है। अपनी जान पर खेलकर मरीजों का इलाज कर रहे इन डॉक्टर्स को सलाम! घरों में कैद हैं लोग, लेकिन डॉक्टर्स कर रहे अपना काम। इनकी निष्ठा, प्रतिबद्धता, दया भावना के आगे हम सभी नतमरतक हैं। अपनी जान जोखिम में डालकर दिन रात कोरोना जैसी महामारी से लड़ने वाले सभी डाक्टरों, नर्सों, वार्ड कर्मियों, पेरामेडिकल कर्मियों एवं पैथोलोजिस्ट का ज़्ज़्ज़ टीम हृदय से धन्यवाद करते हैं।

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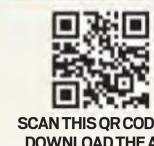






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As the coronavirus pandemic explodes in India with the Tablighi Jamaat as its startled centre, those associated with it say there is more to the body than the "oversight", "irresponsible act", and "pure bad luck" of falling victim to, and spreading, COVID-19

'NIZAMUDDIN INCIDENT UNFORTUNATE, BUT DON'T MAKE IT A WITCH-HUNT'

VIDEO OF THE DAY



PM MODI CALLS FOR 'LIGHTS-OFF' AT 9 PM

How India responded to the Prime Minister's call on Sunday

EXPRESS EXPLAINED



delves into the cases across hotspots

EXPRESS

Rapid antibody tests and why states are considering them?

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

Today, we detail what serological tests are, why they are not used to diagnose COVID-19, and why ICMR has put out an advisory for states to consider using them

FROM PAGE ONE

Long battle: PM

♦ The Indian EXPRESS

Virat Kohli reclaims top position

in ICC Test Batting Rankings

strategy" to ensure the staggered re-emergence of the population once the lockdown ends. During Monday's meeting, the PM signalled that the central government is working on such a

strategy.

In the morning, in an address to BJP workers on the party's foundation day, Modi said the battle against the novel coronavirus would be long, but it must be

"It's a long battle," Modi said. "Do not get tired or get defeated. This is a war we have to win. Our mission is one and our pledge is one, and that is we will have victory in this war," Modi told BJP

He echoed the same in his meeting with the ministers, too and underlined the importance of being motivated, determined, and vigilant in the battle against COVID-19, and to continuously monitor welfare programmes so that their benefits reach the poor in a seamless manner.

"The crisis in the farming sector during this harvesting season was a big concern raised by the Prime Minister. He wanted all the ministers to come up with suggestions that can be implemented in their respective areas. He also talked about ways to resume manufacturing in the hubs with the remaining labourers so that economic activities could be revived," a source familiar with the

discussions at the meeting said. The source said the Prime Minister had asked each ministry to prepare a business continuity plan for its activities.

According to another source, Modi had said that "there could be a plan to open up the districts which are not identified as hotspots". The PM, this source said, "also wanted resumption of activities in the manufacturing sector, especially those for export".

"The PM said this crisis can be turned into an opportunity for us to find new areas of export and new countries," the source said.

An official note on the meeting said: "Talking about the impact of COVID-19 on the economy, Prime Minister said that the government must work on war footing to mitigate the impact, adding that the ministries should prepare a business continuity plan. He noted that a graded plan to slowly open departments where hotspots are not existing should be made, adding that the crisis offers an opportunity to become self dependent in the medical sector.'

Modi asked all ministers who have been given charge of states in the battle against the coronavirus, to take feedback from district authorities on both the farming and manufacturing sectors.

The ministers were asked to communicate exhaustively with the state and district administrations, especially in the districts that have been identified as hotspots, and to be aware of the situation on the ground with regard to emerging problems.

They were also asked to ensure that PDS centres are not crowded, and to take action on complaints of blackmarketing and rise in the prices of essential commodities.

The informal group of union ministers, which has been brainstorming on issues arising out of the nationwide lockdown, too has been discussing options post the lockdown period that ends on April 14. The committee met on Friday, and is expected to meet

again this week. At Monday's meeting, the PM stressed that the lockdown measures and social distancing norms

needed to go hand in hand. "Prime Minister said that it is essential to strategise for the emergent conditions once lockdown ends... While mentioning that due to the emergent challenges the country need to lessen its dependence on other nation,

support ho jaata (If I had got my pension, it would have helped),"

father.

says the 36-year-old who is un-

employed and dependent on his

ilies in both villages of Sukruhuttu

Around 200 of the 1,800 fam-

HOW BADLY IS YOUR DISTRICT HIT?

The Indian Express

sent to central institutions like AI-IMS, Safdarjung and RML hospitals, RIMS, NEIGRIHMS, BHU and AMU," the health ministry said.

Northern Railways has also developed a PPE coverall. This is in addition to the PPE coveralls and N95 masks developed by DRDO earlier. Efforts are on to start mass production of these products.

Salary cuts

and Pension of Members of Parliament Act, 1954, cleared by the Cabinet on Monday, the 30 per cent cut for all MPs will be effective from April 1.

Briefing the media after the Cabinet meeting, Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar said the decision has been taken keeping in mind the "social responsibility" of the MPs. "It is not about savings but the intention behind it is more important," he said.

Responding to a question, he said central government employees "have already given one day's salary on their own", but did not elaborate on whether they would face a pay cut too.

Currently, the Lok Sabha has 542 members while the Rajya Sabha has a strength of 245 members, including 12 nominated While 55 RS members were due to retire in April, 37 have already been elected unopposed; elections for the remaining 18 seats have been deferred due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

According to the last pay hike announced in 2018, each MP draws a monthly salary of Rs 1 lakh, Rs 70,000 as constituency allowance, and Rs 60,000 for running office besides other perks.

On March 30, Telangana had

announced salary cuts at all lev-On the MPLADS funds.

Javadekar said many MPs had already donated from their fund for the COVID-19 fight. According to information

shared by the Rajya Sabha Secretariat last week, 74 Rajya Sabha members had contributed a total of Rs 100 crore, and 265 Lok Sabha members had given a total of Rs 265 crore.

Javadekar said the government had announced various other measures "worth lakhs of crores of rupees", including the PM Garib Kalyan scheme.

"The government has taken several major steps. And when such steps are being taken, it should start from itself. That is the intention behind this," he said adding that the "will of the Members of Parliament" is reflected in the Cabinet's decision.

Asked if there were any discussions on extending the lockdown beyond April 14, Javadekar said: "We are monitoring the world situation every minute, and therefore decisions are taken ultimately in the nation's and people's interest. That decision will be declared when it is the right time... Empowered committees have been created, the situation is changing every day and is be-

ing monitored continuously". Meanwhile, the Congress welcomed the decision on a salary cut, but was divided on the move to suspend the MPLADS fund. While some party MPs like Jairam Ramesh and Abhishek Singhvi welcomed the MPLADS decision, many others slammed the move. Lok Sabha MP Manish Tewari said the decision to suspend the MPLADS fund was "ill thought out" and a "knee-jerk reaction".

The CPI(M), too, criticised the move, with party general secretary Sitaram Yechury saying the government was "taking away expenditure which would have attended to unique requirements of an area". Saying that "this centralisation goes against federalism", he added: "If there's no money with the government. why doesn't it abandon the Central Vista project in Delhi?"

he asked all departments to maindo not have ration cards since the tain an objective index on how their work will promote Make In

The meeting was also attended by the principal secretary, cabinet secretary, and other senior officials, who gave detailed presentations on the "steps being taken to meet the emerging challenges", the official release said.

India," the official note said.

Migrants

Thane and Pune in Maharashtra; Chennai, Erode, Kancheepuram, Coimbatore and Tiruvallur in Tamil Nadu; Indore and Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh; three districts of Bengaluru in Karnataka; Hyderabad Rural and Urban in Telangana; Surat in Gujarat; and Chandigarh.

These cities and districts were mentioned by the Economic Survey as those with "high net inmigration". The survey report mentioned a few other places, like Valsad in Gujarat, Sonitpur in Assam and Puducherry, which have a large migrant population, but these don't have any positive cases till now.

As of Monday morning, Delhi had the highest number of positive cases for any city, at 523. It was followed by Mumbai, including its suburbs, with more than 315 cases.

The 2016- 17 Economic Survey put Delhi at the top for migrants from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Jammu and Kashmir. Gautam Buddh Nagar and Gurgaon, located around Delhi, have recorded more than 50 and

Other cities that attract migrants include Hyderabad, Chennai and Bengaluru, with more than 125, 80 and 55 cases respectively.

With the 21-day lockdown nearing end, any government strategy will have to keep an eye on these migration centres. The PM told chief ministers last week that states must look at a common and staggered exit plan.

Iharkhand

Anyway, some people in the village checked. the money has not come," she said.

On paper, there are enough social security schemes and entitlements to see the poor through a 21-day lockdown such as this from free grains to disability and old-age pensions to LPG cylinders and anganwadi supplies. But on the ground, these schemes are hobbled by poor implementation, planning or just plain apathy.

Arpana Bara, a mother of three, says she has been running around to get her ration. After the Kanke block office suspended the licence of her ration dealer over "irregularities", Bada recently got to know that the new dealer is around 5 km away. "How can I go there now?" she asks.

Most of the residents of Sukruhuttu North and South, two villages that make up the Sukruhuttu panchayat in Kanke block, are daily-wage labourers. While ration cards and other schemes were never streamlined. at least the men brought back meagre earnings and that saw them through. But now, with most of them home or without work, families in these parts stare at an uncertain future.

Manoj Lohra's right leg had to amputated after he met with an accident in 2017. Sifting through his certificates at his one-room kuccha house, he says he has applied for the state government's Singh. Rs 1,000 a month disability pension, but hasn't heard from the block authorities yet. "I am tired. I haven't been able to get my ration card made. Pension milta to thoda

The officer said "tough

district's quotas are full. Though the Jharkhand government had announced 10 kg rice to people whose applications for ration card are still pending, in Sukruhuttu, however, not many have heard of

the announcement. Not even panchayat samiti member Sushma Devi. "I will discuss this issue with the officers," she said.

On the irregularities in the

Public Distribution System, Chief Minister Hemant Soren told The Indian Express, "There is a taskforce already in place. A few dealers have been suspended too. We cannot straightaway cancel the licences as it will create a big problem in appointing new ones during the crisis. At present, 6-7 lakh are being fed through various kitchens on a daily basis and we will increase the number to 12

BDO Kanke Gyan Jaiswal, too, said that the government has been issuing "ration passes" for those who do not have ration cards. "Dal-bhaat kendras have also been started and we will be relaying the information to as many villages as we can. Rations to anganwadi centres will also be

Development economist John Dreze, however, said a onetime 10-kg foodgrain scheme for those without ration cards achieves little. "Excluded households should be integrated into the PDS, with regular monthly rations, at least for the duration of the crisis."

One of the few schemes that seemed to be working was the mid-day meals for schools, with an equivalent amount of dry ration being supplied directly to

Vikram Nayak, a house painter, says he has got his ration for April but with eight mouths to feed, he doesn't know how long that will last. Painting his own house because he has "nothing else to do", Nayak says he wanted to build a toilet but will have to put that off for now.

While Jharkhand had announced itself Open Defecation Free in early 2019, on the ground, things are different. "We defecate in the fields. Some have put in their own to build toilets, some through Swachh Bharat Mission, but most people in the village don't have toilets," said Nayak.

He has heard the government's messages on the need for personal hygiene and social distancing to "defeat" coronavirus. "Haan, suna hai. Mahamari hain (Yes, I have heard of it. It's an epidemic)," he said.

Kashmir

A search operation was launched in the snow-covered forests and additional forces were moved to the area. The para commandos were air-dropped.

Col. Kalia said the Army launched "a daring operation at the Line of Control and engaged Pak-supported infiltrators in a close quarter battle in heavy snow, neutralising the entire infiltrating batch of five".

"In this battle, however, Army lost five of its best soldiers, three on the site and two more succumbed while they were airlifted to a nearby military hospital," he said.

The Army said that the Special Forces squad led by Subedar Sanjeev Kumar included Havildar Davendra Singh, Paratrooper Bal Krishan, Paratrooper Amit Kumar and Paratrooper Chhatrapal

A senior officer privy to the Keran operation said that Special Forces soldiers, while chasing the militants in the snow, slipped into a nallah where the militants were present. "There was face-to-face battle," the officer said.

weather conditions" in the high altitude area hampered the evacuation of injured soldiers

lem. He said people could be lockdown only after the govthat procurement will not beallowed to return in batches. ernment is satisfied that the gin at urban centres in Indore, In Lucknow, a day after situation is under control — "or

No hurry to ease lockdown

port, which estimated that COVID-19 cases will peak in India by the first week of June. Maharashtra Health

Rao also quoted from a re-

Minister Rajesh Tope said his state "needs to work with great care in Mumbai and Pune as cases are higher in these regions... nobody should assume the lockdown will be relaxed completely from April 15". In Guwahati, Assam Health

Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said: "As and when the lockdown is withdrawn, we have to regulate those wanting to come to Assam. For a temporary period, we may need an ILP-kind of a situation even for permanent residents." The ILP (Inner Line Permit)

is a document that regulates the entry of outsiders in Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram — Manipur was recently added to the list. Sarma described it as an

Jaslok and Wockhardt have

been declared containment

zones and their OPDs shut and

all admissions stopped. Two

other hospitals in Mumbai

were declared containment

Jaslok had tested positive for

coronavirus, with 10 more

added to the list Monday. The

infection is said to have spread

from an asymptomatic patient

admitted for a different illness.

The 12 include five nurses, six

technicians and a cook. The

BMC has shut down its OPD,

though the hospital continues

to treat patients who were ad-

lated at the hospital and were

being treated there, a hospital

official said a COVID-19 patient,

on ventilator support, was

shifted to Kasturba Hospital,

the main government facility

in Mumbai for COVID19, in or-

der to prevent further risk of

infection to other Jaslok

Wockhardt on March 28 after

two nurses tested positive. In

the testing done by the hospi-

tal since, the results of 52 more

came out positive Monday,

sending the entire staff of the

treating a patient admitted on

March 17 for an angioplasty,

who later tested COVID-19 pos-

itive. However, the two, despite

showing symptoms, continued

to work, travel from their hostel

to the hospital in the staff bus,

The two nurses had been

hospital in quarantine.

The BMC had sealed

While all were initially iso-

mitted before April 1.

On April 1, two nurses at

zones earlier.

"entry permit" system and said that if thousands of people return at once, arranging quarantine could become a prob-

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath indicated that the lockdown might be lifted in a phased manner, the state government asked residents to "be ready to wait for some more time".

159 cases related to the Tablighi Jamaat have come. Following this rise, the load of cases in the state has increased," said Additional Chief Secretary Awanish Awasthi. Rajasthan, meanwhile, has

set up a committee to formulate a state-specific exit strategy, based on sealing high-risk zones. "It could be zones where there is already a flare-up or a probability of a flare-up later," a senior official said.

INFECTED IN THE LINE OF DUTY

doctors, nurses, paramedics

DELHI: 34

over 15

doctor 1

KERALA: 2

health staff 1

doctors 11, nurses 20,

MADHYA PRADESH: 7

doctors 4, paramedics 3

MAHARASHTRA: 60

doctors 10, nurses 40,

KARNATAKA: 1

nurse 1, paramedics/

paramedics/hospital staff

paramedics/other

hospital staff 3

Express, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren said the state (4 cases) would lift the else, we will keep it slow". "Around 6 lakh labourers

Speaking to *The Indian*

lockdown is lifted... Fortunately, rural areas constitute more than 80 per cent of "In the past three-four days, Iharkhand and those are already isolated, and the population is not dense. The only workable solution with us right now is to make people aware of COVID-19. And we have to be ready with all medical facilities," he said

will come to the state once the

In Madhya Pradesh, which has recorded 256 cases and 14 deaths, Chief Minister Chouhan said during a video conference to review wheat procurement plans: "There is a possibility that the lockdown

Chouhan said that "more procurement centres should be opened so that the process ends by May 31" but added

will be lifted on April 14."

Bhopal and Ujjain districts to avoid crowding. In Chhattisgarh, Chief Minister Baghel requested the Prime Minister to take a decision... "after extensive deliberation" before allowing inter-

state travel after April 14.

Pointing out that eight of the 10 positive cases in the state have been discharged, Baghel wrote: "If after April 14th, trains, air traffic and inter-state road transport gets started in the country, then there are possibilities that COVID-19 infected people can arrive from other states in the state of Chhattisgarh. The state may face new difficulties." (Compiled from ENS reports)

Two hospitals in Mumbai shut been sealed on March 31 after

More than 100 healthcare workers are now infected with coronavirus in India, including

> **UTTAR PRADESH: 1** doctor 1 **CHANDIGARH: 3** doctors 2, nurse 1 **PANCHKULA (HARYANA): 10**

nurse 1, paramedics/ hospital staff 9 **J&K: 1**; doctor 1 **GUJARAT: 1;** paramedic 1

TELANGANA: 1 doctor 1 TAMIL NADU: 1 doctor 1

and ate with others in the canteen. It was only three days after another patient tested positive on March 25 that the two

nurses were tested. All those who have tested positive have been shifted to other hospitals. The patients in the 350-bed hospital were tested for COVID-19 before being sent to other hospitals or discharged, depending on their

condition. With the staff angry over the "late reaction" by the hospital, Wockhardt said in a statement Monday, "It is the hard truth that healthcare professionals all over the world on the front line are at the highest risk of contacting the COVID-

Another hospital in Mumbai, Brahma Sabha Hospital, was declared a containment zone on Monday after a 95-year-old man died there and tested COVID-19 positive. The hospital has been asked to test all its staffers and remaining patients. In Chembur, Sai Hospital had

a patient tested positive. The two hospitals hit in

Delhi are the state government's Delhi State Cancer Institute (DSCI) and the semigovernment Sir Ganga Ram Hospital. A resident doctor in the Department of Preventive Oncology at the DSCI tested positive earlier and 10 more on Monday, taking the number of such healthcare workers at the hospital to 19, including doctors and nurses. Its OPD has been shut and its patients are being shifted to other hospitals.

At Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, OPD services have been shut and only half of the 5,500 staff are working after 108 staffers including 20 doctors and 72 nurses tested COVID-19 posi-

"All confirmed cases have been sent to the Rajiv Gandhi Super Specialty Hospital for treatment. The campus has been sanitised and we are preparing a list of people who might have come in contact with the healthcare workers (who tested positive)," Dr B L Sherwal. Medical Superintendent, DSCI, said.

In Kolkata. 55 healthcare workers, including 39 junior doctors, at the governmentrun NRS Medical College and Hospital in Sealdah were quarantined Sunday after a patient who died there tested COVID-19 positive. The hospital has shut down the male general medicine ward and is disinfecting the CCU unit. All other departments are functioning.

19 infection whilst treating patients... We are following the containment protocol as laid out by the BMC. We have tested all those within the hospital and are treating the positive patients, quarantining the primary contacts of the infected and cleaning the facility to contain the contagion with full support of the BMC."

> With several states reporting shortage in Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) supplies, the health ministry said along with domestic supplies of 20,000 coveralls, a total of 1.90 lakh coveralls will be distributed to hospitals. This will be in addition to the 3,87,473 PPEs currently available. India also received 1.70 lakh PPE coveralls from China. The government estimates it may need 15 million PPEs by June.

About two lakh domesticallyproduced N95 masks are being sent to hospitals. Over 20 lakh N95 masks have already been supplied by the Centre. About 16 lakh N95 masks are available in the country, and a fresh supply of 2 lakh masks is on the anvil. India will need 27 million N95 masks by June, according to estimates.

states with higher number of cases such as Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Delhi, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Rajasthan. Supplies are also being

during the operation.

Defence sources said that the slain Army personnel belonged to 4 Para — a unit that was also involved in the 2016 surgical strikes across the LoC.

While the Army has not said anything about the identification of the militants killed in the firefight, three families from South Kashmir have approached Kupwara authorities, claiming that their kin are among the slain militants.

Kupwara Superintendent of Police Shriram Ambarker told The Indian Express that the mission was over, but search operations were still on in the area.

Govt data Replying to a question about

the stage of the outbreak in India, Lav Agarwal, Joint Secretary, Health Ministry, said India was currently between stages two and three – local transmission and community transmission. "For limited cases, we are doing cluster

containment; localised community transmission means there are more cases in those areas, and we are focusing on them."

The analysis of 4,067 cases also shows that 30 per cent of those dead were in the 40-60 years age bracket, and just 7 per cent under 40 years, suggesting a strong correlation between age and mortality risk. This has also been the global experience.

In a statement, the health ministry: "As of now, 86% death cases have exhibited comorbidity related to diabetes, chronic kidney issues, hypertension and heart related problems. Although 19% confirmed cases have been reported among the elderly, since 63% deaths have been observed among them, elderly people form a high risk population. Further, though 37% deaths are reported from people below 60 years, approximately, 86% of deaths amongst people with co-morbidities indicate that

young people with co-morbidi-

ties are also at high risk of COVID-

So far. 1.445 cases (about 35%) have been linked to the Tablighi Jamaat. Also, 25,500 people associated with the organisation have been placed under quarantine.

Meanwhile, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla asked all states to keep the supply of medical oxygen smooth and hasslefree. Medical oxygen has been included in the national list of essential medicines. Government sources said the

ministry of pharmaceuticals was assessing the availability of hydroxychloroquine(HCQ)domestically, before it could consider lifting a ban on its export. US President Donald Trump had requested India to supply HCQ. At present, there is no plan to use HCQ as a preventive medicine for the entire population. It is meant for use among health workers and those at home caring for a COVID-19 positive patient.

"Supplies are being sent to

THE () UTBREAK THE CITY

'CENTRE HAS PROVIDED 27,000 KITS AS WELL'

1.2 lakh PPE kits ordered for Delhi: CM

If we look at projections for number of cases per day, we are still at the first stage — when we are getting less than 100 cases a day: Panel chief

MALLICA JOSHI & SOURAV ROY BARMAN NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

THE DELHI government has placed an order for 1.2 lakh personal protective equipment (PPE) kits over the past few weeks. Of these, close to 3,000 are delivered each day, said officials in the Delhi government. On Monday, the Centre also provided 27,000 kits to the

The availability of PPE kits has been a worry for healthcare workers and state governments, especially as 34 doctors, nurses and other hospital staff have so far tested positive for COVID-19 in the capital.

"The Centre has written to us saying that Delhi has been allotted 27,000 kits. The kits will be delivered by tomorrow or the day after. We thank the Union government for this. It will be an important step towards the safety of our doctors," said Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

On April 4, he had told reporters that the Delhi government wrote to the Centre on April 3 seeking PPE kits to meet the shortfall.

Last month, Kejriwal had held a meeting with heads of all Delhi government hospitals and asked them to place orders for PPE kits as well as ventilators. The paperwork for funding would be expedited, he had

CORONA

At AIIMS

test positive

New Delhi: At AIIMS Jhajjar,

161 suspected COVID-19

patients are presently ad-

mitted and 125 of them

have tested positive so far.

The institute has dis-

charged 39 patients and

reports of seven suspected

patients are still awaited.

The institute is functioning

as a dedicated COVID-19

hospital with a 300-bed

isolation ward. Union

Health Minister Dr Harsh

Vardhan also visited the

campus Sunday to take

stock of its preparedness to

Milkman held

for carrying

liquor bottles

New Delhi: A milkman

who was allegedly carry-

ing liquor bottles con-

cealed within milk con-

tainers was arrested at a

police picket near South

Avenue Road Monday.

15 from Nuh,

Gurgaon: Fifteen people nine in Palwal and six in Nuh— who attended the Tablighi Jamaat gathering

at Delhi's Nizamuddin last

month tested positive for

New Delhi: After the Delhi

government shared over

25,000 phone numbers of

COVID-19 Monday.

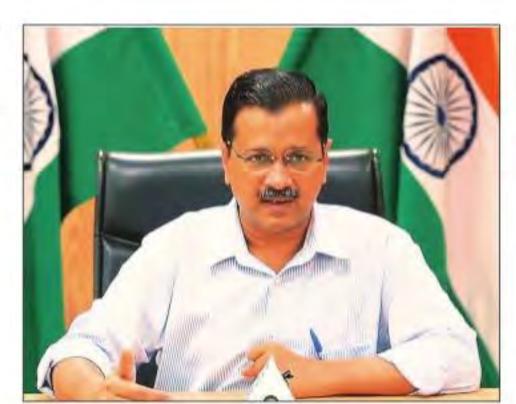
247 FIRs

registered

Palwal test

positive

combat the virus.



CM Arvind Kejriwal at the press briefing on Monday. He thanked the Centre for providing PPE kits. Express

He had also appealed to the Centre for help in procuring more kits, which include full body suits, visors, goggles, masks, gloves and shoe covers.

Dr S K Sarin, who heads the Delhi government's expert committee on COVID-19, told *The Indian Express*: "If we look at the projections for the number of cases per day that had been made, we are still at the first stage — when we are getting less than 100 cases a day. As of now, we are admitting all COVID-19 patients but if you look at the data, not all will need hospitalisation. Eighty percent can self-isolate and will not require hospitalisation. But let us say that there are 100 patients

admitted, around 300 PPE kits per day will be needed for their care and another 200 for allied activities such as testing, disposal of waste and disposal of bodies, etc."

He also said that Delhi has enough ventilators for the case load at the moment.

"Only 2.3% of those admitted require ventilator support, data has shown. Another 5% require care in ICU. In Delhi, there are 306 ventilators in government hospitals and 800 in private hospitals. Even if the load increases suddenly, there is capacity. More capacity is being built," said Dr Sarin.

As of Monday, eight people are on ventilator support.

CORONA COUNT **DELHI-NCR** 645 7 DEATHS CASES 51 RECOVERED

Meanwhile, East Delhi MP Gautam Gambhir tweeted that he was willing to contribute Rs 1 crore to the Delhi government from his MPLAD fund to procure kits.

"CM Arvind Kejriwal and his deputy say funds are needed. Though their massive egos didn't allow them to take Rs 50 lakh from my LAD fund earlier, I pledge Rs 50 lakh more so that innocents don't suffer," Gambhir tweeted.

Kejriwal responded: "Gautam ji, thank you for your offer. The problem is not of money but availability of PPE kits. We would be grateful if you could help us get them from somewhere immediately, Delhi government will buy them. Thank you."

Gambhir later tweeted that Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia had earlier claimed there was a shortage of funds. Sisodia had written to the Centre two days ago, saying it was "unfortunate" that the Delhi government had not been allocated money from the Centre for combating the dis-

Gambhir also said he had managed to procure 1,000 kits.

Citing South Korea model, Delhi govt to scale up testing

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI. APRIL 6

CITING THE example of South Korea, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Monday said his government was going to considerably scale up testing to contain the spread of COVID-19, which has claimed seven lives in the national capital so far.

Till Monday afternoon, the city recorded 525 cases, with 22 new cases surfacing over the last 24 hours. Out of the total cases, 330 are linked to the Tablighi event at Nizamuddin, the CM said.

"Over the last 24 hours, 20 cases have come up, of which 10 have a Markaz link. Out of the total, 61 are patients with foreign travel history while seven have died. As many as 25 patients are in Intensive Care Units and eight on ventilation. The rest are stable," he said.

The CM went on to refer to South Korea's aggressive testing strategy to limit the spread of coronavirus infections, in making a case for more testing in Delhi. He said that by Friday, around 1 lakh new testing kits will arrive. "You may have noticed a surge in the number of cases in Delhi. It is partly due to the fact that many people evac-

uated from the Markaz tested positive, and because we have increased the number of tests. We want to ensure that whoever wants to get a test done can do so. It will help us identify patients and treat them; their contacts can be traced and isolated. The more we test, the more successful we will be in containing the spread of the virus. South Korea, considered the most successful, had also adapted this technique. So we will also get more and more tests done in Delhi," said Kejriwal.

Till March 25, 100-125 daily tests were conducted in the city. This rose to 500 by April 1. Presently, the number of daily tests have reached nearly 1,000, said the CM.

On arrangements of food for those struggling to make ends meet, Kejriwal said disbursal of ration of 5 kg each to those without ration cards will start on Tuesday. "We are getting full cooperation from the Centre in this regard. As of now, we have ration for 10 lakh people. If needed, we will increase allotment. Around 421 schools have been identified for this purpose," he said.

Separately, at hunger relief centres, around 6.9 lakh people had lunch and 6.94 lakh had dinner on Sunday, the CM said.

Air quality

Sunday night

THE CAPITAL'S air quality

plunged Sunday evening, after

several residents went a step

ahead in heeding Prime Minister

Narendra Modi's call to light

diyas by setting off firecrackers.

tions of the Delhi Pollution

Control Committee showed con-

centration of PM 2.5 and PM 10

spiked suddenly after 9pm, when

firecrackers were set off. A Delhi

environment department official

said, "The spike was due to fire-

crackers, as currently there is no

bustion. Its concentration at

Patpargani was 53 µg/m3 at 9pm,

but more than doubled an hour

later to $125 \mu g/m3 - higher than$

the acceptable levels of 60

μg/m3. At Dwarka, PM2.5 levels

were also 53 µg/m3 at 9pm and

increased to $127 \,\mu\text{g/m}3$ at $10 \,\text{pm}$.

ground also releases dust, which

is a source of PM10. Its concentra-

tion at Mandir Marg rose to 172

µg/m3 at 12 am from 96 µg/m3 at

9 pm, much higher than accept-

ceived no complaints regarding

bursting of crackers Sunday, an

officer said: "We will take action

if someone files a complaint."

Delhi Police, however, re-

able standard of 100 µg/m3.

Setting off firecrackers on the

PM2.5 is produced from com-

other source of emission."

Data from six monitoring sta-

dips after

fireworks

SHIVAM PATEL

NEW DELHI, APRIL 6



An electrician at work in the Civil Lines area during the lockdown. Abhinav Saha

For thousands in power sector, lighter load but work as usual

SOURAV ROY BARMAN NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

A FIVE-minute daily briefing on "social distancing" at work, wearing special vests and helmets even while cycling to office, and maintaining a safe distance from households with home quarantine posters — COVID-19 has caused an updation of the dos and don'ts rulebook of the

city's electricity personnel. The city's largest power distribution company, BSES, which caters to over 43 lakh consumers, said it is following all government guidelines to ensure safety of its employees, most of whom cannot afford to let their guard down.

Tata Power, which supplies

power to around 18 lakh households in North and Northwest Delhi, has also taken a number of measures, ranging from arranging places to stay for its maintenance staff, to developing a mechanism for its call centre operators to work from

Among those having to show up to work is Manmeet Singh, zonal manager of Tata Power's Timarpur zone, tasked with ensuring uninterrupted power supply to around 32,000 households.

"My zone has VIPs such as the Chief Minister and the Lt-Governor as well as several jhuggi jhopris. So far, we have managed well with a small batch of emergency staff," he said.

The manager of Alipur zone Mayur Paul, in-charge of at least 45,000 households, said 20 linemen and 20 helpers are among those working under him to keep the show running.

"The men are briefed every morning. Our vehicles are sanitised on a daily basis. We have also made temporary lodging arrangements for workers to stay back," said Paul.

Singh pointed out that while the company's linemen and related staff are anyway expected to wear gloves while performing maintenance duty, the virus has necessitated more precautions at work.

"Staff have been advised not to step into houses with quarantine posters without the approval of higher ups. Also, since most linemen cycle to work, they have been asked to come wearing the vests and helmets they usually put on at work," he said.

BSES has, for the time being, put on hold all registration requests of new connections, while existing appointments are

POWER

FOR THEM, LOCKDOWN MEANS **COMING TO WORK**

also being postponed until further notice. The company has also discontinued all physical distribution of bills and meter readings till further notice.

A BSES spokesperson said the company has started a workfrom-home policy for a section of its employees and a roster system for others, so that there is no disruption in power supply.

"We have also started doing thermal checking at our offices. Our employees have adequate access to sanitisers and masks. All our vehicles and offices are being regularly sanitised," said the spokesperson.

Both BSES and Tata Power have made contingency provisions of boarding and lodging for field-level employees at various places, including the premises of sub-stations.

"Most of our maintenance workers are contractual. We are taking care of them as well. Some workers come from Harvana. Since regular interstate movement can be a problem, we have made arrangements for them to spend the nights in Delhi itself," said TPDDL

CEO Ganesh Srinivasan. The company has divided its 3,500-strong workforce in segments, under which some are working from home and some working in shifts from office and the ground.

"Usually, employees work in three shifts. Now, there are two shifts so that they can be equally distributed over three-four days each every week. On an average, 500-550 workers are working on the ground daily. Since our control systems are completely digitised, most of our staff looking after the commercial side, revenue, power purchase are working from home," said Srinivasan.

ficial, was the fact that power demand has fallen by at least 30-40% due to the closure of commercial establishments and offices. "To that extent, the task has become much easier. Perhaps in April, with the rise in temperature, we will have to tackle more challenges," said Srinivasan.

The saving grace, said top of-

More freshwater, fewer pollutants behind Yamuna's new blue hues

SHIVAM PATEL NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

HIGHER SHARE of freshwater WATCH being released into the Yamuna, and a pause on industrial effluents due to the coronavirus lockdown, has seemingly improved Jhajjar, 125 the quality of the river in the city.

Jal Board officials told The *Indian Express* that throughout March and so far in April, a significant amount of water has been consistently released into the river after the Wazirabad Barrage, as states through which the Yamuna passes saw good rainfall last month. Figures taken by officials from the Wazirabad Barrage showed that on March 17, more than 17,000 cusecs of water was released downstream, which reduced to over 4,000 cusecs by March 27. On April 1, it was 8,000 cusecs. On Monday, it was around 4,000 cusecs.

A senior DJB official said, "There are two major factors behind this. We are releasing more water downstream of Wazirabad, and, after the lockdown was enforced in Delhi, industries have stopped functioning which also stopped flow of harmful chemicals into the river. The major reason is that there is more freshwater being released into the river."

The quantity of water released from the Barrage recently is often unseen during summer, including April, when there is little or no fresh water flowing downstream of Wazirabad due to scarcity.



The Yamuna near the Wazirabad Barrage. Abhinav Saha

Haryana's irrigation and water resources department releases water into the Yamuna from the Hathnikund Barrage which flows down to Delhi. An official from the department said, "This (current) water availability is due to constant rainfall and limited demand for water in view of the lockdown and crop harvesting season."

The Yamuna flows for 54 km in Delhi, between Palla and Badarpur. Water drawn from the river for supply to the city is taken before the Wazirabad Barrage. After this, a 22-km stretch till Okhla – roughly 2% of the river's total length — accounts for a major share of its pollution.

CHALLENGE IN GOVT SCHOOLS AND FOR EWS STUDENTS

months, in the absence of fresh water below Wazirabad, the only flow in the river is from treated and untreated sewage through a number of drains connected to it. Experts have said maintaining a certain flow in the river is essential for its rejuvenation.

Post the lockdown, the load of pollutants in wastewater going to sewage treatment plants (STPs) has also reduced — as per figures from an STP in Okhla, where authorities are using an advanced software called AACE-

LIMS for assessment. The biochemical oxygen demand, a gauge of organic pollution in water, of wastewater en228 mg/l on March 24 to 155 mg/l on April 3. Similarly, the quality of raw Yamuna water being used by the DJB has also seen an improvement, officials said, with concentration of chloride dropping considerably.

A monitoring panel set up by the NGT for rejuvenation of the Yamuna had asked the CPCB and DPCC to manually collect samples from the river and test them, taking help from authorities enforcing the lockdown.

This was done after posts on social media showed a relatively cleaner looking Yamuna near Kalindi Kunj recently. The bodies are expecting to release figures this week.

tering the STP came down from During non-monsoon

Schools go digital but not everyone has smartphone, net data

SUKRITA BARUAH NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

WITH PRIVATE and government schools moving to online mode of learning during the nationwide lockdown, unequal access to digital resources is posing a challenge to both students and teachers in Delhi.

"One of my classmates has a

people under home quarantine with police, 247 A class XII student of a government school in South Delhi FIRs have been registered till April 6 against people has been attending daily classes violating home quarantine organised by her school since guidelines. Meanwhile, the April 1 on the Zoom app. However, she said out of the 37 students in her section, not more than 20 are attending classes.

sister who is in the first year of college. Since the family has only one smartphone — belonging to their father, a tailor — and they have classes at the same time, she is unable to attend. Some others I have spoken to do not have smartphones; others said the daily internet data quota of their siblings' or parents' phone gets over even before the class begins," she said.

While the classes are an initiative by her school, the Delhi government has also launched online classes, through Career across its schools on Monday.

Launcher, for class XII students It began with a one-and-ahalf hour class each on English and Accountancy. Around 9,000

students registered for these classes, though there are 1.6 lakh Class XII children in these schools.

"Monday was just the first day of this initiative. With classes for different subjects starting, the numbers of those registered will increase. We will try to make more students attend this every week. We will be providing Rs 200 for data usage to all students who register, and directives have been issued to teachers to reach out to them. We are trying our best to do this systematically in stages," said an education department official.

A teacher at a Rajkiya Pratibha Vikas Vidyalaya — one of the exclusive resource-rich

Around 9.000 Class XII students registered for the Delhi govt's online classes launched on Monday, though there are 1.6 lakh children in its schools

schools run by the government – said many students are missing from the Zoom classes she conducts in her personal capacity. "In my class of 29, there were 19 students on Monday. The situation is far more difficult in schools with a larger number of

students, and those from even more marginal backgrounds. Many students in our schools are children of migrants and I'm most worried about finding out where they are right now. There is a student from a very poor family who I have not been able to get in touch with," she said.

Many private schools in the city had begun online classes long before the government, but even here, children admitted under the economically weaker sections (EWS) quota are vulnerable.

While Sardar Patel Vidyalaya is conducting live classes on Zoom even for primary students, teachers are separately reaching out to such students to ensure they have

access to the course material.

"After the Zoom classes, we upload assignments and study material to our Google Classroom module. For EWS students who might have difficulty accessing the classes and modules, we are mailing and WhatsApping them individually and asking them to just copy these out in their notebooks. A big challenge is that we found that some younger children had already gone to their villages before the lockdown. Some are in areas with very little internet access. Education counsellors are conducting conference calls with these children. We are also record-

ing the Zoom classes so they can

be accessed later," said a teacher. Activists advocating for free internet have raised the issue of access to digital learning re-

sources, and the Community

Library Project has begun an "Internet Kholo" campaign to demand that the Delhi government provide free internet. "An education portal with multiple access points like audio, video, read-only modes using

compressed data, alongside widespread availability of free internet will do much to reach the vast majority of Delhi's students who are Hindi-medium government-school educated,' said Mridula Koshy, director of the project.

PCR unit took 22 pregnant women to hospitals in the last 24 hours. ENS

THE ()UTBREAK

IN DELHI, GURGAON

COVID-19 rumours linked to 3 attacks

SAKSHIDAYAL& MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL

GURGAON, NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

A 22-YEAR-OLD who returned from a Tablighi Jamaat congregation was beaten up in Outer Delhi's Harewali village, a family was attacked for making a video of Sunday's 'diya jalao' event in Gurgaon's Manohar Colony, and four men fired outside a mosque in Gurgaon's Dhankot village in three separate incidents of violence linked to coronavirus rumours over the weekend.

On Sunday afternoon, a 22year-old man who returned from Bhopal after attending a Tablighi Jamaat gathering was beaten up by locals in Outer Delhi's Harewali village. A video of the incident shows the man, Dilshad Ali, being thrashed by a mob that accuses him of being a part of a conspiracy to spread coronavirus.

An FIR has been registered and three men have been arrested. Police also filed an FIR against Dilshad — for allegedly violating CrPC Section 144. Additional PRO (Delhi Police) Anil Mittal said they intervened following a call from Dilshad's father. "We have arrested three men – Naveen Kumar (30), Prashant Kumar (26) and Pramod Kumar (30).'

Dilshad's uncle Chaudhary Akram alleged: "He was supposed to return from Bhopal on April 4 but got stuck due to the lockdown. Eventually, he and nine others returned in a truck... In Northwest Delhi, he was caught by police, but was let go after a medical examination."

Akram alleged Ali returned



A screengrab showing one of the attackers at Harewali

home Sunday afternoon, and soon afterwards locals asked him to accompany them for some work. "They took him to an isolated spot and started beating him. His father came to know through neighbours," said Akram.

The video shows locals asking Dilshad about his "plans to spread coronavirus". "If you tell us the truth, we will leave you and hand you over to police. We know what the men who were caught from Nizamuddin had planned earlier. Wasn't that your plan too?" the men can be seen asking.

In Gurgaon's Manohar Colony Sunday evening, 20-year-old Aatif Warsi and his family came under attack after a crowd objected to him recording a video of Sunday's 'diva jalao' event at 9 pm. Warsi was standing in his balcony when 20-25 men took out a procession, flashing phone torches.

When members of the procession noticed him and his brothers, they told them to stop making videos. Some from the group allegedly headed to the family's second-storey home, abusing them and asking them to leave the neighbourhood.

One of the men eventually

test positive, some say were not given PPE kit **SOMYALAKHANI&**

ASTHA SAXENA NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

ELEVEN MORE healthcare workers from the Delhi State Cancer Institute (DSCI) in Dilshad Garden tested positive for COVID-19 Monday, taking the number of positive cases in the hospital to 19. Of the 11, one is a doctor and the rest are nurses and nursing orderlies. While 10 of them were moved to Rajiv Gandhi Super Specialty Hospital, one has been sent to Lok Nayak Hospital. This comes days after a resident doctor from the department of preventive oncology had tested positive.

"We have already shut OPD services and are in the process of shifting patients to private hospi-

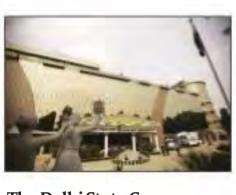
tals. We had taken samples of 50 healthcare workers who came in contact with the resident doctor. The campus has been sanitised and we are preparing a list of people who might have come in contact with these healthcare workers," said Dr B L Sherwal, medical superintendent, DSCI.

Among those who tested pos-

itive Monday is a nursing officer

who is eight-months pregnant.

She has been sent to Lok Navak Hospital. "She was tested for COVID-19 on April 1; the report came back came on April 4, following which she was moved to Lok Nayak hospital on April 5. She lives with her husband and child. They have been tested and results are awaited. Even after she tested positive, she was made to stay with her family for 24 hours be-



Panic at cancer institute as 19 healthcare staff

The Delhi State Cancer **Institute.** Archive

fore being hospitalised," said a source at DSCI.

The source, who is close to the nursing officer, said, "Like all staffers, she too was only given a surgical mask and gloves, not proper PPE. The hospital was careless and reasoned with staff that since it is a cancer hospital, there will be no COVID-19 cases."

DSCI has reported the maximum number of cases among healthcare workers so far. In Delhi, a total of 34 healthcare workers have tested positive. On not providing PPEs to staff, Dr Sherwal said, "Ours is a cancer institute and healthcare workers are dealing with cancer patients. We are not a dedicated hospital for COVID-19, which is why there was no need to have PPE kits. PPE kits are needed for those posted at isolation wards or flu centres. The government is trying its best to provide these kits to those who actually need them."

A male nursing officer at DSCI, who tested positive for COVID-19, has been admitted to Rajiv Gandhi Super Specialty Hospital. His wife and two children aged four and seven years too have been tested and are admitted in the isolation ward next to his room. Their results are awaited. A source close to him said, "He was tested on April 3 and his result came on April 5. Like others, he too wasn't given proper PPE..."

Another nursing officer *The* Indian Express spoke to said "the staff was not given PPEs even after they asked for it... I just wore my normal uniform and a mask.' His wife too has been tested and her result is awaited. A female nursing officer, who tested negative, said everyone wore flimsy surgical masks and were given inadequate HIV dress kits to wear on April 1: "No shoe covers or

Another doctor who tested positive Monday said he was asymptomatic and was moving to Rajiv Gandhi Super Specialty Hospital.

goggles were given," she said.



LINE OF DUTY

Police personnel stationed at a deserted National Highway-24, Monday. Prem Nath Pandey

300 teams to check spread in Noida

AMIL BHATNAGAR NOIDA. APRIL 6

GAUTAM BUDH Nagar administration has deployed 300 teams to visit coronavirus affected areas and carry out awareness programmes and other medical exercises to curtail its spread in the district. Noida has reported 58 positive cases so far.

"The administration has deployed 300 containment/surveillance teams... The teams will make people aware of crucial health practices like social distancing, washing hands etc and collect feedback. Parallelly, the sanitisation and cleaning of these areas will be carried out intensively," said Suhas L Y, DM, Gautam Budh Nagar.

According to the administration, each team will have three

members — one each from the health department, revenue department and police. The administration and medical authorities have identified 12 hotspots and as per guidelines, the surveillance zone will extend to 3 km of each one. The hostpots are situated in both Noida and Greater Noida.

A majority of the hotspots have stemmed from more than 30 cases that have been linked directly/indirectly to the fire safety firm in Sector 135. Presently, 1,225 residents across the district are under surveillance for possible symptoms and disease. The administration also

launched mobile Rapid Response Teams, consists of members from administrative departments, who will be the first responders for COVID-19 related matters. An 'All in One' integrated control room and helpline has also been set up.

Kerala to apex court: Centre yet to act in road blockade issue

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

THE KERALA government Monday told the Supreme Court that the Centre had "so far not acted" on its April 3 order, asking it to discuss the blockade of roads between Kasaragod in Kerala and Mangaluru in Karnataka with the two states and formulate parameters for passage of patients urgently in need of treatment.

In a counter affidavit, the Kerala government said that after receiving a copy of the order, the state Home Secretary had forwarded a letter to Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla on April 4, "requesting him to inform time for video conferencing considering the urgency of the matter" but "no response has been received".

Alleging that Karnataka's move to block roads and cut off Kasaragod patients' access to hospitals in Mangaluru and movement of essential goods to

allows cat owner

Kochi: The Kerala High Court on

Monday allowed a cat owner's

plea seeking to permit him to go

out in his car to buy food for his

pets amid the lockdown.

Considering the plea filed by

Prakash, who owns three pet

cats, a Division Bench of the High

Court comprising Justices A K

Jayasankaran Nambiar and Shaji

P Chaly observed that animal

food and fodder were covered

petitioner could go out to buy

the food for his pets on the basis

of a self-declaration, along with

the order of the court. In his plea,

the cat owner had alleged police

did not grant him vehicle pass for

cat will not eat other food. The

petitioner, a vegetarian, submit-

ted that the cats were fed bis-

cuits and seven kg was required

to feed them for three weeks. PTI

The court directed that the

under essential items.

buying cat food.

to go out to buy

food for pets

Kerala HC

A total of eight lives have been lost till date on account of these blockade of Border Roads by State of Karnataka. One person died after this SLP was filed by the State of Karnataka"

— COUNTER AFFIDAVIT BY THE KERALA GOVT

Kerala, the affidavit said the "blockade...cannot... be stated to be a reasonable restriction". The state urged the court to direct the Centre "to comply" with the April 3 order.

On April 1, the Kerala High Court directed the Centre to ensure that blockades put up by Karnataka on national highways connecting it to Kerala are removed forthwith to facilitate free movement of vehicles carrying people for urgent medical treatment between the two states.

Karnataka challenged this in Supreme Court, saying the open-

ing of the roads would lead to law and order issues as local residents were wary of people from Kasaragod crossing over given that the district has a high number of COVID-19 cases.

fessed," said Gurgaon Police PRO

this area ever since we came here

in 2009. Police have reassured us

that nothing like this will happen

again, and neighbours have also

been apologising. We will not

were fired outside a mosque in

Gurgaon's Dhankot village, police

arrested four people who, during

questioning, claimed they wanted

to "check if anyone infected with

the coronavirus was hiding in-

side". Police identified the accused

as Vinod (40), a property dealer;

Harkesh (18), who works as a cook

at his residence; Pawan (41), a

dairy owner; and Aalam Khan

(39), a ragpicker. "The four were

talking about coronavirus

Saturday and about the people

evacuated from Markaz

heard on social media that six

people were found at the mosque

in Dhankot. They decided to go

there and check," he said. No such

incident had been reported from

the mosque. "They reached the

masjid and tried to open the gate.

When they couldn't, Vinod fired a

shot towards the masjid and a

second in another direction," said

"A few days ago, they also

Nizamuddin," said Boken.

On Monday, a day after shots

Aslam said, "We have lived in

Subhash Boken.

In the counter affidavit, the Kerala government said "the contention that there would be breakdown of law and order if the blockades were removed is not based on any cogent materials".

"A total of eight lives have been lost till date on account of these blockades of Border Roads by State of Karnataka. One person died after this SLP was filed by the State of Karnataka," the state government said.

It added that "Kerala is a consumer state and depends heavily on its neighbouring states for supply of essential goods" which too are transported through these roads.

Even after the Supreme Court order, the Karnataka CM "had openly declared that the blockade...will not be removed", the counter affidavit said.

Matoshree scare: 170 security personnel shifted after tea vendor tests positive

Vendor had no travel history, civic body trying to trace source of infection

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, APRIL 6

AFTER A 45-year-old tea vendor who operated from a locality in the vicinity of the residence of Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray in Bandra East tested positive for COVID-19, over 170 police and SRPF personnel, some of whom were in the CM's security detail, were moved from the area as a precautionary measure.

The tea vendor operated close to the residence of Union minister Ramdas Athavale and several security personnel of both Mumbai Police and SRPF, some in the security detail of the chief minister, would visit the stall for tea.

Matoshree has emerged as the administrative seat of Maharashtra over the past few months as Thackeray prefers to conduct the majority of his business from his residence.



Some personnel from the CM's security detail would go to the stall for tea. File

"Two workers have also been taken to the hospital for testing. Apart from that, the whole lane has been sealed. Since all the police personnel in the vicinity used to come to his stall for tea the civic body is also tracking them." an official said.

The patient had reported fever, cough and breathlessness

GUJARAT

after which he was admitted to HBT hospital. Civic body is also trying to find out from where he got the infection as he does not have travel history. A team from BMC's health

department reached Kalanagar in the evening and sanitised the whole area. According to officials, about

170 personnel from police and SRPF have been quarantine in Uttar Bhartiya Sangh building in Bandra East.

The police personnel, who are on duty at Matoshree, reside in a police camp around Matoshree along with SRPF personnel, said Sena sources. "All of these people have been put in Uttar Bhartiva Sangh building. Inquiries are going on and those who came in direct contact with the tea vendor will be tested and will be put in quarantine. Inquiry is being carried out about others and then the decision about their

testing and quarantine will be

taken," said a senior leader. Police officials claimed the vendor's shop had been shut since March 24 and they are on the lookout for people who could have been in contact

with the vendor between

March 20-24.

"The shop has been shut since the time the lockdown was announced. So we are currently looking for people who came in close contact with him between March 20 and March 24. We have learnt that every-

one would drink tea from him,' said a Mumbai Police officer. Officials claimed the BMC has started taking swab samples of some of the personnel who were part of Thackeray's security detail and had come in contact with the tea stall owner. Around 150 personnel are guarding the chief minister and his family during the day time, while around 120 are guarding him in

the night hours.

Uttarakhand: Quarantined man kills self

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

DEHRADUN, APRIL 6

A 55-YEAR-OLD man committed suicide by hanging himself in a quarantine facility in Rudrapur police area of Udham Singh Nagar on Monday. The man was admitted to the quarantine facility on March 30 as he had entered Uttarakhand from Uttar Pradesh

after the lockdown was imposed. Rudrapur Circle Officer Amit Kumar said the man had tested negative for COVID-19 and he had been informed about the report earlier. Kumar said he had not shown any sign of depression when a medical team, including counsellors, examined

him around 3 pm on Monday. Police said the man belonged to Bareilly, and he had come to his relative's place in Khatima area of Udham Singh Nagar on March 30. "...He used a bed-sheet to hang himself inside the quar-

antine facility room this evening," Kumar said. 14-month-old's mother to

SOHINI GHOSH

THE MOTHER of the 14-monthold child, who became Jamnagar's first COVID-19 case,

will be put through a rapid antibody test on Tuesday to find the source of the baby's infection. The child who tested positive on Sunday continues to be on ventilatory support in the COVID

intensive critical care unit (ICCU) Jamnagar District Collector Rav Shankar said Monday. Fourteen people from the labourers' colony where the family was staying, including the child's parents, tested negative, prompting the authorities to probe further "What is confusing is that the

mother tested negative. One sce-

Medical college being built for 4 yrs made hospital in 4 days

SHAJU PHILIP

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, APR 6

A MEDICAL college in Kerala's Kasaragod district had been under construction for the last four years. The foundation stone of the medical college was laid in 2013 by the previous Congress regime in the state and construction began in 2016. Only a fourstorey administrative bloc of the proposed medical college had been constructed so far.

In wake of the coronavirus outbreak, the college has been converted into a COVID-19 hospital within four days. The administrative bloc serves as the hospital itself, with power supply made available to the building only last week. Equipment The court asked whether the worth Rs 7 crore was installed.

With 128 active cases, Kasaragod has almost half of Kerala's COVID-19 patients. With Karnataka closing its border over the virus scare, the patriate community."

TOLL OF KERALA EXPATS RISES TO 18

Thiruvananthapuram: The number of COVID-19 deaths among Kerala expatriates rose to 18 on Monday, with eight of them in the US. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan told the media, "We have been able to contain the outbreak of COVID-19 in Kerala. Our efforts are showing results but we are concerned about its spread in the world, especially among the Malayali ex-

health infrastructure in the district has been under strain since the lockdown began.

In the first stage, this special hospital would have 200 beds and 10 ICUs. Another 100 beds and 10 ICUs would be readied soon.

State Health Minister K K Shailaja said that at the behest of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, a modern COVID-19 treatment

Officials at

the Department of Non Resident Keralites Affairs said several expatriates have been infected. Many others want to return to Kerala, expecting better healthcare. "But everyone is helpless at this stage. The infected include nurses and caregivers in old-age homes," sources said. **ENS**

centre was made operational within four days.

After a review meeting, Vijayan told media that the state is ready to meet any eventuality. As many as 1.25 lakh beds are available in the government and private sectors. Besides, in 517 corona-care centres, 17,461 isolation beds have been readied and 38 are already functioning, he said.

appeal: Follow lockdown norms flouted in these areas. **PARIMAL DABHI &**

ADITI RAJA AHMEDABAD, VADODARA, APR 6

SEVERAL LEADERS from minority communities have launched an aggressive campaign in Ahmedabad city and other parts of the state, appealing to community members to follow lockdown norms and respect Section 144 of Criminal Procedure Code in force due to COVID-19 pandemic. Many mosques in the city have also started announcing precautions people should take to prevent the infection.

The campaign through social media was launched after minority-dominated areas of Ahmedabad emerged as COVID-19 hotspots, while positive cases were also reported from parts of Central Gujarat and Vadodara. There were complaints that lockdown norms were widely

In one of the videos, a reli-

Minority community leaders

gious leader from a minority community in Ahmedabad is seen appealing to people, saying that the concept of lockdown is not new to Islam and that people should adopt it to get rid of coronavirus. The leader also tells people that if they do not follow lockdown norms, "their existence will be wiped out".

A good part of the campaign is directed at the upcoming Shab-e-Barat (on April 9) when Muslims congregate at burial grounds to pray for their dead. The minority dominated ar-

eas of Ahmedabad city have reported 33 positive cases as of Monday noon. In Vadodara, three minority community members have tested positive. One from Chhota Udepur tested positive and another from Panchmahal died.

Twelve people who went to

the Tablighi Jamaat congregation at Nizamuddin Markaz tested positive for COVID-19 in Gujarat, among the 126 identified to have gone there. Two of them died of the infection, one each in Bhavnagar and Ahmedabad. According to Mufti Abdul

Qayum Mansuri, a prominent religious leader of Gujarat residing at Kalupur area of Ahmedabad, "COVID-19 is a pandemic and the government has asked people to stay away from each other. But I am sorry to say that in our (minority dominated) areas, people get together more than even normal days. They flock the roads when we have stopped going to even mosques for namaz. That is why we are trying to bring awareness among people. We tell them that this is a pandemic and because the roads are empty, it does not mean that they have to assemble there for fun."

undergo test

AHMEDABAD, APRIL 6

nario could be that she had the infection and was cured by the time the baby contracted it. We will carry out a rapid antibody test on her that will tell us if she had the infection," Shankar said.

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2020 THE ()UTBREAK NATION





A disinfectant tunnel installed at the **Director-General of** Police's office in **Hyderabad.** PTI

Kanika Kapoor discharged

Lucknow: Sixteen days after testing positive for COVID-19, singer Kanika Kapoor was discharged on Monday from Lucknow's Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences where she had been admitted. Kapoor tested positive for the virus days after attending a party where several politicians, including former Rajasthan CMVasundhara Raje, her son and BJP MP Dushyant Singh and UP minister Jai Pratap Singh, among others were present. **ENS**

HRD Minister chairs meet with V-Cs

New Delhi: Union HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank on Saturday chaired a meeting with vice-chancellors of 40 central universities through video-conferencing. The minister directed all the universities to take care of the students, faculty and contractual staff amid the COVID-19 outbreak and ensure that they do not face any problem. During the meeting, E Suresh Kumar, Vice-Chancellor, The English and Foreign Languages University, explained to the minister the measures EFLU is implementing during the crisis, including online teaching, a fund to help out the society and a radio campaign to spread awareness. **ENS**

Telangana univ logs into online classes

New Delhi: After the Telangana government declared holidays in all educational institutes in view of the COVID-19 outbreak, the KL University has launched online classes from March 17. The course aims to enable students to adapt practices to an online context and to develop approaches to engage online. The courses for first, second and third year students are uploaded on the online platform. And while students are able to grasp the topics, feedback is being taken on a daily basis for further improvement. **ENS**

Most cases in states high on health index; spread limited

KARISHMA MEHROTRA & **KRISHN KAUSHIK** NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

IN WHAT may have a bearing on the exit plans of states as the 21day lockdown nears end, 11 large states and Union territories have cases spread across more than half of their districts.

But what may help measures to contain the outbreak is that a vast majority of the cases fall in 10 states with high health parameters, as per a NITI Aayog Index. Of these 10 states, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand have some of the lowest healthcare indicators in the country.

According to Health Ministry data up to April 6, Kerala and Delhi have cases across all their districts. The other large states or UTs with cases across almost all their districts are Andhra Pradesh (84 per cent), Uttarakhand (77 per cent), Tamil Nadu (71 per cent), Telangana (70 per cent), Rajasthan (58 per

DISTRICTS AFFECTED ACROSS STATES

State	Cases	Affected
Delhi	503	11 of 11
Kerala	314	14 of 14
Andhra Pradesh	226	11 of 13
Uttarakhand	26	10 of 13
Tamil Nadu	571	27 of 38
Telangana	321	23 of 33
Rajasthan	253	19 of 33
Karnataka	151	17 of 30
Maharashtra	690	20 of 36
Haryana	84	12 of 22

* District-wise data on April 6 ** Graph does not include states with less than 10 districts

cent), Karnataka (57 per cent), Maharashtra (56 per cent), Haryana (55 per cent), and Jammu and Kashmir (50 per

However, of the total 4,280-

plus cases as of Monday morning, 658 reported from 13 states (including Uttarakhand, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Haryana) did not have district data available.

As the states prepare their plans for exiting the lockdown, the decisive factor would be not only the number of cases but also their spread. Some have a high number of cases but these are contained in less than half of their districts. Uttar Pradesh, for example, has 227 cases but all in just 36 per cent of its districts. Madhya Pradesh 165 cases, spread over 16 per cent of its districts.

Around a fifth of the cases (772) are in states categorised by the NITI Aayog as six of the lowest-performing in health indices. This includes Rajasthan, with 253 cases across 20 of 33 districts. However, it is also the only one of the low-performing states to have improved its health score over the past year.

Of the other five which all saw a decline in their scores — Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand only Uttarakhand has coronavirus cases in more than half of its districts.

LIZ MATHEW

NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

make efforts to boost contribu-

BIP's foundation day, the PM said

India's timely efforts to contain

took all state governments along,

even as we did not know anything

about the disease. Whatever nec-

essary decisions were required...

whether it was about thermal

screening at the airports or evac-

uation of people or enhancing

medical infrastructure require-

ments, we took proactive steps,"

touch with the world leaders and

they have all appreciated what

India is doing to fight against the

virus and our holistic approach.

We are busy fighting war against

poverty and we are continuously

New Delhi: The US administra-

tion has provided \$2.9 million to

aid India's fight against the

Monday, the US government

said that the pandemic financial

support was granted to India

through the US Agency for

billion in health assistance and

nearly \$3 billion in total assis-

tance that the US has provided

The relief is in addition to \$1.4

International Development.

In a statement issued by the US Embassy in New Delhi on

coronavirus.

"We have been in constant

he said in a video address.

Addressing partymen on the

"We took several measures,

tions to the PM-CARES fund.

been appreciated globally.

Some of the factors dictating the health score are data integrity, TB treatment success rate, quality accreditation of public health facilities, and immunisation rates.

The medium-performing states West Bengal, _ Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Jharkhand and Assam — account for very few cases too, making up 5 per cent of the total.

In the district-wise data available on Monday morning, 550 positive cases across 13 states were not assigned to any district. This includes 27 positive cases in Rajasthan who are evacuees from Iran.

Of the 284 districts with confirmed cases, nearly 70 per cent had either 10 or less cases. Eighty districts had between 11 and 100 cases.

workers in COVID-19 fight भाजप PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Monday told BJP workers that the fight against coronavirus is no भाजप less than a war and urged them to launch "ceaseless efforts to help the poor". He also asked them to

the spread of coronavirus have PM Modi addresses BIP workers via video conference. ANI

The first task, he said, is to engage in a "ceaseless effort" to reach ration to the poor. As the second task, he told party workers to arrange face covers for themselves and others and asked them to use

Modi lists five tasks for BJP

Under the third task, he urged party workers to express gratitude to social workers and health workers by preparing "thanks notes". The fourth task, he said, is to download the Arogva Setu app with information on coronavirus and get at least 40 others to download it.

crisis," Modi said. Modi entrusted BJP workers war, we need to increase the dowith five tasks which he termed as Panchagraha to strengthen the fight against coronavirus.

US gives \$2.9 mn aid to India

them whenever they go out.

moving unitedly in this hour of "...This is not less than a war, so just as we contribute towards nations being made for the PM-CARES funds...," the PM said, listing the fifth task.

to India over the last 20 years.

ter US President Donald Trump

called Prime Minister Narendra

Modi, requesting him to supply

hydroxychloroquine, used to treat

COVID-19 patients and as a pro-

phylactic by healthcare workers.

imposed a ban on export of the

drug since the coronavirus out-

break hit India, and is expected

to take a call on the request after

assessing domestic requirement

of the drug. **ENS**

The Modi government has

The statement comes a day af-

India, Australia agree to share research efforts

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

AS THE number of COVID-19 cases in the world has crossed a million in just over three months, India and Australia on Monday agreed to share "collaborative research efforts" in the context of the health crisis.

Both the countries agreed on the "importance of bilateral experience sharing" amid the crisis during a telephonic conversation between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison on Monday morning.

The two leaders discussed the ongoing pandemic and the domestic response strategies adopted by their governments. "They agreed on the importance of bilateral experience-sharing in the context of this health crisis, including through collaborative research efforts," a Prime Minister's Office statement said. "Both leaders agreed to remain attentive to the wider significance of the India-Australia partnership, including in the Indo-Pacific region, even as they focus on solving the present health crisis."

Surat couple detained for 'harassing' doctor

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE SURAT, APRIL 6

SURAT POLICE detained a couple for allegedly harassing a doctor, who stays in their society. According to the doctor, Sanjibani Panigrahi, she had an argument with her neighbours, Chetan Mehta and his wife Bhavna Mehta, over an incident concerning her dog on Sunday afternoon. Following this, Chetan allegedly asked her to leave the flat.

On March 23, several residents of the society had allegedly threatened her and asked her to move out because she was "working at a hospital where COVID-19 patients are treated". Later, she uploaded a video

on social media describing the incident. Following this, BJP MLA MLA Harsh Sanghavi intervened in the matter sorted it out.

The National Commission for Women has sought details of action taken into the case from the state Director General of Police.

Police said that the couple was released on Monday. The doctor has demanded that they should give her a written apology and also make an apology video.

AVISHEK G DASTIDAR &

WITH THE number of COVID-19

cases on the rise, India is prepar-

ing for a worst-case scenario by

keeping around 4 lakh beds

Indian Express that relevant arms

of the government, which have

been supplementing isolation and

quarantine facilities, have been in-

dicated this projection following

a meeting of one of the empow-

ered committees formed by the

government to fight the outbreak.

which has so far issued instruc-

tions to turn 5,000 train coaches

For instance, Indian Railways,

Sources confirmed to The

ready for patients by April 30.

RITIKA CHOPRA

NEW DELHI, APRIL 6



A worker sanitises a lion's cage at Ahmedabad Zoo on Monday. Javed Raja

Zoos, sanctuaries on high alert after tiger tests positive in New York zoo

ESHAROY NEW DELHI. APRIL 6

NATIONAL PARKS, sanctuaries and zoos across India have been put on high alert after US authorities on Sunday confirmed that a tiger housed in New York's Bronx Zoo had tested positive for the coronavirus.

The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, the

into isolation units to house

80,000 patients, may have to

keep producing more, it is learnt.

the Railways — based on inputs

from higher levels — was to re-

main "prepared" to surpass the

5,000 mark and keep churning

tified 20,000 coaches as its over-

all capacity, it has issued orders

to convert 5,000 non-AC coaches

into isolation units. By Monday,

it had already converted around 2,500 coaches into isolation

units. With its current design,

each coach can accommodate 16

derstand that isolation coaches

will be deployed in the worst-

"We have been given to un-

isolation beds.

While the Railways had iden-

out more isolation units.

On Monday, deliberations in

Rlys to prepare more isolation coaches

Central Zoo Authority (CZA) and the National Tiger Conservation Authority Monday issued advisories and directives to zoos and national parks across the country.

Zoos have been asked to keep constant vigil for any "abnormal behaviour or symptoms", to not allow any handler near animals without safety gear, and to maintain minimum contact while feeding the animals, as per the CZA directive. Sick animals are to

case scenario as a last line of de-

fence. Also, if requirement arises

in remote areas where public

health facilities cannot handle a

growing number of positive

cases," a top source told *The*

fered its Navodaya schools for

isolation and other medical

Secretary Amit Khare wrote to all

state chief secretaries offering

Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas

(JNVs) for setting up temporary

medical facilities or "quarantine

across 13 states have been iden-

tified and are currently being

used for isolation, even as the

Following this offer, 32 JNVs

camps for isolation".

needs during the outbreak.

The HRD Ministry has also of-

On March 24, Education

Indian Express.

be quarantined and fortnightly samples of suspected cases sent to designated animal health institutes for COVID-19 tests.

"I have spoken to the Bronx Zoo Authority and we have come to understand that the virus was passed on to the tiger by a zookeeper... This can happen with us as well... So our main intervention is to cut out human animal interaction as much as possible," said CZA Member Secretary S P Yadav.

Employees' Welfare Association

of INVs has objected to the move.

Another 80 schools have been

identified and inspected by the

district authorities for use as iso-

Employees Association has writ-

ten to the HRD Minister, express-

ing concern over the safety of

teachers and their families who

isolation, the number of people

requiring quarantine will also in-

crease, as per the government's

assessment. In internal deliber-

ations in a relevant empowered

committee, it was suggested that

home quarantine should be the

first resort to reduce load on

public infrastructure.

With more people requiring

live on campus in such schools.

The Navodaya Vidyalaya

lation centres.

MP health dept staff account for half of Bhopal's COVID-19 cases

MILIND GHATWAI BHOPAL, APRIL 6

OFFICIALS FROM Madhya Pradesh health department, who are spearheading the state's fight against COVID-19, account for about half the number of pos-

itive cases from Bhopal. From the in-charge of the health department to deputy directors to an epidemiologist to clerks, as many as 31 of them have tested positive for the infection.

With so many health officials, including those who had interacted with the chief minister and other bureaucrats, testing positive for the infection, the government has kept an alternate list of officers ready.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

THE ASSAM government will file

cases against those from the

state who attended the Tablighi

Jamaat event in Delhi but are still

not disclosing themselves,

Assam health minister Himanta

COVID-19 patients — all but one

are connected to the Tablighi

Iamaat congregation at

Nizamuddin in Delhi last month.

A total of 112 people who had

come in contact with the one

separate patient have been iden-

tified, and 85 have already tested

negative as of Monday afternoon.

from where this person acquired

the infection is yet to be ascer-

tained because he does not have

a recent travel history outside the

state. The patient, resident of an

upmarket residential apartment

in Guwahati, had come back

Sarma said the exact source

As of now, Assam has 26

GUWAHATI, APRIL 6

Biswa Sarma said.

Bhopal has so far reported 61 COVID-19 cases. The capital reported its first COVID-19 death late on Sunday night when a 52year-old man succumbed to the infection. Bhopal is now under strict lockdown.

More than 20 COVID-19 cases in Bhopal have been traced to the Tablighi Jamaat gathering in Delhi and reports on some samples are awaited. Members of 10 Jamaats cur-

rently in Bhopal had visited the Tablighi Jamaat headquarters in March. "During their stay in Bhopal, they visited 30 mosques. We tested the jamaatis after checking their travel history," a police officer said.

"It's difficult to estimate the extent of spread because nearly

75 per cent of Jamaat members showed no symptoms and must have interacted with many people. That's why we have imposed a strict lockdown," the officer said Meanwhile, Principal Princi

Secretary (Health) Pallavi Jain Govil, who earned praise from Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan for choosing to work de spite testing positive, did not release a video bulletin on Monday.The bulletin was released on Monday by Health Commissioner Faiz Ahmed

Govil had come under criticism by a section of local media for not isolating herself after her son returned from the US on March 16. She could not be reached for comments.

Assam govt to book those Tablighi Jamaat responsible who attended Tabligh for spurt of event, not disclosing self cases, says RSS

Himanta **Biswa**

Sarma

Nizamuddin event. Of that, after

tion by Monday evening.

"It has been decided that under the Disaster Management Act ... government is going to register case against them for wilful disobedience. Although we have been requesting again and again... there is provision in Disaster Management Act for such behaviour. But we are hopeful that this matter will be resolved...," Sarma said.

exclusions, samples had to be collected from a little over 600 persons – 491 samples have been collected but it is remaining to be collected from 128

concerned, Sarma and officials have already met the leaders of the Tablighi Jamaat headquarters in Guwahati and it is expected that they would give a list of those still unidentified person who had attended the congrega-

NEW DELHI, APRIL THE RSS on Monday blamed the Tablighi Jamaat for a spurt in COVID-19 cases in the country, accusing the group of "hiding"

DEEPTIMANTIWARY

with healthcare personnel. However, it also said that the Muslim community is helping the government trace contacts of Tablighi Jamaat members, which should be appreciated.

their infection and misbehaving

RSS joint general secretary Manmohan Vaidy made the statements while addressing a press conference on efforts made by his organisation to help people during the lockdown.

A statement released by RSS quoted Vaidy as saying, "To not call off your congregation is one thing, but to hide, to hide others and to misbehave with nurses and those engaged in COVID containment efforts shows their depraved mentality... it is fact that the number COVID-19 infections have surged because of them... they have got exposed within their

During lockdown, Khattar's message-a-day to Haryana

VARINDER BHATIA CHANDIGARH, APRIL 6

FROM ADVOCATING murga vyayaam for increasing stamina, to telling spouses to spend light moments together and divide the work at home, to quitting bad habits, and learning foreign languages. Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has taken on a new avatar, releasing a video address a day on how the people of the state can spend their time in lockdown.

The addresses began on March 31, and the six so far each around 20-minute long have included messages such as above, apart from announcements regarding the steps being

taken by Haryana to combat COVID-19, and calling for social distancing. Harvana has seen 96 positive

cases of coronavirus, and two deaths.

During the April 4 address, Sports Minister Sandeep Singh came on to give exercise tips to youngsters, while Khattar gave examples from his own childhood. "We can say kabaddi, kabaddi, kabaddi... we can use treadmill for jogging. Our teachers used to make us do murga vyayaam (a kind of punishment). In today's times, nobody can even think of it but our teachers used to tell us that becoming a *murga* strengthens our body... Adopt the posture yourself and

see how many parts of your



Manohar Lal Khattar

body you can exercise with that one step — legs, waist, neck, back...," Khattar said.

In another address, the CM suggested a game that families could play to get to know each other better. "... We give a piece of paper to each member and asks everyone to list their five

favourite things, be it games, heroes, names of their best friends, foods, colours, which university they like, books, their birthdays, their anniversaries if there are married people. When you collect the papers, you will be surprised to learn the new information that you did not know..." Asking people to pursue hob-

bies like painting, reading, music, and cooking, he urged the men to help out at home. "Wives will also be happy... that their husbands have started helping them... I never got this opportunity but many couples share light moments. A time such as this should be utilised for these things," Khattar, a bachelor, said.

In one of his messages, the CM said the lockdown period

could also be used to quit habits like smoking and drinking. "People say that if you want to adopt a good habit, you must practise it for 21 days. Similarly, if you want to guit a bad habit, you practise it for 21 days... We have got these 21 days, we need to use them constructively." Talking about the time he

learnt Tamil during a tour of South India in 1980 for about 20 days, Khattar said, "With the help of soft skills training, we can learn to speak English. Many other foreign languages, Japanese, German, French, Korean, Russian, we can learn at least bits of them. We can also learn our Indian languages... we shall be able to understand our country and the world...,"

Sarma also said it has been identified that over 800 people from Assam were identified to be present in or around the

from Delhi on March 1.



As far as the 128 persons are

own community."

Bhilwara model: Full

containment', more

than 20 lakh surveyed

curfew, 'ruthless

HAMZAKHAN&

JAIPUR. APRIL 6

DEEP MUKHERJEE

WITH OVER 80% of the coron-

avirus positive cases traced to 62

districts across the country, the

government may continue re-

strictions there, once the lock-

down ends, on the lines of what

is being unofficially called 'the

Bhilwara model'. After the

Rajasthan district emerged as a

hotspot for COVID-19, the au-

thorities sealed it, and carried

out a survey of more than 20

lakh residents. Compared to 26

positive cases in 11 days till

March 30, Bhilwara has seen a

recovered and nine discharged.

Secretary, Health, Rohit Kumar

Singh described the Bhilwara

model as one involving "ruthless

containment". Within hours of

the first case, on March 18, the dis-

trict had started door-to-door sur-

vey. The Health Department and

district administration in Bhilwara

constituted nearly 850 teams and

conducted house-to-house sur-

vevs of 56,025 houses and nearly

2.81 lakh people. Intense contact

tracing was carried out of those

who tested positive, with detailed

suspected to have been exposed

were in home quarantine. By

March 27, 22 lakh out of

Bhilwara's estimated population

of 30 lakh had been surveyed, by

teams comprising doctors, auxil-

iary nurse midwives and nursing

students. Most of the houses were

surveyed more than once to rule

out the infection. The Health

Department used an app to mon-

itor those under home quarantine.

ing and testing — we stuck to

these four points, along with

home quarantine and isolation,"

said Bhilwara District Collector

"Surveying, combing, screen-

charts of all they had met.

Of the total 27 cases, 17 have

Rajasthan's Additional Chief

single case in the past week.

DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



MILES AWAY

THE LOCKDOWN has kept many people, including MPs, away from their families. Union Minister Anurag Thakur is among them. His son Jai Aditya Singh left for Jalandhar last month. Although Thakur had information about the lockdown, he did not call Singh back as that would have created panic in the family. So Singh, who appeared for his Class X exams this year, has been stuck in Jalandhar since the lockdown was announced. Thakur, his wife and second son are in Delhi.

New Role

NEW MEA spokesperson Anurag Srivastava took over on Monday. Raveesh Kumar handed over the charge to Srivastava, who was India's envoy to Ethiopia. A 1999-batch career diplomat, Srivastava has earlier worked in the MEA's Pakistan and Afghanistan desk and was posted in Sri Lanka.

Words Of Praise

CHINESE AMBASSADOR Sun Weidong on Monday came out in support of Badminton player Jwala Gutta, who wrote about the racism she faces as the child of a Chinese mother in a column published in The Indian Express. "Brave voice from @Guttajwala. We are with you against any racial discrimination," Sun said.

SC gives legal sanctity to temporary measures adopted by courts

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

THE SUPREME Court on Monday gave legal sanctity to the "temporary measures" adopted by it and other courts to reduce the need for physical presence in their premises to effectively bring into effect social distancing norms.

A bench of Chief Justice of India S A Bobde and Justices D Y Chandrachud and L Nageswara Rao said that all measures taken "to secure the functioning of courts in consonance with social distancing guidelines and best public health practices shall be deemed to be lawful".

The interim directions will hold till the court lays down detailed guidelines after the lockdown is lifted.

Following the countrywide lockdown, the Supreme Court and some High Courts have introduced video-conferencing to hear urgent matters. On Monday, the court took suo motu cognizance of the situation in courts

E-Tender Notice No. 01 OF 2020-21

e-Tender

DRM-RJT-

01-05-2020, 15:00 Hrs.

2020, 15:00 Hrs

Tender: 01-05-2020, 15:00 Hrs

in the wake of the lockdown and "authorised" the Supreme Court and High Courts "to adopt measures required to ensure the robust functioning of the judicial system through the use of video conferencing technologies".

The order left it to the High Courts to determine the suitable modalities depending on the peculiarities of the judicial system in every state and the public health situation.

It said, "The concerned courts shall maintain a helpline to ensure that any complaint in regard to the quality or audibility of feed shall be communicated during the proceeding or immediately after its conclusion failing which no grievance in regard to it shall

be entertained thereafter". The SC also asked district courts to adopt the mode of video-conferencing prescribed by the respective High Court and directed them to duly notify and make available the facilities for who do not have the means or

video conferencing for litigants

WESTERN RAILWAY - RAJKOT DIVISION

VARIOUS ENGINEERING WORKS

Viramgam (excluding) to Wankaner (excluding). (2) Surendranagar (including) to

Ohrangadhra (excluding) under the jurisdiction of Assistant Divisional Engineer

Surendranagar, Date & Time of Opening of Tender: 01-05-2020, 15:00 Hrs.

New Works and all ordinary repairs

New Works and all ordinary repairs

up to Rs. 5 Lakhs No. 4 of 2020-21

up to Rs. 5 Lakhs No. 5 of 2020-21

DRM-RJT- New Works and all ordinary repairs

20-E-06 up to Rs. 5 Lakhs No. 6 of 2020-21

DRM-RJT- New Works and all ordinary repairs

20-E-07 up to Rs. 5 Lakhs No. 7 of 2020-21

20-E-08 Cum ballast into wagons at

DRM-RJT- Rajkot Division - Improvement to

19-E-19R2 toilet facilities, construction of

of Opening of Tender: 06-05-2020, 15:00 Hrs.

Wankaner Date & Time of Opening of Tender: 05-05-2020 15:00 Hrs.

deepscreening of ballast by

deepscreening of ballast and

DRM-RJT- New Works and all ordinary repairs 51,88,463.20 1,03,800.00

e. (1) Hapa (excluding) to Kanaius (including). (2) Jamnagar (including) to Wind Mil

(including), (3) Kanalus (including) to Sikka (including) under the jurisdiction of Assistant Divisional Engineer (East) Jamnagar. Date & Time of Opening of Tender

i.e. Kanalus (excluding) to Dwarka (excluding) under the jurisdiction of Assistan

Divisional Engineer (West) Jamnagar. Date & Time of Opening of Tender: 01-05

lie. Dwarka (including) to Okha (including) under the jurisdiction of Assistan Divisional Engineer (West) Jamnagar, Date & Time of Opening of Tender: 01-05

DRM-RJT- Supplying and loading of 114430 6,84,29,140.00 4,92,200.00

DRM-RJT- Through Ballast Recoupment, 1,82,22,353.29 2,41,100.0

Through Ballast Recoupment, 1,19,05,629.80 2,09,500.00

BCM/Manually, rectification of bad layouts by T-28 and renewal of rubber pads or

various locations under Assistant Divisional Engineer (East) Jamnagar. Date & Tim

rectification of bad layouts by T-28 on various locations under Assistant Divisional

Engineer (East) Jamnagar. Date & Time of Opening of Tender: 06-05-2020. 15:00

overhead tank and staging for tanks at various stations in Divisional Engineer (East

Address of the Office & Website particulars: Divisional Railway Manage

Like us on: f facebook.com/WesternRly - Follow us on! twitter.com/WesternRly

Raikot's Junediction, Date & Time of Opening of Tender: 06-05-2020, 15:00 Hrs.

(Engineering), Western Railway, Kothi Compound, Rajkot-360 001.

ess.com

20-E-03 up to Rs. 5 Lakhs No. 3/2020-21 i.e.

of Opening of Tender: 01-05-2020. 15:00 Hrs.

New Works and all ordinary repairs

access to it.

NIT Cost (₹)

Date: 01-04-202

46,02,466,68 92,100.00

58,98,457,40 1,18,000.0

1,14,46,335,29 2,07,200,0

EMD.

Cost (₹)

CHENNAI, APRIL 6

ARUN JANARDHANAN

AMID A spike in the number of cases and coronavirus hotspots in the state, Tamil Nadu will begin rapid testing to speed up COVID-19 screening on Friday. Chennai has the maximum number of cases among the 621 reported so far in the state.

50 NEW CASES

A 57-year-old woman from Chennai, who reported at the Rajiv Gandhi Government Hospital on Sunday evening with severe respiratory problems and had travelled to Trichy on March 20, died on Monday morning — the state's toll rose to six with this death.

Fifty new cases were reported, including 48 linked to the Tablighi Jamaat meeting in Delhi.

About 92,000 people are in home quarantine and 205 in government facilities in the state. Nearly 19,000 people have completed their quarantine period without symptoms.

Meanwhile, CM Edappadi K Palaniswami Monday said that 1 lakh rapid test kits have been procured from China which will

door-to-door

survey, check

for symptoms

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

GOA CHIEF Minister Pramod

Sawant on Monday announced

that the state government will conduct a door-to-door survey

across the state in which enumer-

ators will go to people and check

whether they are experiencing

symptoms similar to that of

COVID-19 and their travel history.

had been conducted in one dis-

trict of Rajasthan. They added

that the need for such a survey

was felt as six out of seven

COVID-19 patients had a foreign

travel history. Goa has seven

between April 13 and 15 and the

data will be processed thereafter.

community exercise to collect

information on everyone

through our health staff, govern-

ment and aided school teachers

will fan out across the state in

pairs with a preset questionnaire

that families across the state will

colonies, and clusters across indus-

trial belts and tenants across the

state....This is a decision taken by

the state government as this will

also help us understand aspects

of community transmission...."

nounced a 20 per cent hike in

wages for frontline health staff

and workers at ESI Hospital

which is treating COVID-19

The Chief Minister also an-

"This will also include labour

be expected to fill," he added.

The survey will be conducted

"We are executing this huge

COVID-19 cases so far.

Officials said a similar survey

PANAJI, APRIL 6



begin rapid tests from Friday

Death toll rises to 6; TN to

A medic at the COVID-19 OPD of the Government Kilpauk Medical College, Chennai. PTI

reach the state on Thursday and distributed in districts by Friday. Tamil Nadu has among the

maximum number of labs for COVID-19 tests, including 11 in the government sector and six in facilities. private Palaniswami said the state has adequate stock of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and N95 masks. "We are adding 2 lakh masks every day, and over 2,000 ventilators, besides the 3,371 ventilators already available in government and private facilities," he said. The state will set up a dozen

more labs, including in Coonoor in Nilgiris, in the next few days.

Of about 5,000 samples tested in the state so far, private labs have handled 500, of which only 15 samples turned positive, against 621 positive cases in government labs. "The number of samples will increase as more government and private labs are being added," a health official added.

approached the National Institute of Epidemiology in Chennai to carry out two state-specific studies on the outbreak. "We have asked for two studies about big sources of outbreak to look at the pattern," she said, referring to two workers from a shop in a Chennai mall who got infected from a customer who later tested positive after his arrival in Sri Lanka, and tracing the origin of cases linked to the Tablighi Jamaat meet. "We are going to request a

State Health Secretary Beela

Rajesh said the government has

similar study on animals too, to take up a study on the virus itself. While the first study will look at the epidemiology of the outbreak and major sources, the way it played out from the first date, symptoms and patterns, the second study will look at the virus, genetic mutations and change in virus characters."

Tamil Nadu Chief Secretary K Shanmugam had last week said the state government took up the issue of rapid testing with the Centre and that the Union government recommended it to follow the existing real-time reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) based test.

Goa to conduct 'Tharkhand will need over Rs 10,000 cr to deal with influx'

'PM never asked us before announcing lockdown'

JHARKHAND HAS seen four positive cases so far but the state needs more planning to contain the spread of COVID-19. Chief Minister **HEMANT SOREN** spoke to **ABHISHEK ANGAD** about the challenges, financial needs and exit strategy for the lockdown. Excerpts:

What is the scale of the challenge that Jharkhand is facing right now?

This is a disaster and can take any form. But there has to be a lot of preparation... frontline workers are the most scared and it is dangerous... With limited resources, we are extracting maximum output. At present, we have 163 ventilators, including private and government. We have 5,535 PPEs (personal protective equipment) with 5,000 PPEs arriving recently. The central government needs to clarify why we are getting supplies very late even when we had ordered on March 23. There are reports that PPEs were exported to Serbia—the veracity of it needs to be checked. But if it is true then this is shocking...

What is the financial burden

Ranchi: West Singhbhum district

of Jharkhand has come up with a

COVID-19 "phone booth" sam-

ple collection centre. The booth

comes at a cost of Rs 20,000 and

can carry out testing with just

one health worker in personal



THE EXPRESS **INTERVIEW**

HEMANT SOREN JHARKHAND CM

on the state? Have you asked for anything from the Centre?

The state has a liability of MGNREGA funds and we spent Rs 600 crore through revolving funds. We received Rs 102 crore recently from the Centre but it needs to clear the dues as soon as possible. We had GST dues and we have received a letter

Booth for samples in Jharkhand dist

protective gear as against three

required in other testing facili-

booth comprising a small cubi-

cal for the health worker with

COVID-19 sample collection kits.

portable sample collection unit

for COVID-19 sample collection.

It ensures safety of health

workers while collecting sam-

ple from suspected patient. It is

very easy to assemble and can

Thomas the above runned applicant has keets and

Whereas the above remed appropriate has been shown to case against you and whereas it has been shown to the smaller for the first plant passible to acree you in ordinary way. Treation, this notice is over by advertisement depoting you to make repearance in this tribunal 0x04/2/20 at 10.30 A.M. ake notice that in case of your failure to appear on the above mentioned day before this tribunal, the case will be heard and decided in your absence. Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal on this 12th day of February, 2020.

Assistant Registrar, DR7-III, New Delhi

The structure is like a phone

"It is a unique, low cost and

ties, district officials said.

ary allocation, talking conservatively, we will need more than Rs 10,000 crore to deal with the large influx of people.... Do you have a lockdown exit

that the Centre will release GST

compensation of Rs 863 crore.

However, apart from all budget-

strategy? How will you contain the spread of COVID-19 during the influx?

A nationwide lockdown was announced by PM Narendra Modi and we were never asked. But now Modi-ji wants our opinion on exit strategy. We are deliberating on it and only when we are satisfied will we lift the lockdown (in the state)... Around 6 lakh labourers will come to the state once the lockdown is lifted and the influx will not be in anyone's control. Fortunately, rural areas comprise more than 80 per cent of Jharkhand and those areas are already isolated and the population is not dense. The only workable solution with us right now is to make people aware of the COVID-19. And we have to be ready with all medical facilities...

www.indianexpress.com

testing. With the pandemic ex-

panding its reach, it is crucial that

testing is increased so that the

number of patients can be con-

tained well within stipulated

time," the district administration

Commissioner Aditya Ranjan

said, "As of now our district is

collecting a few samples. But a

lot of other districts are showing

Development

said in a statement.

Deputy

interest."

FULL INTERVIEW ON

On Saturday, the camp housed be taken to different locations for

> Sporting an olive green jacket, an orange shirt with Devanagari print, beaded necklaces and a sling bag with an embroidered elephant, Cabrero said, "I took a flight from Barcelona to Dubai to Mumbai. I arrived in December and I have been traveling across India for four months. I was in Udaipur, Rajasthan when I was told at my hotel that I should go back because flights were going to be cancelled. I took a bus from

The strict curfew in Bhilwara meant shops remained closed Police ensured doorstep supplies to the public while raw materials were provided to the needy

and meals to the poor. Bhilwara SP Harendra Mahawer ensured enforcement of the lockdown with the help of police and home guards while an Army unit was kept on standby in Ajmer.

Starting April 3, Bhilwara started a 10-day "maha-bandh", with even passes of mediapersons and NGOs revoked. What prompted the swift ac-

tion by the authorities was that the virus had spread in the district from doctors and medical staff, especially a prominent private hospital of Bhilwara, which is a thriving textile city with a large number of migrant workers.

Bhatt said, "While other districts had their patient zero identified, we faced high uncertainty. Hence we had to survey the entire district to resolve that uncertainty... We had a video conference with Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, where we sought his permission to impose a curfew in the district... The abrupt curfew and sealing of the borders. with no relaxation, helped us check the spread initially."

Bhatt credits the CM and the By March 26, 6,445 people Additional Chief Secretary, Health, with ensuring that the officials had everything they needed, including Personal Protective Equipment and N95 masks.

Of the 27 positive cases in Bhilwara, three were doctors and 14 nursing staff, and the rest their patients or attendants. The first death was of a 73-year-old on March 26, who had underlying medical conditions. A second patient, a 60-year-old who had comorbidities, died hours later.

The patients in Bhilwara were administered hydroxy chloroquine, Tamiflu and anti-HIV drugs.

Spaniard waits for flight home at Mumbai camp

MAYURA JANWALKAR MUMBAI, APRIL 6

THERE ARE many reasons why Mariano Cabrero stands out in a camp set up for the needy at the Civil Defence Ambivali ground near the Versova Metro station.

The 68-year-old retired teacher from Pontevedra in Northwest Spain, arrived in Mumbai from Barcelona in on December 5, 2019. "I came here on a holiday," said the solo traveller at a camp set up by the Harmony Foundation for the civil defence and the Home Guard to run.

285 people, who had no where to go when the countrywide lockdown was announced last month.



Mariano Cabrero

Udaipur and came to Mumbai on March 22 to take a flight back but the airport had been shut down. I had nowhere to go," he said. Cabrero said that he spent

the next few days at the Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport Terminal 2. He said he had tried to reach out to the Spanish embassy in Delhi and the consulate in Mumbai.

Deputy Controller of Civil Defence, Rajeshwari Kori, said, "We informed the Spanish embassy in Delhi about him. The Consulate General in Mumbai has also reached out to him."

When contacted, Consul General of Spain in Mumbai

Jorge de Lucas Cadenas, said "We will try to put him on any plane going to Europe."

Don't withdraw job offers: HRD Minister to campus recruiters

RITIKA CHOPRA

NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

UNION HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal on Monday issued a public appeal to all recruiters, asking them to not withdraw jobs offered to graduating stu-

dents of technical education institutions. As first reported by *The*

Indian Express on April 4, a leading US-based consultancy rescinded its offer to students across IIT-Delhi, IIT-Kanpur, IIT-Madras. IIM-Ahmedabad. IIM-Bangalore and IIM- Calcutta this week. This is being seen as an early warning sign across campuses. The COVID-19 lockdown

and the looming economic distress, the IITs and IIMs fear could force many more companies to rethink their placement

उत्तर प्रदेश पावर ट्रॉन्समिशन कारपोरेशन लि० ई-निविदा सूचना सं0-63/वि0जा0पा0मं0/आगरा/2019-20 के निविदा समयविस्तार का प्रकाशन

E-Tender Notice No. 63/ECTC/2019-20 पर अंकित ई-निविदा जिसकी निविदा विशिष्टीकरण संख्या-198 अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत जानपद पारेषण मण्डल आगरा हेत् एक अदद खीजल बलित बाहन एवं निविदा विशिष्टीकरण संख्या—197 अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत जानपद पारेषण खण्ड आगरा हेत एक अदद डीजल चलित वाहन है जिसको दिनांक 24.03.2020 समय 12:00 बजे प्राप्त किया जाना है। एवं विनाक 24:03:2020 की खोला जाना निर्धारित था अपरिहार्य कारणों से उक्त निविदा की तिथि विस्तारित कर निविदा को प्राप्त करने की तिथि 16.04.2020 समय 12:00 बजे एवं खोलने की तिथि दिनांक 16.04:2020 को समय 15:00 बजे निर्वारित किया जाता है। अन्य सभी शर्ते यथावत रहेगी। निविदा सम्बन्धित विवरण विभागीय बबसाइट http://etender.up.nic.in & http://upptcl.org से भी प्राप्त किया जा सकता है 'राष्ट्र हित में बिजली बचायें' अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत जानपद पारेषण मण्डल–आगरा, उ०प्र० पावर ट्रान्समिशन कारपोरेशन लिए, निकट अमर उजाला प्रेस, पारेषण भवन ककरेटा रोड, 22के0वी0 संपर्केन्द्र सिकन्दरा आगरा | प्रशास 529 विकास प्रशासन / विवाद / 06.04.2020

उत्तर प्रदेश पावर ट्रॉन्सिमशन कारपोरेशन लि० n Jurisdiction of Assistant Divisional Engineer, Rajkot excluding the work of Bhaktinagar to Rajkot. Date & Time of Opening of Tender: 01-05-2020. 15:00 Hrs. ई-निविदा सुबना सं0-55/विश्वाशपार्थांश्वागरा/2020-21 में निविदा निरस्त करने के सम्बन्ध है DRM-RJT- New Works and all ordinary repairs 1,15,25,232.10 2,07,600.00 E-Tender Notice No. 55/EGTC/A/2020-21 पर अंकित ई-निविदा जिसकी निविदा विशिष्टीकरण संख्या-182/ECTC/A/2020-21 Kothi Compound Colony, Divisional Hospital, Divisional Office, Bhatiya Boarding Colony, Loco Colony, Rukhadiya Colony, Rajkot Station and Bhaktinag Construction of Drain, Parking SHED, Road and Development work under the jurisdiction of Assistant Divisional Engineer (Works) Rajkot. Date & Time for Erector Hostel Building at 132 KV Sub-Station Aurangabad (Mathura) है (अपरिहार्य कारणों से उक्त निविदा को निरस्त किया जाता है 68.98.457.40 1.38.000.00 राष्ट्र हिल में विज्ञाती क्यायें अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत जानपद पारेषण मण्डल-आगरा, उठप्रव पावर ट्रान्समिशन कारपोरेशन लिए, निकट अम .e. Rajkot (excluding) to Hapa (including) station and Hapa Colony under jurisdiction of Assistant Divisional Engineer (East) Jamnagar. Date & Time of Opening o उजाला प्रस. पारेषण भवन, ककरेटा शेंड 22क0वीn उपकेन्द्र सिकन्दरा आगरी । पनाक 532 विकजावपावनक जाव / निविदा / दिनांक 06.04.2020

उत्तर प्रदेश पावर ट्रॉन्सिमशन कारपोरेशन लि०

ई-निविदा सचना सं0-62/विवजावपावमंव/आगरा/2020-21 के निविदा निरस्त करने के सम्बन्ध मे E-Tender Notice No. 62/ECTC/A/2020-21 पर अंकित ई-निविदा जिसकी निविदा विशिष्टीकरण संख्या—194 ECTC/A/2020-21, Tube well Boring Work at 132 KV S/S Bamoli (Hathras), 195/ECTC/A/2020-21 Development & Tube well work for Guest House at 132 KV S/S Vrindavan (Mathura) है। अपरिहार्य कारणों से उक्त निविदा को निरस्त किया जाता है। 'राष्ट्र हित में बिजली बचायें' अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विदार जानपद पारेषण मण्डल-आगरा, उ०प्र० पावर ट्रान्समिषन कारपोरेशन लि० निकट अमर उजाला प्रेस, पारेषण भवन, ककरेटा रोड, 22के0वी0 उपकेन्द्र सिकन्दरा आगरा । पत्राक ५३० विवजावपावमवजाव / निविदा / दिनांक २६.०४.२०२०

HARYANA MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LIMITED

(A Government of Haryana Undertaking) Bays No. 59-62, Sector-2, Panchkula Phone: 0172-2567945

Online Short Term Tender of three day's for Medical Consumables Logistics for Coronavirus Haryana of "Group C" and documents can be downloaded from 06.04.2020 onwards on e-procurement portal

www.etenders.hry.nic.in.

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS (NIT) Tender Enquiry No.: 97/tend/COR/2020-21/3/4-A

BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL - III
DELHI 4TH FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING
PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI-110001.
(lotice under Section 19(4) of the Recovery of Debts
due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act. 1993
read with Rule 12 & 13 of the Debts Recovery
Tribunal (Procedure Rules) 1993)
OA No. 886/2019
ICICI BANK LTD., Applicant VERSUS
JAISHREE GIRIRAJ ROADIWAYS PVT LTD &
ORS...... Defendants o. -1 Jaishvee Girraj Roadways Pvt. Ltd. through its irractor Mr. Nitin Bhardwaj (Borrower) Office at: Flat lo. 107, 1st Floor, Plot No. 6, Anupain Plaza, Local No. 107, 1st Floor, Plot No. 6, Anupain Plaza, Local Shopping Centre, Chazipur, Delni -11096
D-2 Mr. Nitin Bhardwaj Slo. Sh. Shish Pal Bhardwaj / Guarantor and also Authorised Signatory)
D-3 Logistic Linkage India Pvt. Ltd., through its Director Mr. Nitin Bhardwaj (Go-Borroweri Officer at Flat No. 101-109. Plot No. 4, LSC National Arcad, Ghazipur, Main Road, Delhi -110096
Whereas the above named applicant has instituted a case against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in ordinary way. Therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make iven 'by advertisement' directing you to make goearance in this Tribunal 08/04/2020 at 10.30 A.M. Take notice that in case of your failure to appear on the above mentioned day before this Tribunal, the case will be heard and decided in your absence.

Given under my hand and seal of the Tribural on this 10th day of February, 2020. BraD By Order of the Tribune

For Managing Director HMSCL, Panchkula



CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED DAILY



Source: Johns Hopkins University, updated at 11:00 pm on April 6

What is the best material for a home-made face cover?

AFTER WEEKS of advising that masks were not needed for healthy individuals, the Health Ministry recently recommended "homemade face cover is a good method for maintaining personal hygiene", and "it is suggested that such people who are not suffering from medical conditions or having breathing difficulties may use the handmade reusable face cover, particularly when they step out...". India's new position is similar to that of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

A "manual on homemade protective cover for face and mouth", issued by the Office of the Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India, said the "homemade face cover" should be of cotton cloth. "Any used cotton cloth can be used to make this face cover. The colour of the fabric does NOT matter but you must ensure that you wash the fabric well in boiling water for 5 minutes and dry it well before making the face cover. Adding salt to this water is recommended," it said. Alternatively, the manual advisory said, "a men's cotton handkerchief" could be used to cover the face.

The CDC, meanwhile, advises fabri-

cating a "cloth face covering" from a Tshirt. Alternatively, it says, a bandanna (or square cotton cloth approximately 20"x20") can be used with a coffee fil-

ter placed between its folds. The New York Times reported that recent tests on a number of materials had found "HEPA furnace filters scored well, as did vacuum cleaner bags, layers of 600-count pillowcases and fabric similar to flannel pajamas". "Stacked coffee filters had medium scores", and "scarves and bandanna material had the lowest scores, but still captured a small percentage of particles".

The basic things to remember are that the material is cotton, is clean, and of a reasonable thickness. An explainer in The NYT quoted anaesthesiologist Dr Scott Segal: "Hold it (the cloth) up to a bright light. If light passes really easily through the fibres and you can almost see the fibres, it's not a good fabric. If it's a denser weave of thicker material and light doesn't pass through it as much, that's the material you want to use."

Another practical point: the fabric of your homemade mask must be dense enough to capture viral particles, but also breathable enough.

SIMPLY PUT

Which factories should reopen?

After the lockdown, what kind of manufacturing can be allowed to minimise risk of COVID-19 spread? Rather than insisting on 'essential goods' only, the key lies in which factories can enforce social distancing

STATE-WISE CONFIRMED

CASES OF COVID-19

CASE COUNT AT 11 pm. APRIL 6

Source: Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

STATE-WISE SHARES IN TOTAL

Source: Annual Survey of Industries 2017-18.

FACTORY OUTPUT (%)

■ SHARES IN PERCENTAGE

Uttarakhand

Madhya Pradesh

HARISH DAMODARAN & **NUSHAIBA IQBAL**

NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

AS THE 21-day lockdown to combat the COVID-19 pandemic prepares to enter its last week, two things are clear.

748

First, lifting of production and movement curbs will be gradual even after April 14. Any exit strategy, in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's words, has to "ensure staggered reemergence of the population".

Second, while the government's focus so far has been on sorting out distributional issues, especially with regard to the movement of essential goods, it would now have to also look at the production end of the supply chain. Given that stocks with company depots, distributors and retailers are likely to eventually run out, resumption of manufacturing activity becomes vital.

The question arises: What kind of manufacturing can be allowed that will minimise the risk of uncontrolled spread of infection?

Two lakh factories

One useful source of information could be the National Sample Survey Office's Annual Survey of Industries (ASI), which covers all organised manufacturing establishments with power connection that employ at least 10 workers, and those engaging 20 and more without the aid of power. Since these are registered units under the Factories Act, 1948 unlike leather belt and garment makers in Mumbai's Dharavi or Delhi's Gandhi Nagar they can technically be monitored and, hence, subjected to social distancing rules.

According to the last published ASI numbers for 2017-18, there were 1,95,584 operational factories across India. Together, they engaged 1.56 crore persons, and produced a total output value of Rs 80.72 lakh crore.

There are some interesting trends:

Trends: output, outbreak

■ The state with the largest share in factory output, Gujarat, is ranked No. 11 in the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases. Delhi, which has reported the third highest cases, isn't even among the country's top 20 manufacturing states. Telangana and Kerala rank No. 4 and No. 5 in the number of corona cases, but No. 13 and No. 15 respectively in registered manufacturing output (see charts).

■ A district-wise analysis yields more revealing trends. Going by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare's latest data, only 146 out of India's 700-plus districts had five or more positive cases of COVID-19. These 146 districts accounted for 3,266, or 80.3%, of the total 4,067 cases for which districtlevel information is available at present.

■ Many industrial centres — Tiruppur and Sriperumbudur-Oragadam in Tamil Mehsana in Gujarat; Raigad and Aurangabad in Maharashtra; Bhilai, Raigarh and Korba in

Nadu; Kutch, Jamnagar, Bharuch and

Himachal Pradesh

Chhattisgarh; Rudrapur in Uttarakhand; Baddi in Himachal Pradesh; or the centrallyadministered Silvassa and Daman - have recorded very few cases.

'Essential', or not

The ASI figures also show that 86.15% of the registered manufacturing sector's out-

put of Rs 80.72 lakh crore and 72.41% of its 1.56 crore employees in 2017-18 came from the corporate sector — both non-government and government companies — and only the balance were from individual proprietorship and partnership firms.

The former set of units would, again, be more amenable to regulation and enforcement of social distancing. It would be even more so for units in relatively secluded special economic zones such as Kandla, Mundra and Sri City.

If social distancing can be rigorously implemented in organised manufacturing, there would be no need to insist that such activity should be restricted only to the production of "essential goods". A narrow definition of such goods may include food and pharma products, but not textiles and wearing apparel. This, despite the latter category employing 28.68 lakh persons as per the 2017-18 ASI data, more than the 17.72 lakh employed in food products and 7.40 lakh in pharma units.

Other major employers, who may also not fully qualify as supplying so-called essential goods, include basic metals (10.33 lakh persons), other non-metallic mineral products (10.91 lakh), motor vehicles and trailers (10.18 lakh), machinery (8.49 lakh), chemicals (8.28 lakh), plastic and rubber products (7.13 lakh), fabricated metal products (6.92 lakh) and electric equipment (5.98 lakh).

The challenge ahead

Currently, almost every industry — barring coal mines, oil refineries, fertilisers, pharma, and those requiring continuous process operations such as steel blast furnaces or aluminium smelters — is shut. Resumption isn't going to be easy even if the lockdown restrictions are lifted. The biggest constraint would be labour and trucks. Manufacturers need labourers not only for production, but also for loading, dispatching and unloading operations. Goods can be moved through rail ways, but the journey from rake points to local area is possible only through trucks.

A signalling of intention now to allow relatively big manufacturing units to reopen after April 14, with strict enforcement of social distancing conditions, would give some lead time for re-mobilisation of labour and logistical resources. Factories may then be able to start producing — even if in a small way.

INDIA COUNT:

4,281 (111 DEATHS)

10

26 32

18

10

144 84

13

109

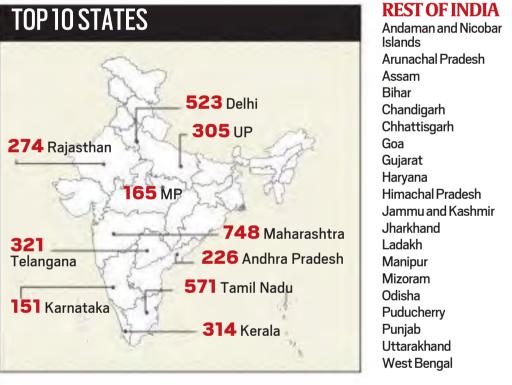
14

21

76

26

80



Union Health Ministry update at 11 pm, April 6. Some states may have reported higher numbers. Only states with most cases are listed above. 319 PATIENTS DISCHARGED IN 20 STATES ACROSS THE COUNTRY

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

Zoo tiger positive: are cats at particular risk?

KABIR FIRAQUE NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

FROM A virus whose behaviour still involves more questions than answers, there has been another first: A Malayan tiger at New York's Bronx Zoo has tested positive for SARS-CoV2. Four-year-old Nadia is believed to have caught the virus from a zoo employee, who had not shown symptoms.

So, humans can infect animals?

The virus came from an animal source and mutated; humans have since been infecting humans. It is theoretically possible for the virus to mutate again to survive in certain species after being transmitted by humans. The Bronx Zoo case suggests an employee spread the virus to the tiger, the US Department of Agriculture said in a statement. Several lions and tigers at the zoo, in fact, have shown symptoms of respiratory illness. The others were not tested to limit the potential risks of general anaesthesia.

What about domestic animals?

There have been a handful of cases of pets being infected; the indications are they caught it from humans. There have been reports about two dogs in Hong Kong — a Pomeranian and a German shepherd — testing positive. While their respective humans had COVID-19, the dogs themselves were not showing symptoms.

In what has more context in the Bronx Zoo tiger testing positive, there has been a domestic cat, too, catching the virus, in Belgium. Unlike the dogs, the cat showed symptoms. After testing positive, it later recovered.

So, are cats at higher risk than dogs, and can they, in turn, infect humans?

Chinese researchers recently published a pre-print paper (not yet peer-reviewed) on this subject. They inoculated cats with the novel coronavirus, placed them alongside uninfected cats, and found that cats can transmit the virus to one other. The good news: the virus replicates poorly in dogs. There has been no evidence about cats infecting humans either.

Temperature

map for Nov

2018-March

2019. Black

represent

significant

community

transmission

(as of March

Source: Climate

Maine, via Sajadi et

10, 2020).

Reanalyzer,

University of

all, SSRN

countries with

circles



File picture of Nadia at the zoo. *Reuters*

There may be a possible explanation why felines are more susceptible. SARS-CoV2 infects respiratory cells after entering through a protein, which lies on the surface of the cells. Called ACE2, the protein in felines resembles

ACE2 in humans, Steven Van Gucht, the Belgian government's spokesperson for coronavirus, told Live Science after the cat caught the virus.

As it is, cats are susceptible to feline coronavirus, which is common but generally asymptomatic, although it can cause mild diarrhoea, according to Cornell University.

Should you worry about your pets?

After the tiger tested positive, the US Department of Agriculture advised that people with COVID-19 restrict contact with animals, just as they would with other people. It did not recommend routine tests for pets

The Bronx Zoo case led to India's Central Zoo Authority alerting all zoos to monitor animals 24×7 for signs of abnormal behaviour. It mentioned cats, ferrets and primates.

Primates are of particular concern. In a recent commentary published in *Nature*, a group of 25 scientists called for urgent discussions on the need to severely limit human interaction with great apes in the wild, and in zoos, until the risk of COVID-19 subsides.

Will summer heat kill virus? Some trends, but experts still advise caution

KAUNAIN SHERIFF M NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

THE TEMPERATURE in several parts of India has crossed 30°C and is expected to touch 40°C in the northern regions in the next two weeks. What will it mean to the survival of the novel coronavirus? The effect of temperature and humidity on the virus is still being researched worldwide.

What the experts say

WHO: The World Health Organization has said that from the "evidence so far, the COVID19 virus can be transmitted in ALL AREAS, including hot and humid weathers".

ICMR: Indian Council of Medical Research director general Balram Bhargava has stressed that at present, there is no relationship between temperature and the spread.

AIIMS: AIIMS Director Randeep Guleria, a member of the high-level technical committee to guide strategies against COVID-19, told *The Indian Express* in a recent interview: "The virus probably will not survive for a long duration in an outdoor environment, if the temperature is above 40°. But having said that one must remember two things: we are still having outbreaks in (tropical) areas; sec-

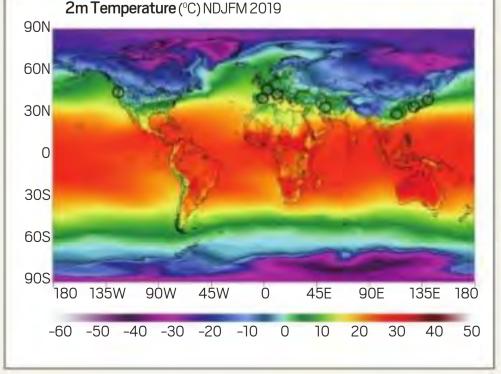
ond, a lot us spend time indoors, where the temperature is air-conditioned... Therefore, summer may help in preventing the transmission outside but possibly not indoors."

What research has projected

Researchers at the University of Maryland School of Medicine used weather modelling data to predict that COVID-19 is likely to follow a seasonal pattern. In an online paper in Social Science Research Network, the team led by Dr Mohd Sajadi observed a significant community spread along a eastwest distribution approximately between latitudes 30°N and 50°N at similar weather patterns (temperature between 5-11°C and humidity between 47-79%).

These include Wuhan, South Korea, Japan, Iran, Northern Italy, Seattle, and Northern California. Using 2019 temperature data for March and April, community spread is likely to reach north of the current areas at risk, the paper predicts. These include Manchuria, Central Asia, the Caucuses, Eastern and Central Europe, the British Isles, Northeastern and Midwestern US, and British Columbia.

"Although it would be even more difficult to make a long-term prediction at this stage, it is tempting to expect COVID-19 to diminish considerably in affected areas (above the 30



degrees N") in the coming months. It could perhaps prevail at low levels in tropical regions and begin to rise again in late fall and winter in temperate regions.... One other possibility is that it will not be able to sustain itself in the summer in the tropics and Southern Hemisphere and disappear," it states.

Limitations to projections

The researchers acknowledge: "The

above factors, climate variables not considered or analyzed (cloud cover, maximum temperature, etc.), human factors not considered or analyzed (impact of epidemiologic interventions, concentrated outbreaks like cruise ships, travel, etc.), viral factors not considered or analyzed (mutation rate, pathogenesis, etc.), mean that although the current correlations with latitude and temperature seem strong, direct causation has

not been proven and predictions in the near term are speculative and have to be considered with extreme caution."

In another study, Massachusetts Institute of Technology researchers Qasim Bukhari and Yusuf Jameel, too, discuss the limitations of correlating the virus spread with temperature and humidity. Their analysis showed that for each 10-day period during January 22-March 21, the maximum number of new cases happened in regions with mean temperature between 4-17°C and absolute humidity between 3-9 g/cubic metre. However, they underline that the spread depends on multiple factors including testing, social dynamics and government policies. "Our results in no way suggest that 2019-nCoV would not spread in warm humid regions," the paper notes.

The MIT paper too observes that countries and states experiencing high COVID-19 growth such as Italy, Iran, South Korea, New York and Washington exhibit weather patterns similar to original hotspots of Hubei and Hunan. Countries with warmer humid climates such as Singapore and Malaysia had a lower growth rate.

Looking for reasons

The MIT paper discusses probable rea-

it could solely be due to less testing as many of the countries lack good healthcare facilities and may have not done enough testing to detect the actual spread... Indeed, so far, the number of testing in several densely populated tropical countries (Brazil, India, Indonesia etc.) have been very low," it states.

sons for the fewer cases in the tropics. "First,

"Second, it could be argued that human mobility between China and Europe and between China and the US is high, therefore the number of cases in these regions are high. However... human mobility between China and South-East Asia is also high and therefore the lower growth rate in these countries is perplexing... Sophisticated infrastructure does not exist in Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Cambodia and the lower growth rate in South-East Asia cannot be explained by lower human mobility with China or robust health infrastructure," the paper states.

"Third, it could also be argued that the government in these countries is taking exceptional measures to stop the spread... which we also know is not true," it states.

The paper concludes that the lower counts in densely populated countries between 0-30°N (combined population almost 3 billion) "may be due to natural factors that warrant investigation".

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2020

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE

"AUTHORITARIAN IDEOLOGIES HAVE VESTED INTERESTS IN PROMOTING FEAR, A SENSE OF TAKEOVER BY ALIENS, REAL DISEASES ARE USEFUL MATERIAL."

— SUSAN SONTAG

The Indian EXPRESS

∽ FOUNDED BY ∽ RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

CHIEF FIGHTERS

Chief Ministers from south and west lead fight against virus, their efforts boosted by past investments in public systems

TATES IN SOUTHERN and western India top the list of places that have recorded the highest number of COVID-19 cases in the country. This is also because these states have been aggressively testing for the infection. Kerala has tested a higher percentage of its population as compared to, say, Bihar. States of southern and western India have taken a lead in most development indices since long and their economic and social advancements are now reflecting in their handling of the ongoing health crisis as well.

Credit also goes to the individual chief ministers who are leading from the front in the battle against the coronavirus. They are communicating directly with the public, offering clear strategies and safety nets. Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has been the standout performer among his peers. But Vijayan is a seasoned administrator, who also handled the Nipah virus outbreak and the unprecedented floods in the state in 2018. Unlike Vijayan, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray is relatively new to government but that does not seem to have come in the way of relief operations in his state. On the contrary, by all accounts, Thackeray has been an assuring and calming presence. His public outreach on social media has been effective and his firm messaging last week against the spread of communal messages a reassuring statement at a time when religious polarisation is a renewed spectre. Tamil Nadu CM Edappadi Palanisamy and Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani, who have so far maintained a low profile, have also shown themselves to be quick to grasp the gravity of the crisis, and fleetfooted in responding to it.

While the CMs are stepping up to the pandemic, the presence of well-functioning administrative networks has boosted their efforts. Long years of investing in public health, and in the delivery of public goods, like rations, has helped Tamil Nadu and Kerala to build capabilities and capacities that are now coming in handy. Both states set up camps for migrant workers much before other states recognised their plight. Kerala set up a large number of community kitchens to serve those unable to access or afford food. Using its vast network of community health workers, Tamil Nadu tracked down 1.50 lakh pregnant mothers in the state. Health professionals are in touch with them daily and special ambulances have been kept ready for 10,000 women who are in the stage of advanced pregnancy. The high levels of public trust in government in Kerala and Tamil Nadu also make the task of the administration easy. For instance, Tamil Nadu could trace 1,100 of the 1,500 persons from the state who attended the Tablighi Jamaat in Delhi and returned in no time as most of them reported for tests following an appeal by the government. A similar response was seen earlier in Kerala when the administration appealed to people who had travelled outside the state to report for tests and quarantine. The message is clear. States that invest in public services and administration are better equipped to handle a crisis, epidemic or natural disaster.

A DRUG IN NEED

India's decision on hydroxychloroquine must be informed by global evidence, domestic needs

S PRESIDENT DONALD Trump has said he has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to relax India's ban on hydroxychloroquine tablets so that the drug can be used to treat America's COVID-19 patients. A day earlier, India's Directorate General of Foreign Trade had prohibited export of the anti-malarial drug, which the Trump administration has described as a game-changer in the battle against the novel coronavirus. The US president's request is reportedly on the table of the high-level Group of Ministers (GoM) that reviews, monitors and evaluates the country's COVID-19 response activities. The GoM headed by Union Minister of Defence Rajnath Singh must take into account the interests of all stakeholders in the country before arriving at a decision on relaxing the export ban.

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) recommends the use of hydroxychloroquine as a prophylactic for asymptomatic healthcare workers and contacts of people who have been infected by the virus. The ICMR's decision on wider use of the drug will, reportedly, depend on further research. At the same time, research in other parts of the world has sparked interest in a more expansive use of the anti-malarial medicine. A study by Chinese researchers, in February, for instance, showed that the drug speeded up the recovery of COVID-19 patients who had suffered pneumonia. Experiments on the drug have also yielded promising results in France. Some experts have called for more tests before hydroxychloroquine is held up as a cure for COVID-19. But some of the early naysayers of the drug, including the US Food and Drug Administration, have now come around to recommending its use in emergency situations. Hydroxychloroquine as a COVID-19 palliative, by all accounts, seems to be a work in progress. However, in a world embroiled in a grim struggle against COVID-19, reports of the early success of the drug have generated hope — especially in the US, the country hit hardest by the pandemic. In such a situation, it is critical that India's decision on the US request be an informed and considered one.

Brazil has joined the US in urging India to lift the ban on hydroxychloroquine — India is one of the global leaders in the production of the drug. As the country plans to intensify the battle against the novel coronavirus in hotspots, the GoM's decision must be based on consultations with a wide range of experts — scientists, public health and foreign policy experts and representatives of the pharma industry

THE COLONY BORES

During the lockdown, RWAs have taken to issuing diktats that annoy and inconvenience residents

OWER, THE PROVERB goes, corrupts — what it does not add is that petty power annoys. In the wake of the corona crisis and the lockdown announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, those running Residents' Welfare Associations (RWAs) have, in their over zealousness, taken to issuing diktats with self-righteous certainty, to the chagrin of many residents. In Gautam Buddh Nagar (encompassing Noida, Greater Noida, suburbs of Delhi), things have reached the point where the local administration has threatened police action if the RWAs' orders — many of which fly in the face of government rules – continue

The humble newspaper has been banned from many societies and some are not allowing the sale of vegetables — defined as essential goods and services. One RWA office-bearer, after "banning" vegetables and dairy products, lectured residents to consume only "namak ajwain roti" and "do steam inhalation". Such an order serves three purposes at once: It promotes quack science (steam as a virus blocker), restricts dietary diversity (a bugbear for many an uncle on WhatsApp groups) while allowing for self-aggrandisement during a crisis which calls for greater understanding. It makes it harder for people to get essential supplies, and doubly punishes vulnerable groups like the elderly.

RWAs are, in their composition, undemocratic. Mostly, only property owners have voting rights in their elections: Such voters and those they elect as a result are largely male, many middle-aged. Usually, their power is limited to asking children not to walk on the grass and ensuring maintenance within their enclaves. Their WhatsApp messages are annoying, but provide fodder for punchlines. For now, though, issuing rushed orders, while ignoring the concerns of the many, is catching on among the colony bores.

ess.com

Social media distancing



It is time for the digital leaders to flatten the curve of the infodemic

BHASKAR CHAKRAVORTI

AS INDIA, HOWSOEVER unevenly, practises social distancing, it may not be such a bad idea to practise some social media distancing as well. The reality is that the "infodemic" an over-abundance of noxious or false-butbenign and occasionally useful information on COVID-19 — has hit the country much harder than the pandemic itself. For now. Ordinarily, you could say that a few sensationalist messages or useless but harmless remedies on WhatsApp do not hurt anyone - a good "time pass" for stressful times.

Here is why the infodemic can be deadly. In a country such as India, where 400 million turn to a single messaging app for sharing news and stories about any and everything, more than 240 million are on Facebook and, often, using it as the predominant source of news, a critical mass of misinformation leads to mis-directed behaviours. Wrong behaviours propel the pandemic, the right ones can slow its spread. A steep rise of infections will overwhelm the healthcare systems almost immediately. It is essential to get ahead of the digital virus because if the biological virus hits India with the force with which it has arrived elsewhere, the outcomes will be catastrophic. It is clear from the varied experiences between South Korea and Italy, that small changes in behaviours can have enormous consequences. Italy, for all its problems, had 4.1 doctors per 1,000 people in 2017; India had 0.8 per 1,000. Now is the time in India to make those small changes.

Like many of you who are reading this, I am on one too many WhatsApp groups. Usually, I let the messages accumulate, as my personal form of social media distancing. Despite that, it is hard to ignore some dominant narratives: Bioweapons origins of the coronavirus (false); Bill Gates was behind it (false); UNICEF's recommendations for warding off infection (unauthorised). I am aghast at how much currency the Misinformer-in-Chief in the White House, has got on these groups.

Of course, we, as users, have a responsibility to find better ways to seek advice or substitutes for that dopamine rush of sharing a message instantly liked, commented on and shared by others. However, as a society, much like our global response to the coronavirus, we cannot rely on bottom-up decisions. We need decisive leadership from the top. In the digital nations we inhabit, Facebook, Facebook-owned WhatsApp,

For the American social media companies, this could be their moment of redemption after years of being pilloried as 'surveillance capitalists' and a menace to society, but they have a narrow window to get it right. Facebook, Google/YouTube and Twitter, have been playing catch-up after failing to catch misinformation at the getgo. Facebook, to its credit, has, uncharacteristically, been a few steps ahead of the others. It has fact-checkers

and takes down content

that fails their tests; the

others don't.

YouTube, Twitter, TikTok, it is imperative that the leaders of these nations act - and act now.

It is about time, Mark Zuckerberg (Facebook/WhatsApp), Sundar Pichai (Google/YouTube), Jack Dorsey (Twitter) and Zhang Yiming (TikTok) made some tough calls, much like what their own political leaders have done. For Messrs Zuckerberg, Pichai and Dorsey, their home state of California was the first in the US to go under a lockdown. For Zhang, his home country of China was the first in the world to go under a lockdown. Wouldn't it be reasonable for the heads of these digital domains to follow California's Gavin Newsom and China's Xi Jinping and consider their own versions of a lockdown? This means maintaining a system of factchecking and tough standards regarding COVID-19 and weeding out messages, hashtags and transmitters that fail to meet them.

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nies, this could be their moment of redemption after years of being pilloried as "surveillance capitalists" and a menace to society, but they have a narrow window to get it right. Facebook, Google/YouTube and Twitter, have been playing catch-up after failing to catch misinformation at the get-go. Facebook, to its credit, has, uncharacteristically, been a few steps ahead of the others. It has fact-checkers and takes down content that fails their tests; the others don't. That said, despite all of Facebook's good intentions, its sibling, WhatsApp, the most powerful digital virus-spreader in India, is largely ungoverned; it is a private messaging app and has end-to-end encryption. Other than a subtle message in light grey that says "Forwarded", which means little to most users, there are no real warnings that, say, hydrating, blow drying your mouth and yoga asanas will not actually kill the coronavirus; complacency created by these actions could end up killing you instead.

Wouldn't it be more useful if instead of a coy "Forwarded" note, WhatsApp had a note that said, "For Reliable Medical Advice, Check Out the WHO" or some other trustworthy medical authority? A little clunky? This is not the time to be fussy about the aesthetics of one's WhatsApp feed.

Speaking of clunky design, let's talk about YouTube. The platform did try to compensate for the quacks and cranks who populate the platform by placing a link to an authoritative organisation, such as the WHO, below

the video, with the organisation's logo. This, frankly, is a terrible design choice on the part of a company based in in the backyard of Stanford, considered the home of "design thinking".

Consider the widely-viewed videos from Baba Ramdev, yogi and ayurvedic capitalist extraordinaire. He claims to have invented Ashwagandha, that "doesn't allow blending of corona protein with human protein." He also has scientifically unproven tests for the coronavirus and yoga asanas that can help stave it off and myriad other sagely advice. Collectively, this collection of advice and products could prove more harmful than utterly bizarre claims that many might write off. YouTube attaches a link to an authoritative logo below the yogi's videos. The result: To the average user you watch Baba Ramdev offering advice and the video seems like it has been given legitimacy by an internationally recognised healthcare authority. What were the geniuses at Google thinking?

Twitter, for its part, keeps updating its policies for what it will and will not allow. The result is an inconsistent policy that leaves room for Elon Musk, @elonmusk, founder of Tesla and SpaceX, to tweet to 32.7 million followers that children are immune to the coronavirus (false). As for the room it has created for @realDonaldTrump with 75 million followers for spreading misinformation. let's not even go there.

Here is the bottom line: Social distancing has direct economic costs. We can see a global economy melting down in front of our eyes. Social media distancing has costs as well — mostly in the form of some added boredom for users and some lost ad revenues for the platforms.

So, Mark, Sundar, Jack, and Zhang, it is time to step up and help us all practise social media distancing by enforcing stricter standards. Beyond India, the entire developing world relies on your platforms for news about the pandemic. If there ever was a time to demonstrate vision and leadership, this is the time for the digital leaders to flatten the curve of the infodemic before it flattens the most vulnerable populations on the planet.

The writer is Dean of Global Business at The Fletcher School at Tufts University, founding executive director of Fletcher's Institute for Business in the Global Context and a nonresident senior fellow of Brookings India

THE FREEDOM TO SING

Turkish singer Helin Bölek was part of a longer non-violent struggle for rights

S GOPALAKRISHNAN

IT WAS DEPRESSING to see the video of a small group of mourners wearing coronaprevention masks being dispersed with water cannons on a rainy day in Istanbul. The group was carrying the body of Helin Bölek for the funeral on April 4. The revolutionary singer had died after 288 days of being on hunger strike, demanding the freedom to sing the songs of her choice.

According to a post on the group's Twitter account, Bölek and fellow band member, Ibrahim Gökçek, started the strike while imprisoned to protest against the way the government treated their popular music collective, Grup Yorum, which has had a rotating membership. Ever since its formation in 1985, band members had been subject to persecution and arrests by the state, which was alarmed by their revolutionary influence. Six members of the band were on the state's "grey list" as wanted terrorists, with a cash reward on their heads. The band had been demanding an end to the embargo on their concerts and the release of their jailed members.

Marion Wallace Dunlop, one of the most well-known British suffragettes who helped to make voting rights to the British women possible, once resisted a male jailor forcefeeding her when she was on a hunger strike

The difference between Gandhi's indefinite fasts and Bölek's fast lies in their contrasting philosophies of protest, though the outward expressions look the same. It is Gandhi's precise use of various modes of protest that has enriched the history of non-violent struggles, in contrast to isolated martyrdoms, like Bölek's. We have lessons to learn from this.

in 1909. Her demand was simple: "Grant me the status of a political prisoner." The mighty system failed before her conviction. Dunlop was later given a "Hunger Strike Medal for Valour" by the Women's Social and Political Union, one of the organisations that helmed the struggle. British Prime Minister Margret Thatcher might have called Bobby Sands, member of the Provisional Irish Republican Army "a criminal who decided to die" when he went on a fast unto death while imprisoned, after being sentenced for firearms possession but ask any Irish, and he is a Mahatma. Along with nine other comrades, Sands died while on a hunger strike — for 66 days, in the HM Prison Maze in Northern Ireland.

Mahatma Gandhi was 79 when he began his last fast on January 12, 1948, just 18 days before his martyrdom. No one could achieve what Gandhi did through his fasting, and the people never allowed Bapu to starve to death. In a private letter to his father, on the day Bapu started the fast, Devadas Gandhi wrote: "By your strenuous efforts [for communal harmony] lakhs of lives are saved and lakhs more would have been saved. What you can achieve while living, you cannot achieve by dying." Even then, Gandhi was unmoved. Perhaps Gandhi knew that his death would not be by fasting. Only an individual could kill him, not any government. He had categorically stated so more than once. Governments, whether the British or the post-Independence one, knew for certain that they couldn't play with the life of the Mahatma as he enjoyed massive public support. The difference between Gandhi's indefinite fasts and Bölek's fast lies in their contrasting philosophies of protest, though the outward expressions look the same. It is Gandhi's precise use of various modes of protest that has enriched the history of nonviolent struggles, in contrast to isolated martyrdoms, like Bölek's. We have lessons to

learn from this. When then the funeral pyre for Kasturba Gandhi was arranged in the Aga Khan Palace jail – she died in February 1944 after a prolonged illness — the jail superintendent told Gandhi that some sandalwood is in stock and, whether Gandhi would mind if they use it for her funeral. Gandhi had a counter-question: How did the jail come to have sandalwood in stock? The superintendent replied "We arranged for it when you were on hunger strike the last time."

Gopalakrishnan is a Delhi-based writer

INDIAN EXPRESS

APRIL 7, 1980, FORTY YEARS AGO

BJP Is Born

THE BHARATIYA JANATA Party, founded after the third split in the three-year-old Janata Party, was formally launched with the unanimous election of Atal Behari Vajpayee as its president. Addressing a crowded press conference after his election at the end of the two-day convention, Vajpayee said that the first priority before the new party, would be to "mobilise the people to meet the growing challenge of dynastic dictatorship". He said that in the coming assembly elections, the BJP would strive to put a common candidate of all opposition parties against the ruling Congress (I). The new president announced the names of other office-bearers of the party

who would run it till the national convention or primary members after the assembly elections. Vijayaraje Scindia, who presided over the two-day convention and Ram Jethmalani would be two of the three vice-presidents, L K Advani, Sikandar Bakht and Murli Manohar Joshi will be the general secretaries.

Jana Sangh Revival

IF THE MOOD of the 4,000 odd delegates at the two-day convention called by LK Advani is any indication, the revival of the Jana Sangh after the assembly elections is a distinct possibility. An overwhelming number of delegates and workers of the erstwhile Jana Sangh were patently disappointed with the leadership's decision to name the new party the Bhartiya Janata Party. Several delegates particularly from Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Delhi, expressed their disappointment with the announced policies of carrying on the legacy of IP Narayan.

ASSAM AGITATION

ASSAM AGITATORS APPLIED a tighter squeeze to prevent the flow of crude oil from the state as the governor's notification designating the entire state a disturbed area. Reacting to the resort to millitary assistance to maintain law and order, thousands of people picketed Oil India's pipeline headquarters at Narengi to prevent the flow of crude to the refineries.

— THE GUARDIAN

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2020

THE IDEAS PAGE

Let's respect the balance

This pandemic has made the world re-examine the interconnection between man and nature



M Venkaiah Naidu

THIS YEAR'S WORLD Health Day comes at a time when the world is engaged in an unprecedented battle against COVID-19, which has claimed thousands of lives so far. It is an occasion to remind humanity to not only maintain personal hygiene but also not to tamper with nature. It is also an occasion to recollect the important role being played by medical professionals, who are the WHO's special focus this year, in treating COVID-19 patients across the globe.

Despite rapid scientific and medical advancements, the pandemic has shown how vulnerable and helpless homo sapiens are, even as scientists across the globe are racing against time to save lives by finding an appropriate cure for the severely afflicted and develop a preventive vaccine.

The deadly virus does not distinguish between a prince and a pauper, nor does it recognise distinctions between regions or religions. It continues to shake the entire world with country after country announcing lockdowns and closing borders to prevent its transmission.

It is not only ironical but also a bit surreal that while the world wide web opened up the world and connected people like never before, the worldwide virus has forced nations to close their borders and opt for social

These are testing times for humanity. After we emerge from this battle and try to come to terms with the altered realities of economic recession and the massive disruption in individual lives, there will be a moment to seek a solution to the conundrum: Can such catastrophic events be prevented? There will be time to raise questions over our development model and the fragility of our ecosystem and the unsustainability of our production-consumption patterns. We may be left wondering if it is true, as some thinkers are arguing, that man's greed which is destroying the habitats of other species is triggering such catastrophic consequences.

The COVID-19 pandemic is bringing into sharp focus the distortions in the ecological equilibrium. It may be time to recall the ancient Indian vision to respect and restore this balance. More than 2,000 years ago, the ancient Vedic sages had espoused a worldview that gave equal importance to all living creatures. In the Rig Veda, one finds the following Sanskrit hymn:

Om tacchamyoravrinimahe gatunyajnaya

gatunyajnapataye daivisvastirastunaha svastirmanushebhyaha urdhvamjigatubheshajam sham no astudvipade sham chatushpade Om shantihshantihshantih (The sage prays for the welfare of all be-

ings. He prays that plants, especially the medicinal herbs should grow in plenty so that all diseases may be cured and we live a healthy life. The sage hopes fervently that the gods will rain peace on us and all the twolegged creatures as well as all the four-legged creatures would be happy. Finally, the sage concludes with the prayer that there should be peace in the hearts of all beings in all realms.)

This prayer epitomises the essential vi-



sion of ancient India, which revered nature and underscored the need for the harmonious co-existence of all living creatures. Worshipping nature is part of our culture as the manifestation of divinity is seen in every element, including plants and animals. As such, preservation of the environment and maintaining ecological balance has been an age-old tradition.

Mahatma Gandhi had quite aptly said: "I bow my head in reverence to our ancestors for their sense of the beautiful in nature and for their foresight in investing beautiful manifestations of nature with a religious significance".

It is time for all Indians and every global citizen to become proactive warriors in the cause of protecting nature so that the planet, people and all other living creatures remain healthy and enjoy a harmonious existence. The air we breathe and the water we drink should be clean. We should conserve soil and plant wealth and other natural resources.

The drastic improvement in air quality in the wake of the lockdowns and the recent reports of wild animals wandering into urban spaces illustrates the extent to which human beings have caused disruption.

In the Indian worldview, our prayers have been for maintaining this harmony not only on the earth but also in sky and space, as the following Vedic verse succinctly illustrates:

DyauhShaantir-AntarikshamShaantih PrithiviShaantir-AapahShaantir-

OssadhayahShaantih VanaspatayahShaantir-VishvedevaahShaantir-Brahma Shaantih, SarvamShaantihShaantir-Eva Shaantih, Saa Maa Shaantir-Edhi

(Peace is in the Sky and Space; Peace is on the Earth; Peace is in Water; Peace is in Plants; Peace is in Trees; Peace is in Gods presiding over various elements of Nature; Peace is in our consciousness; Peace is pervading everywhere; Peace outside and Peace within. May you have that Peace which makes your life fulfilled.)

India has achieved significant progress on various health indices since Independence and has eliminated important infectious diseases like yaws, smallpox, and polio. The average life expectancy has increased to 69 years and India's disease burden due to communicable, maternal, neonatal, and nutritional diseases has dropped from 61 per cent to 33 per cent between

have led to a huge increase in non-communicable diseases. A few years ago, WHO data

diabetes. There is a need to arrest this worrisome trend by mounting a massive national campaign on the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle by shunning sedentary living and avoiding junk food, among other steps. Awareness has to be created from a young age by promoting yoga and meditation as also healthy dietary habits. These aspects should become part of the school curriculum and bodies like the Indian Medical Association and medical institutions should take the lead in educating people. The media also has to play a more proactive role in disseminating information to the masses. Another important issue is the need to

take special care of senior citizens and the elderly, especially in the context of the present pandemic as they are the most vulnerable to contract the disease.

With the glaring urban-rural gap in health infrastructure, COVID-19 has also brought into focus and underscored the need for greater investment in public health. We must treat this as a wakeup call. The flagship scheme of Ayushman Bharat seeks to address this problem to some extent by providing health insurance coverage to over 50 crore beneficiaries and delivering comprehensive primary healthcare through 1.5 lakh health and wellness centres.

We must pay attention to both the preventive and curative aspects of public health. We must address lifestyle issues and look for holistic solutions.

This pandemic has made the world reexamine the interconnection between man and nature. We need to recognise that we share this planet with plants, birds and animals and other living organisms. We need to understand the dynamics of this interaction and adopt what WHO has termed a "One Health" concept, which adopts a multidisciplinary approach to attain optimal health for people, animals, plants and the environment. To achieve optimal health outcomes, it seeks to bring together multiple sectors and combine the expertise of health professionals, biologists, veterinarians, virologists and ecologists, among others, in designing policies

and programmes. Ours is one world. We must protect its balance so that we can lead healthier lives. We must combine knowledge with wisdom. We must act in unison to create a safer planet with improved health outcomes for people, plants and animals while protecting the en-

The writer is vice president of India

When people lead

"The pandemic is underscoring the fact that internet access is no longer a

luxury, but a necessity to participate in society fully. More than half the world's population is now online. But access varies hugely according to the development level of countries, the wealth and education of individuals, and

Prime Minister has deftly drafted the people into the fight against pandemic



gender"

VIKTOR ORBAN felt that the Parliament impeded his fight against COVID-19. The prime minister of Hungary used the majority he enjoys in the parliament to secure emergency powers for himself. He can now run Hungary through decrees without any judicial oversight. Any criticism of his measures will attract imprisonment up to five years.

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures, some justifiable. But critics argue that some leaders are using the public health emergency to usurp all powers and are emerging as authoritarian regimes. We are not talking about Russia or China. Even traditional democracies like Britain and Israel are compelled to turn to emergency measures in their battle against the pandemic. The Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, has ordered the courts to be shut down (some criticise this as a measure to evade his own prosecution), authorised his internal security agencies to carry out extensive surveillance on citizens, and is punishing violators of the lockdown with six months' imprisonment.

The United Kingdom, with well-established democratic institutions and practices, had to push through a pandemic-related bill that gave sweeping powers to different ministries for detaining and arresting people indefinitely. Health Secretary Matt Hancock, while presenting the Bill to the parliament, admitted that it was "a departure from the way that we do things".

President Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines and Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-Ocha of Thailand have been granted supreme powers by their respective governments. Italy and Spain have had to turn to their militaries for quarantining thousands of people. Hungary, Lebanon, Malaysia, Peru and many other countries too have brought their armies to the streets to implement the restrictions. Even Germany and the UK have turned to soldiers for help. The UK has formed a "COVID Response Group" with about 20,000 soldiers.

In the US, initial efforts by the Donald Trump administration called for sweeping powers to detain people indefinitely without trial and end legal protection to asylum seekers. However, the US Congress intervened and forced the Justice Department to dilute its wish-list. President Trump is constrained by the fact that under the US constitution, governors of various states enjoy exclusive powers in matters of lockdown.

Compare all that with what Prime Minister Narendra Modi is doing in India. He has neither asked for nor invoked any emergency powers. He has not resorted to any draconian measures like censorship or detention without trial. The cacophony about gagging the media is misinformed. All that the Supreme Court had asked of the

media is to be careful with fake news and give space to official figures and numbers.

Modi has not called the army onto the streets. He has not denied people any fundamental human rights. The lockdown instructions were largely voluntary and for the public good. Not that harsh measures were not suggested to him. Yet, Modi decided to depend not on authoritarian but on democratic means. He came out as a committed democrat upholding basic human rights in a "world war-like situation", as he has described it.

In his fight against the coronavirus, Modi's weapon is the trust of 1.3 billion people of India. Shashan, Prashasan aur Janta Janardhan — political leadership, bureaucracy and the divine people – was how he described his combat coalition in a recent address to the nation. Although half of the state governments in India are ruled by non-BJP parties, Modi didn't face any opposition. It shows the level of his credibility. It is appropriate here to recall the recent spat between President Trump and the governor of New York, Andrew Cuomo. This is the most significant dimension

of the Modi government. We often hear platitudes for democracies like "Of the people, for the people, by the people". However, in most democracies, things are hardly ever "by the people". Modi has changed that. He has not seen people as mere voters or spectators. He has made them stakeholders in governance. Starting with his first major campaign for cleanliness — Swachh Bharat Abhiyan — right up to the present fight against the pandemic, Modi has displayed the unique skill of increasingly making people active participants.

Francis Fukuyama makes an interesting distinction between the rule of law and the rule by law. Democracies are run based on the rule of law where the rules framed by the constitution are supreme Authoritarians try to resort to rule by law, a complete deviation from the democratic spirit. Modi has clearly shown his commitment to the rule of law. Not that there were no provocations. There were incidents like the Tablighi Jamaat Markaz — a deliberate violation of lockdown restrictions by certain religious groups, and situations like the large-scale flight of migrant workers. There were also instances where state governments themselves were seen violating lockdown restrictions.

Yet, Modi didn't discard his model. He continues to invoke the innate goodness of the people. In his latest address, he described them as *Isvar* (God) and called for the manifestation of their maha shakti (mighty power) and the virat roop (omni form). That the people of India are solidly behind him has been manifested in how they responded to his calls, such as applauding the corona-fighters or lighting a lamp for them.

Modi has taken his fight against the pandemic to a different level. He has used scientific methods, deployed technology in a big way and made 1.3 billion people stakeholders in his fight. Through his unique and visionary handling of this situation, Modi has presented a new mantra to the world: "Human-centric development cooperation."

The writer is national general secretary, BJP and director, India Foundation

fragility of our ecosystem 1990 and 2016. However, lifestyle changes over the years and the unsustainability of our productionconsumption patterns. has attributed 61 per cent of all deaths in Between nationalism & globalism

Sovereignty is back. Solidarity is under stress, will need to be reinvented

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come to terms with the

Raja Mandala

BY C RAJA MOHAN

IS EVERYONE for himself, when the chips are down? That is not true of most communities-a village, city or a nation-where the social capital is strong enough to put the collective above the self. But when it comes to the society of states, it would seem that each nation is for itself, especially in the middle of

Although all world leaders have acknowledged the global imperative in dealing with the virus, they have put the nation first. Are all nations now for themselves? Not so fast. Sovereignty is certainly back. Solidarity is under stress, but not dead. The drift is towards a middle path between extreme globalism and hyper-nationalism. The last few decades have seen the growing awareness of "global problems" like climate change and the need for "global solutions". The corona pandemic certainly adds to that consciousness. But as in the case of climate change, collective action is not easy to come by.

One of the first steps most governments took during the current crisis was to shut down their borders. The idea of a "borderless world" had gained much acceptance in recent years, but is now under serious questioning. See, for example, how the US, Canada and Europe are outbidding each other in buying medical material from China. They are ready to pay a hefty premium if Chinese suppliers break from an earlier commitment. Meanwhile, many nations, including India, have banned the export of much-needed

medicines and equipment to combat the

Washington, which initially criticised other countries for limiting exports of essential drugs, has had no option but to go down that path as the toll from coronavirus rose rapidly. Donald Trump is angry with 3M, one of the leading American producers of masks, for exporting to other nations at a time of huge domestic shortfall. The US ban on exports of medical supplies came just days after the G-20 affirmed that its member states "will work to ensure the flow of vital medical supplies, critical agricultural products, and other goods and services across borders".

The problem is not that governments are being hypocritical. They are simply trapped in a crisis that is testing two important assumptions that guided the world in the last three decades. One is that globalisation, with its long and transborder supply chains, generates prosperity through economic efficiency. Second was that economic globalisation based on the dispersal of production will serve the interests of all nations.

The new objections to economic globalisation are not coming from the traditional champions of sovereignty in the East and the South, but the West. It was North America and Europe that had preached the virtues of unhindered economic globalisation. They also championed the idea of globalism that will transcend national sovereignty in terms of both institutions and values.

New converts to nationalism and sovereignty began to appear in the West well before corona crisis. Britain walked out of the European Union claiming the need to "take back control" of its borders. Storming the White House against all predictions in 2016, Trump has sought to push Washington away from the trinity of America's post-war political commitments-to open borders, free trade, and multilateralism. For Trump and his team. the corona crisis is confirmation of the dangers of excessive globalisation. This argument is finding some resonance in Europe. Addressing workers at a factory that makes masks in France, President Emmanuel Macron said, "We have to produce more in France.... to reduce our dependency. we must rebuild our national and European sovereignty".

The efficiency argument of the globalists has been countered in the West by many who say societies are not merely economic units; they are also political and social communities. While expansive globalisation has helped generate super profits for the capital, it has put the working people at an increasing disadvantage.

The uneven distribution of the benefits from the dispersal of production and free movement of labour has undermined political support for economic globalisation in the West. Reinforcing this downward trend is the belief that China is misusing global economic interdependence for unilateral political advantage. There were indeed strategic conse-

quences to China's emergence as the world's factory. After all, China is not a passive territory; it is an ancient civilisation with ambitions of its own.

Where then does the virus leave us? While economic interdependence among nations can't be eliminated, we might be past the peak of expansive globalisation and hyper-connectivity. Many countries are likely to move to diversification of external production, short supply chains and stockpiles of essential materials to limit vulnerability during times of crises.

The palpable anger against China in the US and beyond, for keeping the world in the dark about the spread of the coronavirus, has been magnified by Beijing's "mask diplomacy" and political triumphalism after it got in control of the situation in Wuhan. This anger is bound to translate into long-term changes in the relations between China and the West and some rearrangement of multilateral mechanisms.

Out of this restructuring new international coalitions are likely to emerge. Even as world leaders put their own respective nations first, they will also explore new forms of solidarity. Like the instinct for self-preservation, solidarity too is part of human nature.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SUPPLY CRUNCH

whole world is grappling with the menace of the coronavirus pandemic, India is suffering a double whammy of acute shortage of essential medical equipment such as gloves, masks and personal protection equipment for doctors and paramedical staff. Appreciating the magnitude of this problem on April 4, Prime Minister Narendra Modi took the lead in voicing his deep concern and alerting the country's health authorities to do the needful. Panic buying should be avoided and such items may be purchased judiciously.

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Securing frontlines' (IE, April 6). While the

Ravi Mathur, Noida

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Securing frontlines' (IE, April 6). There can be no excuse for non-availability of PPEs even for health workers. The US unscrupulously procuring PPEs and the WHO's inability to ensure equitable distribution is an indication that India is unlikely to be able to import supplies. It is prudent to authorise more indigenous manufactures to pick up the slack.

Deepak Singhal, Chennai

AN EYEWASH

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Bad old ways' (IE, April 6). The acquittal of Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, the main accused in the murder of journalist Daniel Pearl by the Sindh High Court proves that Pakistan's law enforcement authorities had failed - deliber-

LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

To encourage quality reader intervention, The Indian **Express offers the Letter of** the Week award. The letter adjudged the best for the week is published every Saturday. Letters may be e-mailed to editpage@expressindia.com or sent to The Indian Express, B-1/B, Sector 10,

ately or otherwise - to build a "watertight case" against the assailants. If past incidents are anything to go by, Pakistan's resolve to appeal against the verdict is mere eyewash.

Noida-UP 201301.

SS Paul, Nadia

COVID PREJUDICE

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Pandemic and prejudice' (IE, April 6). The plight of the author is understandable. Naming China as the culprit behind the spread of COVID-19 seems to have generated a dislike for people from that country among Indians. The US, which began blaming China, might benefit from such an exercise. But it does not behove a country with a rich tradition of humanitarianism.

G Javaid Rasool, *Lucknow*

wess.com

10 THE OUTBREAK THE WORLD



Leo Varadkar

IRELAND

Indian-origin PM Varadkar rejoins medical register

London: Ireland's Indianorigin Prime Minister, Leo Varadkar, has rejoined the country's medical register to take on his former role as a doctor on the frontlines of the Irish health service tackling the COVID-19 crisis. According to 'The Irish Times', the Taoiseach – as the Irish Prime Minister is known – rejoined the medical register back in March, just as the pandemic hit Ireland. Varadkar, 41, is set to work within the country's Health Service Executive (HSE), providing essential over-thephone assessments to anyone who thinks they may have been exposed

SINGAPORE

to coronavirus.

Govt to close airport terminal for 18 months

Singapore: Singapore will suspend operations of Changi Airport's terminal 2 for 18 months starting next month following a sharp drop in passenger traffic. Changi Airport is Singapore's main civilian airport and is one of the largest transportation hubs in Asia. It has terminals. "We will save on running costs for the airport operator, retail tenants, airlines and ground handlers," Transport Minister Khaw Boon Wan said Monday. One terminal is enough to handle current traffic at the airport, he said.

'Gradual decline' in virus: Govt

Tehran: The trajectory of coronavirus infections in Iran appears to have started a "gradual" downward trend, the government said Monday, but it warned the disease is far from being under control. The COVID-19 outbreak claimed 136 deaths in the past 24 hours, bringing Iran's overall death toll to 3,739, health ministry spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour told a televised news conference. "Due to intensification of social distancing, we have seen a gradual and slow decline in the number of new cases in recent days," a spokesperson said.

'PANDEMIC Peak death week': US braces for fight

With worst to come, govt report flags chaos, shortage of key gear; NY governor extends lockdown

DOINA CHIACU& SUSAN HEAVEY WASHINGTON, APRIL 6

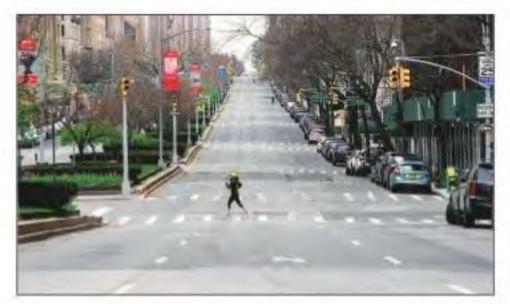
US OFFICIALS on Monday girded the country for a "peak death week" from the coronavirus pandemic as the accelerating American death toll closed the gap with Italy and Spain, the countries with the most fatalities to date.

"It's going to be the peak hospitalisation, peak ICU week and unfortunately, peak death week," Admiral Brett Giroir, a physician and a member of the White House coronavirus task force, told ABC's "Good Morning America" on Monday.

Giroir raised particular alarm for New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Detroit.

Confirmed US coronavirus cases topped 336,000 on Sunday. Roughly twice as many people a day are dying in the United States versus Spain and Italy, according to the latest data. The American death roll rose by 1,144 on Sunday, pushing the total to 9,573.

Hospitals report chaotic shortages of beds, ventilators and protective gear as patients isolated from their families die alone. Meanwhile, more than 90 percent of Americans are under



A nearly-empty Park Avenue in Manhattan. Reuters

stay-at-home orders issued by state governors.

In the US government's first review of the ability of hospitals to cope with the coronavirus outbreak, investigators on Monday confirmed that facilities nationwide faced "substantial challenges," including shortages of equipment and staff.

In terms of testing and treating patients, hospitals have insufficient capacity to handle the surge, which is taking an emotional toll on doctors and nurses, the US Department of Health and Human Services inspector general said in a report based on 323 hospitals surveyed from March 23-27.

"Hospitals reported that widespread shortages of PPE put staff and patients at risk," HHS inspectors said, referring to personal protective equipment. "Additionally, hospitals reported frequently waiting seven days or longer for test results," requiring

use up more critical supplies. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo on Monday extended a shutdown in the city until near the end of the month, as per a PTI report.

them to keep patients longer and

Cuomo said the COVID-19 death rate in New York was "effectively flat" for the past two days but announced that schools

TIGER TESTS POSITIVE

US denies

diverting masks

bound for Berlin

Berlin: The US embassy in

Germany on Monday denied a

claim that a Berlin-bound ship-

ment of protective masks had

been "confiscated" by the United

States, calling it disinformation

take any action to divert any...

supplies that were destined to

Germany nor did we have any

knowledge of such a shipment,"

an embassy spokesman said.

"We remain concerned about

pervasive attempts to divide in-

ternational efforts through un-

sourced, unattributed disinfor-

Friday said 200,000 FFP2 masks,

destined for use by Berlin police,

were "confiscated" in Bangkok.

and of carrying out an "act of

modern-day piracy". Geisel

doubled down on the accusa-

tions on Monday morning, in-

sisting that the masks had been

redirected to the US. **AFP**

Berlin's regional minister of the interior Andreas Geisel on

He accused the US of using "methods from the Wild West"

mation campaigns," he added.

"The US Government did not

designed to stoke division.

ATIGER at the Bronx zoo has COVID-19, in what is believed to be what one official called "humanto-cat transmission." "This is the first instance of a tiger being infected with Covid-19," as per to the US Department of Agriculture, which noted that although only one tiger had been tested, the virus appeared to have infected other animals as well. "Several lions and tigers at the zoo showed symptoms of respiratory illness," according to a statement by the **Agriculture Department**

and non-essential businesses must stay shut until April 29.

"Now is not the time to be lax," he told reporters.

Trump, who has oscillated between issuing dire warnings and expressing optimism that contradicts the views of his medical experts, tweeted "USA STRONG!" and "LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL!" on

TOLL TOPS 5,000; QUEEN RALLIES UK

Boris in hospital after symptoms persist for 10 days



At the hospital where PM Boris Johnson is admitted. Reuters

AGENCIES LONDON, APRIL 6

PRIME MINISTER Boris Johnson was hospitalised on Sunday evening after 10 days of battling the coronavirus, unnerving a country that had gathered to watch Queen Elizabeth II rally fellow Britons to confront the pandemic and reassure them that when the crisis finally ebbed, "we will meet again."

Johnson messaged from his hospital bed on Monday that he was in "good spirits" and staying in contact with his ministers to oversee the UK's fightback.

"Last night, on the advice of my doctor, I went into hospital for some routine tests as I'm still experiencing coronavirus symptoms. I'm in good spirits and keeping in touch with my team, as we work together to fight this virus and keep everyone safe," Johnson said in a Twitter post.

More than 5,000 people who tested positive for coronavirus have now died in Britain, official figures showed Monday.

Earlier, UK housing and communities secretary Robert Jenrick said, "This wasn't an emergency admission. It was a planned admission to undergo some routine tests. He is doing well, I am told,

I'd like to say thank you to all the brilliant NHS staff taking care of me and others in this difficult time. You are the best of Britain.

Stay safe everyone, and

home to protect the NHS

please remember to stay at

— BORIS JOHNSON

and save lives"

and we look forward to him being back at No 10 soon."

But the uncertainty generated by his persistent illness underscored the sense of crisis that led the queen to address the country in a rare televised speech that evoked the darkest days of World War II.

"I am speaking to you at what I know is an increasingly challenging time," the queen said. "A disruption that has brought grief to some, financial difficulties to many, and enormous changes to the daily lives of us all."

Threat looms largest at home: UN chief urges govts to protect women

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE UNITED NATIONS, APRIL 6

UN SECRETARY General Antonio Guterres has urged governments to include the protection of women in their response to the

novel coronavirus pandemic. Reports of domestic violence have surged globally in the wake of massive lockdowns imposed to contain the spread of the disease.

"Violence is not confined to the battlefield," said Guterres in a statement and video released in multiple languages, days after his call for a worldwide ceasefire in the wake of the outbreak.

"For many women and girls, the threat looms largest where

they should be safest. In their own homes," he said.

Describing the rise in domestic violence as "horrifying," he urged all governments "to make the prevention and redress of violence against women a key part of their national response plans for COVID-19." India reported double the usual number of domestic abuse cases in the first week of nationwide movement restrictions, according to the country's National Commission for Women.

Cases in France rose by a third in the week after that country's lockdown, authorities said while Australia reported a 75 per cent increase in internet searches relating to support for domestic violence victims.

Japan PM proposes emergency, \$1-trillion aid

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE TOKYO. APRIL 6

JAPAN'S PRIME minister on Monday proposed a state of emergency for several major regions seeing a sharp rise in coronavirus cases, as well as a stimulus package worth \$1 trillion to cushion the impact on the world's third-biggest economy.

The official declaration of the state of emergency would likely come as soon as Tuesday, Shinzo Abe said, as the country grapples with a recent spike in cases.

"Currently, we are seeing rapid increases of new infections particularly in urban areas like Tokyo and Osaka," said Abe.

The declaration hands regional governors the power to ask residents to stay inside, seek the closure of businesses that attract large crowds and commandeer land and buildings for medical purposes. But it falls far short of the sort of lockdown measures imposed in parts of Europe, where police have patrolled the streets and fined offenders.

"We envision, for a period of about one month, that we will ask further cooperation of the Japanese people to reduce person-to-person contacts that lead to infections," said Abe.



Japan PM Shinzo Abe. AP



Workers from Bangladesh and India at a dormitory in Singapore on Monday. Two dormitories, housing over 20,000 foreign workers, were gazetted as isolation facilities after they became clusters of coronavirus cases. Combined, they have so far seen over 90 cases. Workers under quarantine will continue to be paid salaries, the government has said. Reuters

Toll tops 50,000; Europe sees signs of hope

AGENCIES APRIL 6

EUROPE'S HARDEST-HIT nations saw some tentative signs of hope in the fight against the coronavirus on Monday. There was cause for cheer in

some European hotspots, with Italy reporting its lowest death toll in two weeks, Spanish fatalities dropping for the third straight day and France seeing its fewest dead in a week.

"The curve has started its descent and the number of deaths has started to drop," said top Italian health official Silvio Brusaferro, adding the next phase could be a gradual easing of a strict month-long lockdown.



A winding queue outside a **supermarket in Italy.** *Reuters*

In Spain, deaths and new infections dropped again Monday. The country's health ministry reported 637 new deaths, the lowest fatality toll in 13 days, for a total of over 13,000 dead since the pandemic hit. New recorded infections were also the lowest in

"The growth rate of the pandemic is decreasing in almost all

regions," Health Ministry official María José Sierra said. However, Italy's daily coronavirus death toll shot up to 636 on

Monday, just one day after dropping to its lowest level in over two weeks, the civil protection service said. The number of fatalities had fallen to 525 on Sunday, the lowest since March 19.

Meanwhile, Germany has drawn up a list of steps, including mandatory mask-wearing in public, limits on gatherings and the rapid tracing of infection chains, to help enable a phased return to normal life after its coronavirus lockdown is set to end on April 19.



The next step

mism over the decline in death tolls, some nations have begun planning for what comes after their full lockdowns. Spain is looking at easing the restriction on all non-essential workers having to stay home. Germany, with one of the lowest tolls in Europe, is planning a phased return to normal life — with rules such as limits on gatherings and compulsory use of masks in place.

AMID CAUTIOUS opti-

Pak cancels Baisakhi fest at Gurdwara Punja Sahib

M ZULQERNAIN LAHORE, APRIL 6

PAKISTAN HAS cancelled the Baisakhi celebrations at Gurdwara Punja Sahib in Punjab province from April 14, in which around 2,000 Sikhs from India were to participate, due to the coronavirus pandemic in the country, authorities said on Monday.

The number of the coronavirus cases in Pakistan on Monday reached 3,277 with the infections in the worst-hit Punjab province approaching 1,500. The deadly virus which originated in China's Wuhan city has infected more than 1.2 million people globally.

"The government has cancelled both Baisakhi and Sadhu Bela festivals scheduled to be held in April and May, respec-

tively, because of coronavirus," Mir Hashmi, the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) spokesman, told PTI.

He said the Pakistan government was to issue over 2,000 visas to Indian Sikhs for the Baisakhi festival but it has stopped the process earlier because of the pandemic. "Instructions have also been issued to the management of the Gurdwara Hasan Abdal not to open it for local Sikhs for the Baisakhi festivities either,'

he said. Thousands of local Sikhs in addition to pilgrims from India and other parts of the world participate in it every year.

The ETPB looks after the holy places of the minority community in the country. In 2019, over 2,200 Sikhs from India visited Pakistan to celebrate Baisakhi. PTI

'GERMS DON'T RESPECT CENSORSHIP' Autocrats' COVID-19 dilemma: You can't arrest a virus

DECLAN WALSH CAIRO. APRIL 6

men hit back as they know best. For Egypt's president, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, that meant deploying chemical warfare troops, clad in protective suits and armed with disinfectant, to the streets of Cairo, in a theatrical display of military muscle projected via social media.

WHEN THE virus hit, the strong-

Russia's leader, Vladimir V Putin, donned the plastic suit himself, in canary yellow, for a visit to a Moscow hospital for coronavirus patients. Then he dispatched to Italy 15 military planes filled with medical supplies and emblazoned with the slogan "From Russia with Love."

President Recep Tayvip Erdogan of Turkey, a jailer of journalists, locked up a few reporters who criticised his early efforts to counter the virus, then sent a voice message to the phone of every citizen over 50, stressing he had everything under control.

the world's most repressive countries, where not a single infection has been officially declared, the

And in Turkmenistan, one of

president for life, Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov, promoted his book on medicinal plants as a possible solution to the pandemic. In responding to the pandemic, the world's autocrats are turning to their tried-and-tested tool kits, employing a mixture of

propaganda, repression and os-

tentatious shows of strength.



Temperature check on a bus near Istanbul. Reuters

trench their already vast powers In the immediate term, the with little risk of censure from a crisis offers the autocrats an opportunity to taunt rivals or endistracted outside world, where

the scramble to contain the pandemic has forced even liberal democracies to consider harsh measures, such as invasive cellphone surveillance systems.

"Coronavirus is the new terrorism," said Kenneth Roth, executive director of Human Rights Watch, who fears that a sweeping expansion of draconian powers could become the virus's enduring legacy. "It's the latest pretext for rights violations that I fear will persist long after the crisis ends."

The virus cannot be arrested, censored or outlawed. The economic toll of a pandemic will strain the patronage networks that underpin many autocracies. Leaders who portray themselves as saviours are more exposed to blame if the death toll soars.

italised on the crisis to crack down on domestic dissent and play up their favoured tropes. In a speech last week, el-Sisi denounced critics of his efforts as lackeys of the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood. In Russia, Mr. Putin's officials initially tried to blame the crisis on wine-sipping Russian jet-setters, out of touch with vodka-drinking ordinary Russians, who imported the virus from skiing trips in Europe. But the pandemic has also

Autocratic leaders have cap-

scrambled the plans of those same strongmen. "Germs don't respect censorship," said Roth of Human Rights Watch. "The censorship might stop the momentary criticism, but it could fuel the public health crisis." **NYT**

ECONOMY



₹41,705



₹76.13



\$26.15



₹38,100

SENSEX: 27,590.95 ▼674.36 NIFTY: 8,083.80 ▼ 170.00 NIKKEI: 18,576.30 ▲ 756.11 HANG SENG: 23,749.12 ▲ 513.01 FTSE: 5,539.61 ▲ 124.11 DAX: 9,984.05 ▲ 458.28

COVID-19 EFFECT PHARMA SECTOR

Drug exporters urge RBI to extend deadline to pay dues by 6 mths

PRABHARAGHAVAN NEW DELHI. APRIL 6

PHARMACEUTICAL PORTERS have approached the RBI, asking it to extend "at least" for six months their deadline to pay bankers dues of as much as \$600 million, claiming the industry has taken a hit during the ongoing novel coronavirus outbreak.

The exporters fear failure to do so may lead to their businesses shutting down, leading to shortages of several crucial medicines, the chairperson of the Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India (PHARMEXCIL) told The *Indian Express.* "...we wish to inform you that our member companies, which are approximately 3,500 who generate value turnover of \$50 billion divided equally into \$25 billion each for domestic and exports... have approached us to request you to immediately consider at least an extension of six months for due payments against non-fund limits predominantly provided through Letter of Credit (LC) for making the payments to the bankers," stated PHARMEX-CIL chairman Dinesh Duain a letter to RBI Governor

Shaktikanta Das. The industry witnessed "very serious" disruption both in manufacturing and supply chain operations, leading to a

"financial setback" that has prevented "all" pharmaceutical firms to continue producing and making available pharmaceutical products in India and overseas, Dua wrote in the letter dated April 4. Although classified as essentials, the industry is "not at all" able to operate beyond "at best" 25-30 per cent of their normal operational manufacturing capacity, he added.

"The above will ultimately lead to acute shortage of lifesaving pharmaceuticals both in India and overseas, particularly in friendly countries like the US, the EU, Asia, Latin America, CIS and Japan to some extent," he stated.

According to Dua, LCs worth up to \$600 million will be due this month. However, shortages in raw material from countries like China, unpaid dues from importers and issues with obtaining no-objection certificates for firms to export from India have left corporates unable to refurbish their accounts with bankers.

"This will result in the bankers terming these companies as NPAs. We just want that around \$350 million dollars of this is extended by six months while we all try to get out of this monstrous situation," he told The Indian Express. "The moment the banker takes away the LC limit and says the firm is dysfunctional or NPA, the firm will have no choice but to close

down," he added.

INDICES HAVE COME UNDER PRESSURE DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Market sell-off hits investor AUM, but fresh investments insulate MFs

SANDEEPSINGH

NEW DELHI. APRIL 6

THOUGH THE sharp fall of around 30 per cent in the value of benchmark indices — Sensex, mid cap and small cap—at the BSE has resulted in big losses for equity mutual fund investors, asset management companies seem to be largely unaffected by the same and their average equity assets under management (AAUM) has declined marginally by 0.6 per cent in the three-month period.

According to the data available at AMFI and collated by Myplexus.com, a mutual fund research and advisory firm, the AAUM of all equity schemes (including equity linked savings scheme, exchange traded funds and index funds) for the month of March aggregated to Rs 7,69,110 crore. This was down by Rs 4,525 crore or 0.6 per cent from an AAUM of Rs 7,73,635 crore, in December 2019.

The decline in equity AUM is much lower than the mark to market losses (on account of the fall in the equity markets) and industry players say it has been compensated by continued net inflows from investors. While the data of net inflow for March is yet to be released by the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI), the net inflows into equity schemes for January and February amounted

HOW THE NUMBERS STACK UP **EQUITY FUND CATEGORIES AVG AUM CHANGE OVER DEC'19 FOR MARCH** (₹CRORE) **AAUM** 1,48,911.2 -1,384.9 **Equity Multi Cap Fund** -4,205.5 **Equity Large Cap Fund** 1,44,581.4 **ELSS Fund** 95,272.9 -1,493.9 85,776.9 3,886.7 **Equity Mid Cap Fund Equity Sectoral/Thematic** 61,295.6 -1,879.4 55,390.5 275.6 **Equity Large &** Mid Cap Fund **Equity Small Cap Fund** 48,385.9 1,374.4 -4,063.8 **Equity Value Fund** 45,174.4 **Equity Focused Fund** 42,375.2 1,215.5 1,640.4 **Open Ended ETF** 23,706.6 18,239 109 **Others** -4,525.8 7,69,109.5 INDEX VALUE CHANGE (%) **BSE Sensex*** 29,468.50 -28.6 BSE Mid-cap Index* 10,569.90 -29.4

to Rs 7.877 crore and Rs 10.795 crore, respectively.

BSE Small-Cap Index*

Even as foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have been busy selling and exiting Indian markets amid the rising concern over global growth, following the spread of coronavirus, domestic institutional investors (DIIs) have emerged as big investors.

While FPIs sold their holdings

9,608.90 *Value as of March 31 and change over December 31; source: Myplexus.com worth a net of Rs 1,18,203 crore in March (Rs 61.972 crore from equity and Rs 56,230 crore from debt), DIIs pumped a net of Rs 55,595 crore into the capital markets during the month. The Sensex

> over the next couple of years. Mutual fund industry participants say the behaviour of the in-

lost over 23 per cent in March as

concerns grew on global growth

EXPLAINED Investors hold their

nerves THE STABILITY in MF industry AUM despite a sharp fall in benchmark indices shows that while investors resisted from selling their holding, but they also looked to use the fall as an opportunity to

make fresh investments.

vestor has been very surprising and, at the same time, encouraging for them as despite the sharp falls in the market, investors have stayed with their investments and have not gone for redemptions. Several participants say while investors have continued with their monthly investments through systematic investment plans, several investors have also taken the fall in the markets as an opportunity to make fresh investments.

Top executives with two leading mutual fund houses said even as the markets fell sharply, they did not witness any redemption pressure. "In fact, we have seen investors continuing with their scheduled investments and also coming with fresh investments. It is a very healthy development and shows that investors have become far more mature now," said the CEO of an AMC. "This investor behaviour is in

contrast to what we have seen in

the difficult periods over the last two decades such as the financial meltdown and other pandemics like SARS. This points to the huge leap in maturity of average investor and more importantly the optimism that permeates through them," said Prasunjit Mukherjee, CEO, Plexus Management Services. Between December 31, 2019 and March 31, 2020, the Sensex fell 28.6 per cent and the mid-cap and the small-cap indices at the BSE fell 29.4 per cent and 29.9 per cent, respectively. However, the MFAUM data shows in the three-month period, several categories of equity schemes witnessed an increase in their AUM. For example, the mid-cap fund category saw a rise in average AUM by Rs 3,886 crore (4.75 per cent), schemes in the small-cap fund category saw an aggregate increase in AUM of Rs 1,374 crore (2.92 per cent) and the focussed fund category witnessed an increase of Rs 1,215 crore (2.95 per cent) in the AUM for the period. The index funds (4.6 per cent) and openended ETF category (7.4 per cent)

saw gains in their AUM. Among the categories of equity funds that saw a fall in AUM were multi-cap fund (-0.92 per cent), large-cap fund (-2.8 per cent), ELSS (-1.5 per cent) and equity value fund (-8.2 per cent).

Mitra writes to FM on 'disappointing'

release of funds under 15th FC

BRIEFLY

'Discoms have to pay within 45 days'

New Delhi: The Power Ministry has clarified electricity distribution firms will continue to be obligated to pay for power within 45 days of presentation of the bill.

'Self-KYC process for issuing SIMs'

New Delhi: The Apex Advisory Council for Telecom has approached the Centre to allow a self-KYC process for subscriber verification for new mobile connections.

Infy COO is **Nasscom** chairman

New Delhi: Nasscom said it has appointed Infosys Chief Operating Officer UB Pravin Rao its chairman for 2020-21. **PTI**

IDBI Bank contributes to **PM-CARES**

New Delhi: IDBI Bank has announced it is contributing Rs. 3,95,46,223 to the PM-CARES fund towards containment and relief efforts for the pandemic. **ENS**

DGFT lifts curbs on 12 APIs except paracetamol

PRABHA RAGHAVAN NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

THE DGFT has lifted curbs it imposed over a month ago on exports of drug ingredients like Vitamin B12 and progesterone during the COVID-19 outbreak, as per an official notification.

However, exports of paracetamol will continue to remain restricted, which means companies would have to procure no-objec-

tion certificates to export it, The *Indian Express* has learnt.

The restrictions were first implemented on March 3 due to a shutdown in COVID-19-affected Hubei, from where the ingredients were mostly imported.

Operations in the Chinese province have since commenced, allowing for India to ease up on these restrictions on exports of 12 such active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) and the medicines made from them.

'Domestic air traffic to fall to 90 mn this fiscal year' Domestic air traffic is

expected to drop to 80-90 million passengers in the current fiscal from an estimated 140 million in FY20, according to CAPA

REASONS

- COVID-related travel restrictions
 - Economic downturn

OUTLOOK

■ The second quarter is historically the weakest period



are only likely to limp back into recovery

As a result, the majority of the fleet is likely to be surplus to requirement during the first half of the current financial year

80-90 MN: Domestic traffic will decline to 80-90 million this fiscal from estimated 140 million in FY20. International traffic is expected to fall from 70

INTERVIEW WITH ADITYA BIRLA SUN LIFE AMC MD & CEO

million last fiscal to 35-40 million

or less this fiscal Source: CAPA/PTI

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU West Bengal Finance NEW DELHI. APRIL 6

HIGHLIGHTING THE "severe financial distress" being faced by states due to lower revenues and higher expenditure for tackling COVID-19, West Bengal Finance Minister Amit Mitra has written to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman raising concerns over lower-than-expected release of funds by Centre as part of grants under

Mitra, in his letter, said the state had requested advance release of revenue deficit grant under 15th Finance Commission amounting Rs

15th Finance Commission.

Minister Amit Mitra also asked for raising the FRBM limit for the state to 5 per cent from 3 per cent

5,013 crore for April-June, with monthly installment of Rs 1,671 crore each. However, the government has released only Rs 417 crore for April "without taking into cognizance the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis". "This is most disappointing, if not shocking, at this critical hour of need to fight COVID-19

and disburse committed expenditures," Mitra said. He further asked for release

of pending GST compensation payments and reiterated the state's demand for raising the FRBM limit for state to 5 per cent from 3 per cent.

The Centre on Friday had released a total of Rs 17,287 crore in grants to states to enhance their financial resources during the COVID-19 crisis.

In the wake of delayed GST compensation payments since October, and a lower revenue stream amid economic slowdown which has been wors ened by the impact of COVID-19, states have been facing pressure on their finances.

SEZs' units in Gujarat supply 54 mn tablets of hydroxychloroquine, PPEs

AVINASH NAIR AHMEDABAD, APRIL 6

A SUBSIDIARY of a Canadian firm at the Kandla Special Economic Zone (KASEZ) in Gujarat, used for the supply of raw materials to shoe and hand bag manufacturers in Panipat, is gearing up to make 6 lakh cotton masks a month and help the state government in its

fight against the pandemic.

The firm, BVH Manufacturing India Ltd, will join 15-odd pharmaceutical companies in Gujarat, which are currently functioning in SEZs during the lockdown period and making essential drugs including hydroxychloroquine.

"We started our production on Sunday. We will be making three types of masks including the Level 1 masks worn by patients showing symptoms of the virus," said Steven Bethell, one of the directors of the company that has been operational in Kandla and has been making components for shoes and

manufacturing essential goods to function in the SEZs. This includes the pharmaceutical units operating with a truncated staff are manufacturing very important drugs used in the fight against COVID-19, including hydroxychloroquine and its API formulations that is hydroxychloroquine sulphate. We are also making metronidazole, azithromycin, erythromycin and paracetamol. The government has banned the exports of all these essential drugs which are used in the combat of COVID-19," said Amiya Chandra, zonal development commissioner, KASEZ to The

Indian Express. Currently, there are at least two companies — Rusan Pharma Ltd (KASEZ) and Amneal Pharmaceutical Pvt Ltd (Zvdus SEZ)—that have a monthly capacity to manufacture 54 million tablets of hydroxychloroguine and

147 kg of API (Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients) for-"We are allowing only the units mulation hydroxychloroquine sul-

> There are eight pharmaceutical companies in the SEZs of the state that have monthly manufacturing capacities for 5 million tablets of Azithromycin in doses of 250 milligram and 500 milligrams, 7.7 million tablets of metronidazole and 28.1 million tablets of erythomicin.

Seven firms manufacturing PPEs in Gujarat have capacity to make 11.5 lakh cotton masks and aprons, 12,000 oxygen cylinders, 90,000 surgical gowns, 30,000 coveralls, 30,000 ICU bed sheets and 9.000 elastic bed covers.

There are 125 industrial units that are functioning in 11 of the 18 operational SEZs in Gujarat. Of these, 42 are pharmaceutical firms, while the rest are largely in the IT/ITES space. The other functional units are those manufacturing essential goods like salt.



'Investors should not worry & remain hopeful of a repeat of upside' good mix of actively managed eq-

A BALASUBRAMANIAN, MD & CEO at Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC who manages assets worth Rs 2,47,520 crore, spoke to GEORGE MATHEW on the stock market fall, losses by investors and redemption pressures. Edited excerpts:

Markets have fallen sharply in the last one month. Has the market reached the bottom?

The Sensex has fallen from the peak of 42,273 on January 20,2020 by almost 40 per cent to its current level. Such a sharp fall has also brought the market to an attractive level. However, uncertainties around COVID-19 and the news flow around it still remains a hanging sword. While one can assume this will stay for some time, it appears that market has discounted negative news quite substantially within a matter of two months from its peak period. This makes me feel the market may have limited downside from here, say about 6-8 per cent, and can settle at these levels and begin to move

HARISH DAMODARAN

the predominant frying medium

used by hotels, restau-

rants/dhabas, canteens, caterers

and bread, biscuit, noodles, nam-

oil (CPO) and RBD (refined,

bleached and de-odourised) pal-

molein stood at 3.35 lakh tonnes

(lt) in March, a steep 58.2 per cent

drop compared to 8.02 lt for the

India's imports of crude palm

keen and *mithai* makers.

NEW DELHI. APRIL 6



A Balasubramanian

up when the news flow reverses in favour of stability.

Do you think markets have entered the bear phase? Will there be a recovery in the near

Broad economy across the globe will see a substantial slowdown due to lockdowns and with no activity in any sectors or any part of the economy for some

time. A complete lockdown has taken the earnings of the labour force across the nation. It has also taken away 3-4 months of earnings for majority of companies mainly in the discretionary spending space and also sectors like travel and tourism, hospitality, airports and ports, airline and transportation industry among others. Such a sudden drop in earnings naturally will have an impact on the savings of public at large and there is a likelihood of change in the behaviour of consumer spending. The government is expected to take decisive steps to revive economic growth. Therefore, equity market may see a bounce back purely on the basis of hope and optimism returning, which is the current missing piece.

Investors, including MF investors, suffered huge losses in March. NAVs have plunged. How can they recover losses?

The coronavirus-related market impact has affected the entire industry and investors across mutual funds have not made money this year post this unprecedented fall. The extensive market fall due to COVID-19 would have also impacted 2-3 year returns.

I would assume markets will first come back to their normal range, stabilise and then begin to move up on the basis of fundamental changes. Therefore, one should keep the equity as a longterm investment and should probably look at investing more at the current level in order to build long term portfolio. Markets have recovered from substantial losses in the past as well... hence investors should not worry and remain hopeful of a repeat of the same upside that comes post a downtrend,

What should be the ideal investment pattern for retail investors during turbulent times like this?

as has happened in the past.

In the current market environment, investors should have a of investor needs by offering products for different objectives from savings (liquid fund), income funds, long term wealth creation (large cap and multi cap funds) and for tax saving purpose (ELSS) Investors should have exposure across these four categories while planning their MF exposure.

uity funds, debt funds and index

funds or ETFs. MFs cater to all types

There are reports that MFs are facing redemption pressure. How are you tackling it?

Every year due to liquidity needs before financial year end mutual funds do face redemption pressure and then it comes back with the start of new financial year. Purely on the basis of our experience, our fund managers had created liquidity to meet any such redemption and also look for buying opportunities if the yield spikes.

> Full report on www.indianexpress.com

'March services sector activity shrinks on low client demand'

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU MUMBAI, APRIL 6

INDIA'S SERVICES sector activity contracted sharply during March as the coronavirus pandemic hit demand, particularly in the overseas markets, as discretionary spending was knocked by public health measures aimed at stemming the

COVID-19 outbreak. The IHS Markit India Services Business Activity Index plunged to 49.3 in March, down from February's 85-month high

of 57.5. The headline figure fell by over 8 points, undoing the strong gains in growth momentum seen throughout 2019 so far, the IHS Markit survey said. A reading below 50 indicates contraction.

"Having recorded the strongest rise in business activity for over seven years in February, latest survey data brought this to an abrupt end as services output in India declined in March," IHS Markit said. According to firms, the outbreak of the coronavirus disease 2019 dented client demand.

'Force majeure to not apply to virus death claims

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU MUMBAI, APRIL 6

LIFE INSURANCE Council, the apex body of the life insurance industry, on Monday announced all life insurers, both public and private, are committed to process any death claim pertaining to COVID-19.

The Council confirmed the clause of force majeure will not apply in the case of virus death claims. This step was taken to reassure customers who had reached out to various life insurers.

Imports of crude palm oil, RBD palmolein were 3.35 lakh tonnes POST LOCKDOWN, Indians have practically stopped eating outside. in March, a 58.2 per There's probably no better indicacent drop compared to tor of that than imports of palmoil,

the year-ago month

same month of 2019. What is notable, however, is the far less drop in imports of sunflower (from 2.98 lt in March 2019 to 2.97 lt in March 2020) and soyabean oil (from 2.93 lt to 2.92 lt).

"Sunflower, soyabean, mustard, groundnut, coconut and

kitchens. Palmoil isn't a consumerfacing oil and you hardly have any big brands. While RBD palmolein is sold through the public distribution system in some states, 90 per cent or more of it is consumed by the hotel and food industry. Since these are now largely shut or operating at low capacity, palm oil consumption has taken a hit. On the other hand, households are continuing to use the other oils and they are also eating more at home," says BV Mehta, executive director of the Solvent Extractors'

Association of India. Mehta estimates the country's annual edible oil consumption at

As hotels and eateries shut, palm oil consumption dips about 230 lt. Being the cheapest oil sesame oil is directly used in home and amenable to deep and multiple frying, palm oil is ideal for institutional and industrial consumption. According to Siraj A Chaudhry, industry expert and a former chairman of Cargill India, the reduction in palm oil imports may also have to do with the Centre, on January 8, placing RBD palmolein on the restricted list. Import licenses are being is-

sued for import of this oil only from Indonesia, a move seen as retaliation against the top supplier, Malaysia, for its criticism of India's abrogation of Article 370 and CAA. Full report on

www.indianexpress.com

Volkswagen loses 'dieselgate' UK class lawsuit

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE LONDON, APRIL 6

VOLKSWAGEN FACES the threat of a hefty "dieselgate" payout in Britain after a court Monday ruled in favour of more than 90,000 VW drivers whose vehicles cheated emissions tests.

Following adverse rulings and compensation payouts elsewhere, the High Court in London ruled that the German auto giant was liable also in Britain. The ruling adds

pressure on Volkswagen.

epaper indianex mess.com



If ANYONE is not working/not getting an income and runs out of food, or times are just tough ... please don't go to sleep with an empty stomach. Don't be afraid or embarrassed to send me a private message... Even just for a box of noodles, a loaf of bread or milk. I will drop it off at your doorstep, no questions asked." NICK KYRGIOS, WORLD NO. 40 TENNIS PLAYER

Yorkshire put cricketers on furlough

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE LONDON, APRIL 6

YORKSHIRE BECAME the first English cricket county to announce they had put their players and coaching staff on the British government's furlough financial aid scheme on Monday. With the English domestic season delayed until May 28 because of the coronavirus and further postponements likely, talks have been ongoing between the 18 firstclass counties and the Professional Cricketers' Association over questions of pay deferrals and wage cuts. Under the scheme, the British government pays 80 percent of wages up to £2,500 (\$3,070) per month.

The PCA had planned to announce a collective response following conference calls over the weekend but Yorkshire, the county of England Test captain Joe Root, broke ranks to say they had decided to opt for the furlough scheme on Friday.

A statement issued Monday said: "The Yorkshire County Cricket Club's players and cricket staff have been placed on furlough leave until further notice.

"This decision comes after the majority of the club's non-playing staff were placed on furlough leave at the end of March in accordance with the government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. "Following a board meeting on Friday, the club took the decision to furlough all players and coaches. Each player and member of staff in the cricket department were contacted individually by director of cricket Martyn Moxon on Friday night."

Williams furlough staff

Williams became the second Formula One team to furlough some staff due to the coronavirus pandemic as drivers George Russell and Nicholas Latifi agreed to cut their wages by 20 percent on Monday. Formula One's 2020 season has been delayed because of the pandemic and British-based Williams announced their cost-cutting moves a week after McLaren opted to take the same financial measures.

Canadian Latifi and Briton Russell, along with senior Williams executives, have taken a 20 percent pay cut from April 1, with the other staff put on an enforced leave until the end of May. McLaren drivers Carlos Sainz and Lando Norris took voluntary pay cuts last week.

'If not in top 100, you'll struggle'

With no events or prize money, lower-ranked players have no option but to endure suspension, says Amritraj

SHAHIDJUDGE

MUMBAI. APRIL 6

THE WORD 'suspended' has been added, rather grimly, next to the name of each event on the ATP and WTA calendars till July 13. With this upheaval wrought by the coronavirus pandemic, a substantial amount of prize money that would have been distributed among players now remains unachievable. Since mid-March, when the Indian Wells Masters 1000 became the first event to be cancelled, a total prize purse of \$56,834,845 and \$34,224,127 on the ATP and WTA tours respectively (not including lower-level events) now stands as null and void till mid-July. These figures don't include what would have been available at the Wimbledon Championships, where the prize purse was \$46,625,829 last

The income of a tennis professional involves the prize money based on the stage of a tournament they reach – this excludes any sponsorship deals they may cut off court. But now that the tour has been suspended, there is no income at least till July.

The higher-ranked players may have enough savings to help them get by. But for those lower down the charts, or the upcoming ones who are yet to make their mark, the tour suspension deals them a harsh blow. And as India tennis legend and former World No. 18 Vijay Amritraj asserts, they have no choice but

"If you're not in the top 100, you will struggle," Amritraj, 66, told The Indian Express. "Potentially, I would hazard a guess that there are at least 1,000 men and women in that category who rely on the tour to get better and move up to the Challenger circuit, the tour level, eke out a living from whatever amount they make over the course of the year, with or without any help from governments or sponsors and so on.

"The unfortunate issue is, like every other independent contractor or business in the world, you are not covered for anything. The ITF, ATP, WTA, they are all independent bodies that are pretty much non-profit. They don't have large cash reserves like various governments may have to support the system. This is a high-risk venture the moment you step into

it, which is where we are all stuck unfortunately."

On March 19, current world no 375 in singles, Sofia Shapatava of Georgia started an online petition to get the ITF involved in relief work for lower-ranked players since "many companies have organised paid leave for their employees and tennis players should also be considered an 'employee' of world's tennis organisations." As of Monday, 1,726 people have signed the petition.

In all likelihood, the players in this category are the ones who aren't ranked high enough to qualify for tour events and are therefore unable to try and earn money from the multi-million-dollar prize purse.

Indians better off

Though, India's Sidharth Rawat has signed the petition that Shapatava floated, the 26year-old World No. 438 says he is relatively comfortable for the time being but things can get tough once the tour finally opens up. "Right now, I can sustain on my savings till maybe September or October. After that I'll be struggling. You don't know how much money you will have left and how much you can invest because you don't know how expensive flights will be then. Mostly I used to play in China and other Asian countries to minimise travel costs.

The unfortunate issue is, like every other independent contractor or business in the world, you are not covered for anything. The ITF, ATP, WTA, they are all independent bodies that are pretty much non-profit. They don't have large cash reserves like various governments may have to support the system. This is a high-risk venture the moment you step into it, which is where we are all stuck unfortunately."

VIJAY AMRITRAJ, FORMER WORLD NO 18, ON THE INCOME OF A TENNIS **PROFESSIONAL**

Now that too will be a problem as well." Giving details about his income he says:

"On an average, I make around 1000 to 1200 dollars a month, so right now I'm living off the savings and contributing to the expenses at home with my family."

World No. 443 Rutuja Bhosale, 24, points out that the Indians are better off than players in Western countries. "I spoke to my doubles partner, who is an American. They all live away from family which means they have to pay for rent apart from other expenses on essentials. In that way, we're a bit better because in our culture it's normal for people staying at their parents' home. So right now I'm staying in Shrirampur (in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra) with my parents," she says. "Some people with office jobs are doing the whole work-from-home thing. So they are still making money. But we can't do that. We aren't paying rent, and the expenses are low, but the expenses are still there."

Lockdown doesn't bother stars

On the other side of the spectrum however, there are players for whom the tour's suspension means something completely different.

"At the highest level, Rafael Nadal, Novak Djokovic, Roger Federer and all are not playing for the money anymore, they're playing for the history," says Amritraj, a former ATP president. "Rafa (winner of 19 Grand Slams) could potentially have won the French Open to tie with Federer (who has won 20 majors), Djokovic could have potentially won another Wimbledon. It seems a bit far-fetched to talk about all this given the current circumstances, but each individual has their own disappointments."

For Federer and Serena Williams, at 38, just a month younger than the Swiss - half the season being called off – there's also been talk for the entire calendar getting cancelled – may prove to be all the more damaging.

"In Roger and Serena's case where age is a factor, every six months makes a big difference," Amritraj adds. "When Indian Wells was cancelled, we felt that Roger was in the best position because he had taken time off and that he would be back for Wimbledon, and that he's probably the only one laughing. But now on the other hand, with the year suddenly gone, it's a big year for him to lose from his perspective."

As it stands, there is a chance that the Australian Open, that took place in January, may be the only Grand Slam event this year – the event in Melbourne too was in doubt because of the bushfires that had engulfed the country at the time. Wimbledon has already been cancelled, now there's a chance that the US Open, scheduled to start on August 30, may be called off as well.

"(The US Open) remains a bit dodgy right now, but the more important issue is that when life - as we potentially know it - comes back to normal, concerts, sporting events, conventions or anything where there are large crowds or things like that, those will be the last things to take place." Putting 50,000 people in one facility is not advisable, Amritraj says. "(But when the tour resumes) across the

board, it's going to be hard. It's not that one person is going to have an advantage. People who would have been good on grass have lost that entire season to make their points, same "This (pandemic) just puts sport into per-

spective. We have all the geniuses in the world, in every country, working on this. People are saying this is very close to the flu, and still here we are (struggling). This is much bigger than

BRIEFLY

Guardiola's mother. 82, dies after coronavirus infection

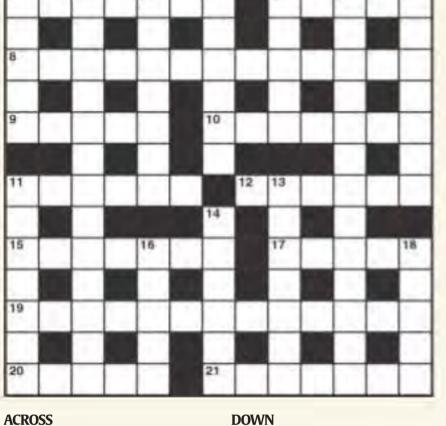
London: The mother of Manchester

City coach Pep Guardiola has died after being diagnosed with the novel coronavirus, the English Premier League champions said on Monday. "The Manchester City family are devastated to report the death today of Pep's mother Dolors Sala Carrió in Manresa, Barcelona after contracting coronavirus. She was 82-years-old," City said in a post on their official Twitter account. "Everyone associated with the club sends their most heartfelt sympathy at this most distressing time to Pep, his family and all their friends." Guardiola, who has also coached Barcelona and Bayern Munich and spent most of his playing career with Barca, donated one million euros (\$1.08) million) last month to fight against the virus, contributing to a campaign launched by the Angel Soler Daniel Foundation and Medical College of Barcelona. Spain declared Monday a fourth consecutive drop in the number of coronavirus-related deaths, with 637 over the past 24 hours, the lowest number in nearly two weeks.

Bayern Munich to resume training

Berlin: Bayern Munich said that players will return to training on Monday for the first time since the Bundesliga was suspended due to the coronavirus. Bayern led the table by four points when the season was halted on March 13. "The Bayern Munich first team will return to training in small groups from Monday, April 6," said a statement from the club. "This will be done in coordination with government policy and the relevant authorities. "It goes without saying that all hygiene regulations will be strictly observed." German football league officials had already advised a break in training until Sunday at the earliest. Bayern said that training will be held in private with no members of the public allowed. **AGENCIES**

CROSSWORD 4085



1 Painter of French delight

A second look at something?

4 One is privileged to have them

5 Singer gets the awkward note

6 A national concern under

7 Lands in Eastern America

11 Master copy of a client's order

13 Standing upright makes an

14 Aim for a high place in the

16 A trio bent on making a

18 There's a scrap when a

communist is told to be quiet

discussion (7,6)

animal gasp

church(6)

relationship

(5)

2 Certainly confident

right(5)

ACROSS

- 1 The widow who urges one to take a gamble
- 5 Experience discrimination
- Making some progress and
- nearly past it (7,2,1,3)9 Pick up something exclusive
- 10 Hill split by flood
- 11 He won't stand for being portrayed (6)
- 12 Note deserter is not charged
- 15 Suffers, being made to conclude certain change is needed(7)
- 19 Be involved in a risky action -
- (5,8)20 There's much to this game
- 21 Went in for tree chopping in

the answer for the given quip.

-Oscar Wilde (4,3,4)

SVAEE

One's real life is often the life that one

the end (7)Solutions Crossword 4084: Across: 1 Geese, 8 Hard luck story, 9 Strap, 10 At the end, 11 Train, 12 Sou, 16 Stance, 17 Skewer, 18 Nee, 24 Demeaned, 25 No end, 26

possibly ruinous to the litigant

12 Sen, 13 Use, 14 Rest home, 15 Bearings, 19 Eyelid, 20 Idiot, 21 Image, 22 Haunt. **JUMBLED WORDS**

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to

IPSLNT

IIMSDD

the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get

Organdie, 27 Lease, Down; 2 Entirety, 3 Stations, 4 Castro, 5 Idaho, 6 Muses, 7 Skids,

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis

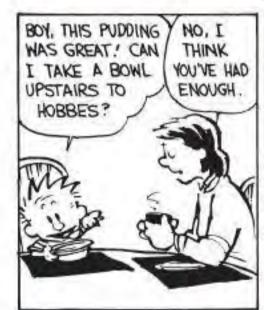








CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson





5

9

3

1 4

2

2



SUDOKU 417

SOLUTION



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



Difficulty Level 1s

To solve a Sudoku puzzle,

must appear in each of the

each of the nine horizontal

1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy;

3s = Medium; 4s = Hard;

5s = Very Hard; 6s =

nine vertical columns, in

rows and in each of the

every digit from 1 to 9

Instructions

nine boxes.

Genius

Difficulty Level

SUDOKU



8

9

9 6

5

IF WE GET BROKEN

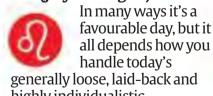


4 3

5

8





highly individualistic circumstances. You'll do best to stick to your principles, but there doesn't seem to be any real reason why you can't be infinitely flexible when it comes to the details.

The plain fact is that the nicer you are to other people, the more pleasant they'll be to you Simple, isn't it? Plus, you may have forgotten a number of important facts. You might even have lost a vital piece of paper.

BY PETER VIDAL

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

You ought soon to be

free from a lot of

pressure, and also

Even those people

dealings in the past

with whom you have had profitable

unnecessary

from unwanted commitments.

You are therefore ready to take

concept which I know is treated

with some scepticism in certain

circles. Still, that's no reason for

the path of universal love, a

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)

you to be cynical.

are now likely to use

unorthodox methods in a

hand. Don't worry: they're

suffering from a bad bout of

over-confidence, and they'll

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)

today look

optimistic, enthusiastic and

confident. Such stars always

carry with them a warning to

consciously check all details,

queries. By the way, you may be

embarking on a journey of the

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

In many respects it's

moment, a time to

For someone who is

before they look, you

have certainly been

supposed to leap

a Capricornian

slow down and

make sure your life is resting on

firm foundations. There's still a

lot of life in the old goat yet and

now is also the time to revive

to completion next year.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

changing your spots, becoming

appreciate partners' many little

don't let them pull you off course.

tempting blandishments, but

long-term dreams with a view

especially regarding legal

spirit or the mind.

The overwhelming

emphasis is still on

travel plans, which

be brought back down to

earth soon.

vain attempt to gain the upper

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20) You're good at

DAY TODAY

picking winners. At least, that's the current indication. I'd say that the two key considerations at the moment are that you follow methods which are tried, tested and reliable and look at the minutiae of the situation, rather than the big picture.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21) This does not have to

be a week of discord, disagreements and conflict, but that's just what it could be if you succumb to frustration and impatience. As you know, it's much better to give people a second chance, especially at home. Why not follow your own advice?

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21) The main Geminian

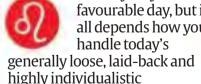
danger lies in trying to be too clever. The planetary signs strongly advise you to learn the lessons of the past! Look again at advice from people you know and trust. You might not have taken any

notice so far, but now could be a good time to make up for that. CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

Domestic discussions should

be pursued with great vigour. Being diplomatic and considerate is quite compatible with standing up for your rights. It's just a question of arranging all your points in order before you open your mouth, and getting partners to listen.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

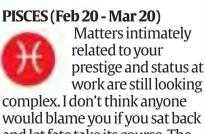


VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23) Try not to invite

trouble or discord by saying anything in haste or in anger.

Perhaps it's because you realise that your choices will only work if you anticipate the possible practical problems. You may

more cautious by the hour.



and let fate take its course. The end result would probably be the same in any case. Your romantic stars are looking up, so that's good news, then.

Answer: One's real life is often the life that one does not lead **2011/10/1:** EAVES, SPOOF, SPLINT, MISDID

2