



KEEP SAFE

- Follow President Trump's Guidelines on Coronavirus
- Observe Social Distancing
- Wash Hands Frequently
- No Panic Buying
- No Price Gouging

KEEP AMERICA SAFE

COVID-19 UPDATE, as of May 21, 2020

- More than 5 million cases confirmed worldwide and over 332924 deaths, according to data from Johns Hopkins University.
- More than 1.5 million cases and at least 93,439 deaths from the disease in the United States, according to the latest tallies from Johns Hopkins.
- At least 361313 cases and at least 28663 deaths from COVID-19 in New York State, as of May 21, according to New York Times.
- In New Jersey which ranks second to New York in COVID-19 cases, as of May 21, there are at least 151,472 cases and 10,843 deaths, according to Governor Murphy.
- In India, there were 1,18447 identified cases and 3883 confirmed deaths, as of May 21 night (ET)

Read related stories inside

80 reported dead as Cyclone Amphan Ravages West Bengal

PM Modi arrives in Kolkata for aerial survey of damage



A battered house and a fallen tree tell the story of the destruction

KOLKATA (TIP): Prime Minister Narendra Modi has arrived in West Bengal to take stock of the damage due to Cyclone Amphan in the state which left 80 dead and thousands homeless. This is the prime minister's first visit outside Delhi after coronavirus lockdown was imposed on the midnight of March 24.

After an aerial survey of affected areas in Bengal, PM Modi will visit Odisha.

Cyclone Amphan that tore into West Bengal killed 80 people and "completely devastated" two districts as Kolkata and several parts of the state wore a battered look on Thursday, May 21, a day after the storm left thousands of people

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Trump says he won't close the country if second wave of coronavirus hits

WASHINGTON (TIP): President Donald Trump said "we are not closing our country" if the U.S. is hit by a second wave of coronavirus infections.

"People say that's a very distinct possibility, it's standard," Trump said when asked about a second wave during a tour of a Ford factory in Michigan.

"We are going to put out the fires. We're not going to close the country," Trump

said. "We can put out the fires. Whether it is an ember or a flame, we are going to put it out. But we are not closing our country." President Donald Trump on Thursday, May 21 said "we are not closing our country" if the U.S. is hit by a second wave of coronavirus infections.

"People say that's a very distinct possibility, it's standard," Trump said when

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President Trump toured the Ford plant in Michigan, May 21 (Screenshot)

Cuomo bars summer school in N.Y. amid spike in coronavirus-linked illness afflicting kids



Gov. Cuomo at a daily COVID-19 briefing. Photo / Kevin P. Coughlin-Office of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo

NEW YORK (TIP): Gov. Cuomo announced Thursday, May 21 that summer school isn't happening in New York. It is "still too early", he said, to say if students will be allowed back into their classrooms in the fall amid an uptick in cases of children developing potentially deadly inflammatory symptoms from coronavirus.

Speaking at a press briefing in Manhattan, Cuomo reported that the State Department of Health

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T. S. Tirumurti Assumes Charge as India's New Permanent Representative to UN



Ambassador Tirumurti arrived in New York on May 19 to assume charge as India's new Permanent Representative to the United Nations

NEW YORK (TIP): Ambassador T S Tirumurti, India's new Permanent Representative to the UN, presented his credentials virtually May 20 as he assumed charge as the Ambassador. He succeeds Syed Akbaruddin, who is set to retire this month.

"Privileged to take over...as Permanent Representative of India to the UN in New York. During these COVID-19 times, I was the second Ambassador/ Permanent Representative to the UN to present virtual credentials!" Tirumurti who arrived in New York on May 19 tweeted.

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WHO WARNS AGAINST USING HYDROXYCHLOROQUINE OUTSIDE CLINICAL TRIALS



GENEVA (TIP): A senior official of the World Health Organization (WHO) has warned against using hydroxychloroquine or chloroquine, the drugs for malaria and other diseases, in the treatment of COVID-19, saying these drugs should be reserved for use "within clinical trials".

Responding to question on hydroxychloroquine or chloroquine being used to treat COVID-19 patients in certain countries, Dr Michael Ryan, executive director of the WHO Health Emergencies Programme, told a press conference on Wednesday that, despite that both drugs are already licensed for many diseases, at this stage, they "have been as yet found to be effective in the treatment of COVID-19 or in the prophylaxis against coming down with the disease", Xinhua reported.

"And in fact the opposite, warnings have been issued by many authorities regarding the potential side effects of the drug and many countries have limited its use to that of clinical trials or during clinical trials or under the supervision of clinicians in a hospital setting that's specifically for COVID-19, because of a number of potential side effects that have occurred and could occur," Ryan stressed.

"Having said that, again it is for each national authority to weigh and assess the evidence for and against the use of this drug," he added.

Covid-19: Two studies indicate reinfection may not happen

CHICAGO (TIP): Two recently published studies hold promise over one of the most enduring questions since the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19): does a person who has recovered from the highly contagious disease develop immunity against reinfection? US researchers have indicated that the answer may be yes – a positive sign that vaccines being developed could succeed.

The two studies in monkeys have offered some of the first scientific evidence that surviving Covid-19 may result in immunity from reinfection, the researchers said on Wednesday. Although scientists have assumed that antibodies produced in response to the new virus are protective, there has been scant scientifically rigorous evidence to back that up.

How long the protection lasts, however, still remains unclear.

In one of the new studies, researchers infected nine monkeys with Sars-CoV-2, which causes Covid-19. After they recovered, the team exposed them to the virus again and the animals did not get sick.

The findings suggest that they "do develop natural immunity that protects against re-exposure", said Dr Dan Barouch, a researcher at the Center for Virology and Vaccine Research at Harvard's Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, whose studies were published in the journal Science. "It's very good news," Barouch said. Several research teams have released papers – many of them not reviewed by other scientists – suggesting that a vaccine against the virus would be effective in animals.

In the second study, Barouch and colleagues tested 25 monkeys with six prototype vaccines to see if antibodies produced in response were protective. They then exposed these monkeys and 10 control animals to Sars-CoV-2. All of the control animals showed high degrees of virus in their noses and lungs, but in the vaccinated animals, "we saw a substantial degree of protection," Barouch said.

Worldwide coronavirus cases near 5.2 million mark

Coronavirus worldwide cases are nearing 5.2 million mark taking positive patients toll to 5,194,028 including 334,613 deaths while 2,080,921 have recovered, according to Worldometer figures. As cases continue to rise, US President Donald Trump Thursday said the US would not close in the case of a second coronavirus wave.

"People say that's a very distinct possibility. It's standard. And we're going to put out the fires. We're not going to close the country. We're going to put out the fires," Trump told reporters when asked if he was concerned about a second wave of COVID-19 during a tour of a Ford manufacturing plant in the state of Michigan.

"A permanent lockdown is not a strategy for a healthy state or a healthy country. Our country wasn't meant to be shut down. A never-ending lockdown would invite a public health calamity. To protect the health of our people we must have a functioning economy," the President added.

Brazil crosses 20,000 Covid-19 deaths after record 24-hour toll

RIO DE JANEIRO (TIP): The coronavirus death toll in Brazil surpassed 20,000 on Thursday, after a record number of fatalities in a 24-hour period, the health ministry said.

The country is the epicenter of the outbreak in Latin America, and its highest one-day toll of 1,188 pushed the overall death tally to 20,047.

Brazil has now recorded more than 310,000 cases, with experts saying a lack of testing means the real figures are probably much higher. With its curve of infections and deaths rising sharply, the country of 210 million ranks third in the world in terms of total cases, behind the United States and Russia.

The death toll -- the sixth highest worldwide -- has doubled in just 11 days, according to ministry data.

Despite the worrying spread of the disease, far-

TRACKING THE VIRUS

GLOBAL

Cases	Deaths
5,194,574	3,34,621

INDIA

Cases	Deaths
1,18,447	3,583



UK deaths cross 36,000, including 695 Indians

LONDON (TIP): The number of daily deaths and new cases is showing a steady decline, particularly in London, but new figures on Thursday revealed the UK-wide death toll had reached a cumulative figure of 36,042 (including 695 'Indians' in England) and 250,098 cases.

According to NHS England, 695 members of the non-white community categorised as 'Indian' died after contracting coronavirus as of May 19. The UK-wide death toll of 36,042 includes a day rise of 338.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson faced renewed calls from within and outside the ruling party to scrap the immigration health surcharge levied on Indian and other non-EU health professionals who need to pay 400 pounds per person per year to access the National Health Service (NHS).

Senior Conservative party called it 'immoral and monstrous' that migrants putting their lives at risk to treat coronavirus patients had to pay the surcharge, which amounts to them for it twice, since they also pay income tax, which funds the NHS. The surcharge is



levied on all non-EU migrants, and the demand is to scrap it for doctors and other healthcare professionals.

Johnson told the House of Commons that he recognised the contribution of migrants and recalled his own recent life-saving treatment at the hands of nurses from outside the UK, but refused to scrap the surcharge on the ground that the NHS needs the funding.

The surcharge, payable at the time a migrant applies for a UK visa, is to rise to 624 pounds per person per year from October. Various organisations, including the British Association of Physicians of Indian Origin have campaigned the the surcharge to be waived.

right President Jair Bolsonaro on Thursday continued his calls to scrap lockdown measures to revive the country's flagging economy.

But almost all of the country's 27 states are

under some sort of lockdown order, though Brazilians are wearying of the restrictions in place since the end of March. Sao Paulo state, the economic and cultural capital of Brazil, is by far

the most affected area, with about a quarter of the country's deaths and infections.

The virus's impact has accelerated in Rio de Janeiro state in recent days.

New Jersey Gradually Lifting Lockdown Restrictions for Strategic Economic Restart



STAY AT HOME covid19.nj
"Through our combined efforts, we have flattened the curve of COVID-19 cases, and we are well-positioned to continue our restart and recovery process," said Governor Murphy

Photo / courtesy NJ Governor's Office

BIDISHA ROY

TRENTON, NJ (TIP): New Jersey continues to rank second in the country after New York with at least 151,472 cases and 10,843 deaths attributed to COVID-19 since the outbreak began March 4. On May 21, Officials reported 98 new deaths and 1,304 new positive tests, which is, according to the Governor 'way down from our peaks.'

With Garden state's outbreak showing signs of slowing and the economy continuing to suffer, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy has been slowly lifting restrictions. He unveiled a multi-stage approach to execute a responsible and strategic economic restart to put New Jersey on the road back to recovery from COVID-19. The multi-stage blueprint, guided by the Governor's Restart and Recovery Commission and complementary Advisory Councils, plans for a methodical and strategic reopening of businesses and activities based on level of disease transmission risk and essential classification.

"Through our combined efforts, we have flattened the curve of COVID-19 cases, and we are well-positioned to continue our restart and recovery process," said Governor Murphy. "Our multi-stage approach uses science, data, and facts to determine which businesses and activities can reopen according to their risk level and challenges they face to safeguard public health. Additionally, we will be guided by our ability to protect against a new COVID-19 outbreak with expanded testing and contact tracing, and clear social distancing safeguards in place. We are currently in Stage 1, and we will aim to move through each stage quickly, but also judiciously, with the public health of our communities and all New Jerseyans in mind."

More indoor businesses such as barbershops, salons, and gyms in the Garden State may be allowed to reopen, with restrictions, in "a matter of weeks, not months," Murphy said during an appearance on CNBC's "Squawk Box." The Governor said that he's hopeful schools will be able to physically reopen for the beginning of the next academic year in September. Schools are closed in New Jersey through the end of the year, with students learning remotely.

Earlier on May 18, Murphy signed Executive Order No. 147, allowing certain outdoor activities at recreational businesses, including archery ranges, batting cages, golf driving ranges, horseback riding, shooting ranges, and tennis clubs as well as community gardens to open with required social distancing measures in place. The Order takes effect on Friday, May 22 at 6:00 a.m.

Elected leaders share their thoughts on various issues with Renee Report



Congresswoman Grace Meng, NYS Senator John Liu and Assemblyman David Weprin shared their thoughts with Renee Report

NEW YORK (TIP): Renee Report last week had the spotlight on Congresswoman Grace Meng, (D-NY6), NYS Senator John Liu, NYS Assemblyman David Weprin along with Harish Thakkar, President of Association of Indians in America, NY. Congresswoman Meng talked to Dr. Renee Mehrera about stimulus checks for individuals making less than \$75,000 annually, and also for those with ITIN numbers to be eligible for payments with the introduction of her new Bill in Congress. She warned constituents to be aware of scammers who are unfortunately taking advantage of consumers during the pandemic.

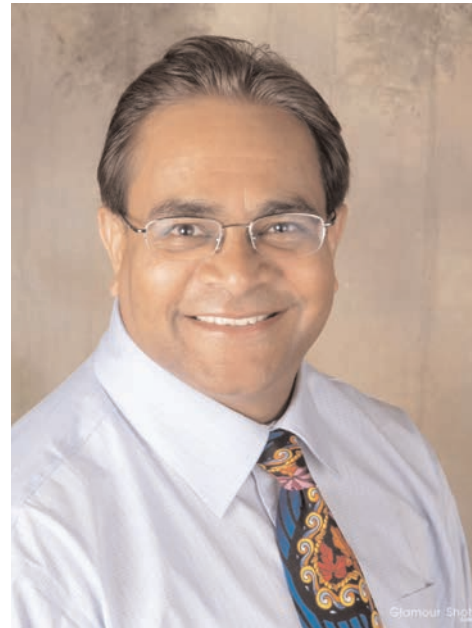
There are many students across the country, she said, who do not have access to the internet for remote learning as schools remain closed during COVID 19. NYS Senator Liu who chairs the Education committee echoed her sentiments. Besides the computer devices for school children Liu stated that students are being provided free Wi-Fi during these challenging times.

Assemblyman Weprin talked about meal options for people lacking food as a result of the pandemic, including vegetarian, kosher, and halal food in Queens.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American KK Mehta and Chanda Mehta Respond to Mother India's Call

Donated INR 1 Crore to PM Cares Fund, and Committed another \$ 1 million



Filled with the milk of human kindness, KK Mehta and his wife Chanda Mehta have always placed their heart where it should be, in India, the country of their origin

NEW YORK (TIP): A well-known businessman and CPA K.K. Mehta and his wife Chanda Mehta, a former President of Vegan World, settled in New York have responded feelingly to the call of Mother India. They have made several rounds of donations running in to millions of dollars as their humble contribution for providing relief to people in need at a time of adversity.

The couple donated INR 1 crore to PM Cares Fund the day the creation of the fund was announced.

Recently, Consul General of India in New York Sandeep Chakravorty announced on behalf of KK Mehta the latter's commitment to donate another \$ 1 million towards PM Cares fund.

The couple filled with the milk of human kindness has made several other donations to diverse organizations. A brief list should include INR 11 lakhs for food pack, and INR 5 lakh to Rajasthan

Police for masks. Incidentally, Mehtas hail from Jodhpur in Rajasthan.

They also donated during this period of pandemic over INR 20 lakh for a blind school, and INR 4 lakh for food packets for the needy, on a daily basis.

Mehtas run a not-for-profit charitable organization by the name "Nakoda Bheravnath". Well-known community leader and Chairman of Jaipur Foot in the US, Prem Bhandari is the chairman of the Nakoda Bheravanath Trust while Former SEBI chairman and deputy Governor of Reserve Bank of India D R Mehta and a former Director General of Border Security Force, India K K Sharma are members of the Trust.

The noble example set by the Mehta couple must inspire many more Indian Americans to come forward to serve their country of origin in times of adversity. Three cheers for the kindhearted generous souls!

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announces Human Trafficking Bureau

First Prosecutors Office in City to Have Dedicated Bureau

QUEENS, NY (TIP): District Attorney Melinda Katz announced, May 20, the creation of a Human Trafficking Bureau that is exclusively dedicated to combating human trafficking in Queens County. This newly formed Bureau will combat sex and labor trafficking by aggressively prosecuting traffickers and buyers of sex and will also connect survivors of trafficking with meaningful services to empower them to escape their traffickers, and provide community outreach, education and information aimed toward preventing and identifying



Your Weekly Update from the Queens District Attorney's Office

Queens DA Melinda Katz said she was "focused on holding traffickers and buyers of sex accountable for their role in the facilitation of human trafficking"

trafficking in our communities.

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Indian Origin Nobel Laureate Venki Ramakrishnan Elected to American Philosophical Society



Venki Ramakrishnan is a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge and President of The Royal Society, London

NEW YORK (TIP): Venkatraman 'Venki' Ramakrishnan, a Nobel Prize-winning biologist of Indian origin, is among 34 new members recently elected to the American Philosophical Society (APS), the nation's oldest scholarly organization. Ramakrishnan has been inducted into APS' biological sciences class.

Candidates for APS membership are nominated by existing members and elected for extraordinary accomplishments in their fields. Election to the American Philosophical Society honors extraordinary accomplishments in all fields. The APS is unusual among learned societies because its Membership is comprised of top scholars from a wide variety of academic disciplines.

Venki Ramakrishnan is a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge and President of The Royal Society, London. In 2009, he shared the Nobel Prize in Chemistry with Thomas A. Steitz and Ada Yonath, "for studies of the structure and function of the ribosome"

Indian American Qazi Javed Appointed to Texas Pediatric Acute-Onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome Advisory Council



Qazi Javed, M.D. of Austin is a psychiatrist at Integrated Psychiatry-Austin

HOUSTON(TIP): Texas Governor Greg Abbott last month has appointed Indian American psychiatrist Qazi Javed to the Pediatric Acute-Onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome Advisory Council for terms set to expire on August 31, 2021. The council

advises the commission and the legislature on research, diagnosis, treatment, and education related to pediatric acute-onset neuropsychiatric syndrome.

Qazi Javed, M.D. of Austin is a psychiatrist at Integrated Psychiatry-Austin. He is a member of the American Psychiatric Association, Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians, Texas Medical Association, Integrative Providers of Austin, and Austin Wellness Collaborative. Javed received a Bachelor of Medicine at King Edward Medical College and a Bachelor of Science at Panjab University.

Indian American Vrinda Marwah Earns Prestigious Mellon/ACLS Fellowships

AUSTIN, TX (TIP): Vrinda Marwa, a Doctoral Candidate of Sociology at University of Texas at Austin is among the winners of the 2020 Mellon/American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) Dissertation Completion Fellowships. The prestigious fellowships support a year of research and writing to help advanced graduate students in the humanities and social sciences in the last year of PhD dissertation writing and are awarded to 65 students each year.

Vrinda Marwah is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Sociology at The University of Texas at Austin. Her primary research interests are in reproductive health and women's labor in contemporary India.

Vrinda's Master's thesis focused on hijras in India, and examined debates around sexual subjectivity, identity, and terminology in the context of HIV/AIDS, queer mobilization and legal reform. She received her MSc in Gender and Social Policy from the London School of Economics, and her BA in Political



Vrinda Marwah is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Sociology at The University of Texas at Austin

Science from the University of Delhi.

Vrinda has worked in Delhi at the research, capacity building, and policy advocacy levels with feminist groups

Sama and CREA.

Vrinda got the fellowship for her project 'Reproducing the State: Women Community Health Volunteers in North India.'

Working in the heart of India's reproductive health care system, this project explores how the contemporary state constitutes citizenship through the modality of care. It examines the working lives of women community health workers, called ASHAs, who are "volunteers" paid to motivate poor women to use public health services. ASHAs reveal the productive power of an understudied and intensely gendered role in the state: the frontline bureaucrat. Because of the deeply intimate knowledge ASHAs have of their clients, and the networks they build among public and private health care providers, they become highly sought-after actors in service delivery. Through 14 months of ethnographic fieldwork, this project uncovers how the sociality of these women exceeds, and reconstitutes, the policy they are meant to implement.

Indian American Physician Sudheer S Chauhan Succumbs to Deadly Corona Virus



Dr. Chauhan, an Internal Medicine specialist in South Richmond Hill, New York, who was diagnosed with COVID-19 and battling for his life for the past few weeks, died of complications from the illness

NEW YORK (TIP): Dr. Sudheer S Chauhan, a kindhearted physician of Indian Origin, who had dedicated his life at the service of his thousands of patients in the New York region, succumbed to the deadly corona virus on May 19th.

Dr. Chauhan, an Internal Medicine specialist in South Richmond Hill, New York, who was diagnosed with COVID-19 and battling for his life for the past few weeks, died of complications from the illness.

"Our Father, Dr. Sudheer Singh Chauhan, Internal Medicine Physician and Associate Program Director IM Residency Program at Jamaica Hospital, New York passed away on May 19 after battling with COVID for two months. We will miss this unique, kind, gentle and caring spirit. May his soul rest in peace," wrote his daughter, Sneha Chauhan on COVID-19 Physicians Memorial.

Dr. Chauhan, who had attended and graduated from medical school in 1972, has had nearly half a century of diverse experience, especially in Internal Medicine. Dr. Chauhan received his graduate medical education from GSUM Medical College, University of Kanpur, India in 1972. He was chief resident in Internal Medicine at Jamaica Hospital and graduated in 1997. He is Board Certified in Internal Medicine. He also received MRCP and FRCP from Royal College of Physicians and FACP from American College of Physicians. Dr. Chauhan joined the Department of Medicine at Jamaica Hospital upon graduation in 1997 and is currently working as a faculty supervisor and attending physician. He is also the Associate Program Director in Internal Medicine Residency Program for the hospital.

Dr. Priya Khanna, 43, another Indian American nephrologist died in a New Jersey Hospital last month. The deadly virus also took the life of her father Satyendra Khanna (78), a general surgeon, after being in a critical condition in the intensive care unit in the same hospital for several days.

Indian-origin South Africans' 'musical' initiative to fight coronavirus blues becomes global hit

JOHANNESBURG (TIP): The 'SA Musicians against COVID-19' project helps artists to showcase their talent in Indian music and song, sometimes accompanied by dance as well.

The project was started by Johannesburg residents-Lexy Shunmoogam,

Chitra Perumal, Kreasan Moodley and Guru Pooven Pillay-as a way to keep people entertained for a few hours in the weekend during the lockdown by bringing all singers and musicians together in a musical extravaganza via Facebook.

The initiative has now become an international hit. The group members said they now have their hands full every day of the week with demands from artists who want a slot on their Facebook page.

Almost every leading artist from South Africa who performs religious or cultural songs, especially in the Tamil community, has already been featured, with the organizers having to turn down many requests from performers in India and other countries.

"Our aim was to showcase the talent that we have right here at home, including providing a platform for children who are learning the art form with local teachers. We could hardly foresee how artists who have never ever performed together would be on the same platform at some stage," Shunmoogam said.

"What started as a small and humble initiative has now become a unique and almost unequalled 'Concert from Home' event, galvanizing tens of thousands of people across the world through music," he said.

Last week the 'SA Musicians against COVID-19' Facebook page featured priests from various temples across the country performing Kavady prayers.

"The demand for performances of light music and cover versions of Indian film songs has also been huge, so we had a special weekend from May 15-17 where artists will perform in this genre only," Shunmoogam said. (Source: PTI)



The 'SA Musicians against COVID-19' project helps artists to showcase their talent

EID MUBARAK

EID FALLS ON SUNDAY, MAY 24

Eid ul-Fitr is an auspicious festival celebrated by Muslims all around the world. The occasion marks the end of the Islamic holy month fasting of Ramadan. It is believed that Prophet Muhammad got the first revelation of the Holy Quran in this month. The date of the festivity is dependent on the combination of the sighting of the new moon as well as the astronomical calculations. Moreover, the onset of Eid also depends on where an individual is in the world and when the new moon is seen.

Date and timings

This year, Ramadan began on April 23 and shall continue till May 23. Eid-ul-Fitr is celebrated at the end of the month of Ramadan. This year, Eid shall be celebrated on May 24. However, it all depends on the date when the moon is sighted.

Islamic holidays depend on the lunar calendar and not the Gregorian calendar. During this time period of one month, the practice of fasting is called roza, breaking the fast in the morning is called suhur and the meal had in the evening is called iftar. Iftar is when people have their meals in the evening after having fasted for the entire day.

Importance and significance

Eid ul-Fitr falls on the first day of the month of Shawwal, which is the only day in that month when Muslims are not permitted to fast. The first day of the Eid month depends on any lunar Hijri month. This occasion has a unique salat (Islamic prayer), consisting of two rakats (units) and is usually offered in a large gall or open field. It is to be performed only in a congregation (Jama'at) and has added six Takbirs (raising of the hands to the ears while saying "Allahu Akbar" which means "God is the greatest"); three in the beginning of the first raka and the remaining three before ruku in the second raka'ah in the Hanafi school of Sunni Islam.

It is often said that Muslims believe they are commanded by Allah — as also mentioned in the Holy book of Islam Quran — to continue the fasting till the very last day of Ramadan and pay the Zakat al-Fitr before offering the prayers for Eid.

The festivities of Eid begin only after the crescent moon is seen. Eid ul-Fitr implies breaking of the fasting time

frame, which goes on for a month. The festival is celebrated over three days and is also called Choti Eid.

Following the Sunnah, which is the record of



teachings of the Prophet Mohammad, Muslims wake up early in the morning, chant their Salat ul-Fajr (daily prayers), take a bath and wear ittar (perfume). It is a custom to eat a hearty breakfast before people head to perform the special congregational prayers. Many Muslims also recite the takbir, which is the declaration of faith, on their way to the prayer ground and take part in Zakat al-Fitr (charitable contributions).

Why Do We Celebrate Eid?

The three basic reasons for celebrating Eid-Al-Fitr are narrated below:

- Showing gratitude towards God for

being a constant guide in the fasting month of Ramadan.

- Going to the Mosque and praying at least five times a day and asking God for forgiveness.
- To carry out the act of charity towards the poor and needy and it is called "Zakat-Al-Fitr"

This Eid is primarily a feasting day after the strenuous 30 days of fasting in Ramadan which is the 9th month of the

Islamic Calendar. Apart from that, this month and Eid celebration also signifies the achievement of communication with the

celestial spirit and religious merits, characterized by sacrifice, self-discipline, and charity. With fasting, prayers, and charity, one becomes a modest person and attains self-control.

This fasting means one has to desist from food, beverages, and sexual relations primarily. This practice of giving up basic

and carnal needs and desires actually makes a person stronger by cultivating the qualities of self-control, self-righteousness, and self-discipline. This is the month of true devotion and people learn how to be happy with the minimal things. One is also abstained from using slang language or cuss words. No modes of entertainment like music, TV, movies, dancing, or singing is allowed because these things would distract one from the thought of the Almighty.

Only the senior citizens, patients of asthma or diabetes or any such difficult disease, pregnant woman, children, and sports personalities, are exempted from this fasting. But again it depends on the belief and the body system of a person whether he/she should fast or not. Some family allows children to keep half-fast so that they learn about the festival from a young age.

Muslims across the globe start Eid Al Fitr celebrations by taking part in prayers which is followed by a sermon soon after dawn. The day proceeds with people getting ready, wearing new clothes and exchanging greetings and sweets. Children receive gifts and money from elders. The day is incomplete without the preparation of a variety of dishes including Biryani, Haleem, kebabs and a sweet dish like Seviyan. As one of the five pillars of Islam, Zakat or giving of alms to the poor is also practiced on Eid.



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T. S. Tirumurti Assumes Charge as India's New Permanent Representative to UN

Ambassador T. S. Tirumurti is a senior career Indian diplomat with extensive multilateral experience. Since joining the Indian Foreign Service in 1985, he has represented India's interests in various capacities, promoting friendly ties across the globe.

Prior to his assignment as the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, Ambassador Tirumurti was Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs handling Gulf, Arab world, Africa, Development Partnership and Economic Relations portfolio since February 2018.

He previously served at the Indian Embassy in Cairo, Egypt as Third/Second Secretary, First Secretary at the Permanent Mission of India in Geneva, Switzerland, was the first Indian Representative to the Palestinian Authority in Gaza and served as Counsellor at the Indian Embassy in Washington D.C., USA. He also served as Deputy Chief of Mission at the Indian Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia and as India's High Commissioner in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

He served as Under Secretary (Bhutan), Director (Foreign Secretary's Office), Joint Secretary (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Maldives) and Joint Secretary (United Nations Economic and Social) during his stints at the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi.

Ambassador Tirumurti has bachelor's degrees in Commerce and in Law. He is proficient in English, Hindi, Tamil and Arabic. He is author of three books - *Kissing the Heavens: The Kailash Mansarovar Yatra* (1999), *Clive Avenue* (2002) and *Chennaivasi* (2012).

Ambassador Tirumurti is married to Mrs. Gowri Tirumurti, partner in law firm M/s Anand & Anand, which specializes in intellectual property rights. The couple has two children - daughter, Bhavani and son, Vishwajit.

Ambassador Tirumurti has taken over as India's PR to the United Nations at a time when UN is faced with a number of contentious issues, among them the belligerent attitude of President Trump towards the UN, particularly, towards the World Health Organization (WHO), accusing the agency of misrepresenting the facts with regard to COVID-19. Even as US president is fuming against WHO, the news is in that India is the new chairman of WHO. The country's Health Minister Harsh Vardhan will be occupying the chair.

New hope for COVID-19 vaccine, clinical trials show promising early results on humans in US

NEW YORK (TIP): As scientists across the world work frantically to find a vaccine against COVID-19, which continues its rapid global spread, all eyes are on US-based company Moderna's encouraging early results on a small group of healthy volunteers.

Cautioning that a vaccine is still months, maybe even a year away, experts said the US-based biotechnology firm's results have propelled it to a pole position in the race of 118.

Eight candidate vaccines for COVID-19 are in the clinical evaluation, while 110 are in the preclinical stage, according to the WHO's latest draft landscape. Preclinical development is a stage of research during which important feasibility, iterative testing and drug safety data are collected, while clinical trials are research studies performed on people.

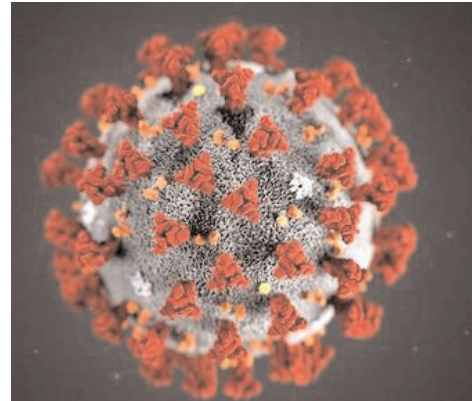
Early data from its vaccine candidate "mRNA-1273" showed it produced protective antibodies in a group of eight healthy volunteers, Moderna said.

The other closely watched COVID-19 vaccine is the one being developed by scientists at Oxford University. It appears protective in a small study of six monkeys, promising findings that led to the start of human trials late last month.

"Because Moderna's is the only vaccine having demonstrated any kind of immunologic response in the COVID-19 field, we would consider this to be the leading candidate," said Michael Breen, associate director, Infectious Disease, at GlobalData, a UK-based data analytics and consulting company.

"Of the vaccines in human trials, only two have demonstrated any kind of effectiveness," Breen told PTI, noting that the Moderna study proves that the platform can lead to the production of antibodies against a given virus.

Moderna on Monday announced positive interim clinical data of mRNA-1273, from the Phase 1 study led by the



National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID).

The data comes from eight people who took part in a 45-subject safety trial that kicked off in March.

The study showed the vaccine was safe and all study participants produced antibodies against the virus, according to the company.

"Globally, one vaccine candidate that is promising is Moderna's mRNA based vaccine that showed promising results in the early trials," Upasana Ray, assistant professor at CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Biology in Kolkata, told PTI.

RNA is the genetic material of the viruses. While conventional vaccines are developed with an inactivated virus or using proteins made by virus, messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines work by introducing a synthetic sequence of the viruses' genetic material that encodes the disease-specific protein to trigger the body's immune system, the experts explained.

Discussing the Oxford University vaccine, she said the work "deserves applause but needs additional supportive information and experiments".

The preliminary findings of the Oxford study appeared on the preprint server bioRxiv.

A preprint is a full draft research paper that is shared publicly before it has been peer reviewed or published in a

journal.

British drug maker AstraZeneca teamed up with researchers at the Oxford Vaccine Group and the Jenner Institute in developing the vaccine.

Breen described their "ChAdOx1 nCoV-19" candidate vaccine as a "standout". "While this vaccine has yet to demonstrate efficacy in humans, it was shown to be able to prevent infection and disease from COVID-19 in a primate model," he said.

While this needs to be replicated in humans, it is one of only two vaccines to have demonstrated any effectiveness in reducing infection due to COVID-19, making it a "highly interesting candidate".

Though the Moderna and the Oxford vaccines are in a leading position, there are several other vaccines, including those being developed in India, in the running.

In India, eight organizations are in the fray with a vaccine candidate, half of which are companies and the other half non-industry, said Brooke Wilson, associate director, Healthcare, GlobalData.

"These organizations are running or planning to initiate 12 clinical trials, one is ongoing, recruiting and the other 11 are planned," Wilson told PTI.

He explained that six of these trials are specifically for a COVID-19 vaccine while the other six trials use a vaccine developed for other indications, such as tuberculosis, adding that the majority of the trials are in Phase I, followed by Phase 3 and Phase 2.

Explaining the various phases in the development of a vaccine, E. Sreekumar, chief scientific officer at the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology (RGCB) in Kerala, said Phase 1 trials are small-scale, usually involving few participants, to assess whether the vaccine is safe for humans. (Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz Issues Warnings to Parents About Online Child Predators

QUEENS, NY (TIP) The spread of the coronavirus has brought new challenges and responsibilities to all the parents and guardians in Queens County. With schools closed many teens and preteens are finding more time to explore the internet on computers and phones. Teens are naturally curious about everything including their sexuality and in this very difficult time may find themselves, through no fault of their own, in compromising positions online. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children has seen a rise in the number of reports involving child sexual abuse material on the internet. My office has also seen an increase in the number

of complaints regarding improper behavior towards teenagers and preteens on the internet. Several of these complaints have involved strangers seeking inappropriate pictures of the teens.

Now more than ever, it is important to be aware of what your child is doing on their smartphones, tablets and computers. Predators are aware that children are home during the day and may use this time to attempt to contact them and lure them into inappropriate situations. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) offers free digital resources through Netsmartz.org regarding online

safety for children and parents. NetSmartz.org is NCMEC's online safety education program. It provides age-appropriate videos and activities to help teach children be safer online by becoming more aware of potential risks and being empowered to make safer choices on and offline.

If your child becomes a victim of an online predator, you should save whatever evidence you have, including pictures, and take screenshots of messages and contact information of the predator. You should report it to your local precinct or call (646) 610-7272. Our Computer Crime Unit is well equipped to handle these complaints.

Indian Woman Starts Business To Offer Affordable Masks For All

WARREN, NJ (TIP): Soft Cotton Face Masks, a leading provider of face masks in Warren Township, announced, May 18 that it is expanding to meet the growing needs of individuals and businesses grappling with the outbreak of COVID-19.

On April 1, Founder and CEO, Rohini Anandan launched Soft Cotton Face Masks with her husband, Raj Singaravelu and began selling masks to the general public and soon after she began receiving larger orders from business owners. They provide 100% cotton, machine-washable masks in both child and adult sizes. With business professionals in mind, they offer a range of office-friendly fabrics and will soon start offering the ability for business branding. Since launching, she's partnered with local businesses to source materials and she's hired a team of individuals who help cut fabric and sew masks. In the coming months, she hopes to expand to India so she can help support women seamstresses from her home country.

Anandan foray into sewing started 20 years ago while pregnant with her daughter. Determined to make baby-sized dresses, she bought a sewing machine and learned the ropes on her own.

Anandan moved from Chennai, India to the U.S. in 1999 to attend The City University of New York. Before the pandemic, she had spent the last 14 years of her career as an IT executive. She worked at UBS for more than ten years as an Executive Director, and a year and a half as Chief Operating Officer at Lab49 before starting a sabbatical in July



Face mask manufacturing .
For representational purpose only

2019. "I was working on my next career move-then COVID happened," said Anandan. "And I kept hearing the same thing from my dad, who is a medical doctor in Warren, and from other family and friends who work in hospital emergency rooms that there's just not enough gear. I knew I could contribute and make a difference."

Anandan is not afraid of the unknown and always up for a new challenge. And that is why this mother of two decided to dust off her sewing machine and start making masks. She was able to collect fabric and materials, and soon went on to lead a group of 100+ local residents from the Warren Township Community Forum-which came into existence during Hurricane Sandy-and members of the local Girl Scouts.

Within days, and nearly 500 face masks in hand, Anandan was put in touch with Gail Pester, the Summit Medical Group Foundation's Director of Development. "Rohini was phenomenal with getting the supply chain going within the town," said Pester.

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First Priest of Flushing BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir Passes Away

NEW YORK (TIP): The first and primary Pujari (priest) of BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, at 43-38, Bowne Street, Flushing, NY 11355, Pujari Pratapbhai Raval has passed away on May 13, 2020, at the age of 93 years. He is survived by his son Priyam Raval and family.

Pujari Pratapbhai Raval served as one of the first Hindu priests in New York at the BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir. He had the honor of serving the Hindu community at the behest of his gurus His Holiness Yogiji Maharaj, His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj, and His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj for over forty years. He served BAPS in Mumbai and thereafter he served as the Pujari in both London and New York BAPS mandirs. With his exceptional service, he was instrumental in guiding and encouraging hundreds of Indian-Americans over the years. He was an ideal example of a dedicated, selfless sevak. He has personally helped many new immigrants and went out of way to help the community.

South Asian Community Leader Dilip Chauhan said, Pratapkaka's loss is a loss for the entire Indian American Community. My sincere condolences to the entire BAPS Community of North America and India. He lived his life according to his guru's wishes, and has instilled the same values to his beloved grandson, Urdhva Raval.



Pujari Pratapbhai Raval served as one of the first Hindu priests in New York at the BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announces Human Trafficking Bureau

contd from page 3

District Attorney Katz said, "The sex trafficking industry is a brutal, degrading and illegal enterprise that far too often profits by forcing women, children and members of our transgender community into prostitution. But there are other forms of trafficking, such as forcing individuals to work with little or no pay. This new and dedicated Bureau within my Office will combat those who would victimize others with aggressive investigations to end this industry. But I want to be clear that we are also here to help the victims find a path to freedom with services and programs that will give them positive change in their lives and a future without fear.

The 2019 Trafficking in Persons Report, issued by the U.S. Department of State, reveals that a staggering 24.9 million people are robbed of their freedom and basic human dignity by sex and labor traffickers. Here in the United States, traffickers often use violence, threats, deception, debt bondage and other manipulative tactics to force people to engage in commercial sex or to provide labor or services against their will.

Queens County is leading in New York

City with its rich cultural and ethnic diversity. We are home to 2 international airports and home to a large percentage of foreign born and undocumented persons. Therefore, Queens is a prime geographical location for traffickers to target and exploit those most at risk. Trafficking is not only a local issue, but one involving our world community. Traffickers often target already vulnerable and marginalized members of our society, such as our homeless youth, undocumented immigrants, those with substance abuse or mental health issues, as well as those who face discrimination or gender inequality, and have little economic or social support systems. With respect to foreign born and undocumented persons, traffickers routinely use threats and fear of imprisonment and deportation to maintain control over their victims to continue their exploitation.

In responding to this epidemic and advancing her anti-trafficking policies the District Attorney said this newly formed Human Trafficking Bureau will have a dedicated staff of assistant district attorneys, social workers, detectives and analysts. The Bureau will connect those who are being victimized or commercially

exploited within Queens County to meaningful services, support and tools to enable them to safely exit the sex trade industry or their traffickers.

At the same time, District Attorney Katz said, she is focused on holding traffickers and buyers of sex accountable for their role in the facilitation of human trafficking. Recent prosecutions demonstrate this. In January 2020, 23-year-old Tyquan Henderson was convicted of sex trafficking a 16-year-old victim. This defendant is awaiting sentencing at which time he faces up to 9 years in prison.

In February 2020, said DA Katz, defendant David Viltus, 31, pleaded guilty to attempted murder for the heinous attack against his transgender girlfriend. The defendant repeatedly stabbed her in the head and face after she refused to continue to engage in prostitution. Viltus is expected to be sentenced to 10 years in prison later this month. In another case, defendant Julius Heusner, 27, was sentenced on a felony charge of aggravated patronizing a minor for prostitution, related to paying a 16-year-old child to perform sex acts on him in a parked car. The defendant is required to register as a sex offender and complete a program designed to educate and deter

buyers of sex from continuing to exploit young women sexually.

These convictions, said DA Katz, demonstrate our commitment to aggressively investigating and prosecuting perpetrators of these degrading crimes that deprive many vulnerable members of our community of their liberty and free will. Human trafficking is a horrific form of modern-day slavery.

In creating the Human Trafficking Bureau, District Attorney Katz announced that she has appointed career prosecutor Jessica L. Melton as the chief. Since 2007, when New York State's first Sex and Labor Trafficking laws took effect 13 years ago, ADA Melton has focused her career solely on the prosecution of human trafficking and related crimes. She obtained the first conviction for sex trafficking in New York State and the first labor trafficking conviction in Queens County. In 2013, she was awarded the prestigious Thomas E. Dewey medal by the New York City Bar Association for her work in combating human trafficking.

The Human Trafficking Bureau will operate within the District Attorney's Office's Investigations Division under the overall supervision of Executive District Attorney Gerard A. Brave.



By Ambassador Asoke
Mukerji

The current global crisis demands global leadership. This is a major opportunity for India, together with a coalition of member-states whose national aspirations in a post-Covid19 world depend on effective international cooperation, to rise to the challenge.

When the United Nations (UN) was conceptualized during the Second World War to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war", its two major objectives were to secure and to sustain international peace and security. Among the six principal organs of the UN, the UN Security Council (UNSC) was mandated by all signatory states of the UN Charter with the "primary responsibility" for securing international peace and security. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) was entrusted with sustaining international cooperation to achieve socio-economic progress, including upholding human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. As the UN commemorates the 75th anniversary of its establishment in September 2020, it is apparent that the implementation of this holistic vision of the UN Charter has been fragmented. That is the basis for calls for reform of the UN.

On the positive side, the ECOSOC and the UN General Assembly have succeeded in responding to the single biggest change in international relations since the end of the Second World War: Decolonization enabled hundreds of millions of people in former colonies to be integrated into the UN system based on freedom and equality. Their aspirations have become the focus of the work of the UN and its specialized agencies.

In the past four decades, these two organs of the UN have succeeded in creating a vibrant framework for upholding human rights. They have converged the twin objectives of climate change and accelerated development into Agenda 2030, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Adopted unanimously by world leaders in September 2015, Agenda 2030 is the first multi-stakeholder universally agreed global framework for socio-economic progress. The adoption of Agenda 2030 signaled an awakened hope in ordinary people for better health,

education, infrastructure, employment, and equality of opportunity.

A crucial sentence in the Preamble of Agenda 2030 encapsulates the inter-linked nature of the global challenges of the 21st century. World leaders unanimously agreed that "there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development". This can only be ensured if there is a supportive global environment of peace and security, which requires an effective UNSC.

However, the UNSC's ineffectiveness in responding to challenges to international peace and security has become a major factor behind the fragmentation of international cooperation. Such challenges include the increased recourse to unilateral policies by its five permanent members (China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, known as the P5), the increasing number of intra-state conflicts within UN member-states, the unfettered activities of designated terrorist entities and individuals, and the lack of a coherent political direction by the UNSC to support the UN's response to global challenges, including the current Covid-19 pandemic. More than 70 million people across the five continents are currently impacted by the breakdown of international peace and security. This is the largest such number since the Second World War ended. The responsibility for this disaster lies squarely with the UNSC.

The main reason for the UNSC's ineffectiveness is the 'veto' provision of the P5 applied to decision-making by the Council. Although used in public as a measure of last resort during voting on a UNSC resolution, the P5 have consistently leveraged their 'veto' power to pursue their increasingly narrow self-interest. Most recently, China used this power during its Presidency of the UNSC in March 2020 to prevent any discussion on the impact of Covid-19 on international peace, security, and sustainable development. The United States used this power to prevent the adoption of a UNSC resolution supporting an all-of-UN response to Covid-19 on 8 May 2020.

Fifteen years ago, at the 60th anniversary of the UN in 2005, world leaders had unanimously agreed that a malfunctioning UNSC needed to undergo early reform. They mandated such reform to make the UNSC "more broadly representative,

AS I SEE IT

Reforming the UN system after Covid-19



efficient and transparent and thus to further enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions." In 2007, the UNGA unanimously agreed to establish an inter-governmental negotiating platform to implement this mandate. In 2008 the UNGA unanimously agreed on five specific areas for reform of the UNSC including the question of the veto. In 2015, the UNGA unanimously agreed to use written proposals by over 120 member-states on these five areas to negotiate a resolution to amend the UN Charter.

Since then, the momentum in the negotiations has been stymied by the P5, led by China. At the core of the status quo position of the P5 is their shared interest in keeping intact the provision of Article 27.3 of the UN Charter that confers on each of them the power to 'veto' substantive decisions of the UNSC. Historically, the 'veto' provision was agreed upon between the United States, United Kingdom and USSR at Yalta in February 1945. Despite calls to discuss this provision during the San Francisco Conference held between April-June 1945, the permanent members resisted any attempt to reopen the Yalta agreement on the veto.

Participating countries at the San Francisco Conference eventually acquiesced with the P5's veto provision in the expectation that this would ensure a supportive framework of peace and security for their reconstruction and development after the war. Their view was facilitated by the understanding, contained in Article 109 of the UN Charter, that the provisions of the treaty would be reviewed ten years after the Charter was ratified (i.e. by 1955) by a General Conference of the UN.

Despite this provision, such a General Conference has never been convened. The last major opportunity for the UN to do so was following its 60th anniversary Summit in 2005. In the Summit declaration, world leaders had unanimously agreed to amend provisions of the UN Charter to delete references to "enemy state" (Germany, Japan and Italy), the Trusteeship Council (which had "no remaining functions") and UNSC reforms.

Since 2005, the UN has undertaken significant activities which need to be integrated into the provisions of its Charter. These include the establishment of the UN Human Rights Council (2006),

the creation of UN Women for gender equality and the empowerment of women (2010), the agreement on Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development (2015), a coordinated approach to countering terrorism through a Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2006) and Office of Counter-Terrorism (2017), and the ongoing impact of digital technologies on peace, security and development. Only a General Conference can enable a review of the provisions of the 1945 UN Charter to bring these initiatives into the context of making the UN "fit for purpose" in the 21st century.

During the last decade, any initiative to implement Article 109 of the UN Charter and convene a General Conference has been deflected by pointing to the ongoing inter-governmental negotiations on UNSC reforms, which were expected to result in amending provisions of the UN Charter. Today, the hard reality is that these inter-governmental negotiations on UNSC reform are deadlocked with no end in sight.

World leaders meeting at the UN's 75th anniversary Summit on 21 September 2020 therefore must address this paradoxical situation, which holds the key to any reform of the UN. To do so, they must agree to convene the General Conference provided for in Article 109 of the UN Charter. Any proposal to hold such a Conference can be put on the agenda of the UNGA "if so decided by a majority vote of the members of the General Assembly and by a vote of any seven members of the Security Council." The current global crisis demands global leadership. This is a major opportunity for India, together with a coalition of member-states whose national aspirations in a post-Covid19 world depend on effective international cooperation, to rise to the challenge.

(Ambassador Asoke Mukerji served in the Indian Foreign Service for more than 37 years, retiring as India's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York in December 2015)

GUEST COMMENT

India poised to play key role in course correction

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has been receiving more brickbats than bouquets for its handling of the Covid-19 pandemic. The UN health body finds itself caught in the crossfire between superpowers China and the US. China has called on the international community to increase political and financial support to the WHO, while the US has threatened to permanently freeze the flow of funds and pull out of the organization if it fails to demonstrate its 'independence' from

China in a month. Even as the number of coronavirus cases has crossed 50 lakh globally and the death toll is above 3.25 lakh, about 130 countries, including India, have endorsed a resolution to probe the origin of the virus and carry out an 'impartial, independent and comprehensive' evaluation of the global response to the Covid outbreak. A free and fair inquiry is needed to ascertain the truth and fix accountability for the crisis that has engulfed the world.

In a development particularly significant for India, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan is set to take

COVID-19 PROBE

charge as the chairman of the WHO's 34-member Executive Board. India, which has recorded more than 1 lakh Covid cases and over 3,000 deaths so far, is poised to play a bigger role on the world stage in dealing with the disease. The promptness in extending a helping hand to other countries by supplying medicines and medical equipment has earned New Delhi diplomatic goodwill. The new responsibility will test the country's mettle as it strives to strengthen its healthcare infrastructure.

It will also be critical for India to hold its ground and steer clear of the US-

China slanging match. Only the WHO has the wherewithal to spearhead the global fight against Covid-19. India has a chance to rise to the occasion by advising and assisting the world body in performing its operations efficiently and autonomously. The top priority should be to contain the virus unitedly, rising above geopolitical rivalries. It's also vital to fast-track the probe so that course correction can be done, and the world becomes better prepared to handle such pandemics.

(Tribune, India)

Migrant crisis may help plan viable roadmap



By BL Vohra

“Since the beginning of the nationwide lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic, India and the world have seen on TV channels disturbing pictures of thousands of migrant workers - including women and children - walking on foot or some other means of transport, to reach their home states hundreds of miles away from the places where they have been working for a livelihood. We have also seen the images of protests by those wanting to go home at railway stations at many places.”



The rosy picture of India emerging as a superpower has taken a beating after the exodus of workers from cities and towns

Since the beginning of the nationwide lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic, India and the world have seen on TV channels disturbing pictures of thousands of migrant workers - including women and children - walking on foot or some other means of transport, to reach their home states hundreds of miles away from the places where they have been working for a livelihood. We have also seen the images of protests by those wanting to go home at railway stations at many places.

Such images continue even today. Heart-wrenching stories of their misfortune in not getting shelter or food and being stopped every now and then with some brutality at times at the hands of the police disappoint a lot. Some of them have lost their lives in accidents. Though trains and earlier buses have been used to ferry them, their number is too big. Besides, many of them don't have money to buy tickets though most of the bill is being footed by the government. This has sullied the image of India even though they had been advised by the government against moving like this, and shelter and food is being provided to most of them by the state and Central governments, and by NGOs, corporates and well-meaning individuals.

The Prime Minister announced a sum of Rs one thousand crore from the PM Cares Fund for these migrants recently. And the Union Finance Minister has announced free distribution of ration to them for two months; more work under MGNREGA once they are back to their villages etc. But basically, their demand now is psychological - to reach home come what may.

More technocrats should head senior positions. By chance, we do have a doctor as the Health Minister but the officials working in the ministries and at the cutting-edge level are not medicos. It's important to have technocrats in such positions because today it is a health problem, tomorrow it can be a problem in space or cyber fields.

But this problem has also given a lot of ammunition to the Opposition, who are criticizing the Centre for not looking after these people. This has also given a cause to many activists who have been approaching the Supreme Court, trying to get directions to the Central government to look after these migrant workers, financially and otherwise, helping them in reaching home, while accusing it of being insensitive to the needs of the poor folk.

In the process, the rosy picture of India emerging as a superpower has taken a beating. It won't be fair to lay the entire blame on the doorsteps of the Central government and its leadership for this situation. After all, it was a sudden calamity, not only for India but the whole world. Many powerful countries with less population and rich economy and much better healthcare systems have fallen by the wayside. The government had to respond quickly and rightly leading to a lockdown which has caused this hardship to millions of migrant workers.

The way forward should be to ease their pain as much as possible and learn lessons so that we're better prepared in the future when such situations arise. The two examples of sudden demonetization and lockdown leading to hardships are sufficient for us to learn lessons and plan a roadmap. Some of the suggested steps are as follows:

First, there should be no sudden announcements as far as possible. Of course, in a war-like situation, such sudden action can't be ruled out.

Secondly, there should be careful planning to ensure that the poor don't suffer from hardships. The Central and state governments should prepare contingency plans based on past experience in India and abroad, and about an unlikely situation like the coronavirus. It should include possible situations in areas like defense, warfare of different kinds including those in space and cyber fields, internal security, medical situations, severe natural disasters and many more. Such a planning will help. I recall today with satisfaction that as the Director General, Civil Defence, Government of India, I had formulated the proposal of raising the NDRF in 2003, considering the necessity which fructified and now we have this force doing a great

service.

Thirdly, for putting every plan in action, there should be SOPs and rehearsals as per these like it is done in disaster management situations or war exercises.

Fourthly, where a large-scale movement of the working class is inevitable, plans should be prepared to keep the movement to the minimum and take care of their comfort. The lessons learnt during the current Covid crisis will be a good foundation to work on these plans.

Fifthly, there should be heavy investment in education and healthcare. Had it been done earlier, migrant workers would have behaved differently, and we wouldn't have been struggling to put up a healthcare system to match the current need. Luckily, we haven't failed because the problem is not that big in India so far.

Sixthly, and very importantly, the bureaucracy has to be more nimble-footed. As per the general perception, it hasn't covered itself with glory during this recent tragedy. For these, large-scale changes are required, from recruitment to training and attitude etc. The PM must give a push to this like Margaret Thatcher, the then British PM, had done during her tenure in the UK. It is also suggested that senior bureaucrats should be hired or employed for a ten-year period and their tenure getting extended for the next ten years should depend on their performance during the first term. In all, there should be two extensions, i.e. they shouldn't serve for more than 30 years. It should apply to all services.

Seventhly, more technocrats should head senior positions like secretaries and joint secretaries. In the recent case, we do have a doctor by chance as the Union Health Minister but the officials working in the ministries and at the cutting-edge level are not medicos. It's important that we have technocrats in such positions because today it is a health problem, tomorrow it can be a problem in the space or cyber field. So, those knowledgeable in such areas will do a much better job.

Next, the wages and other facilities or service conditions of the technocrats and others like the police should be at par with the top civil service to acknowledge their contribution. Today, even though the technocrats are more qualified, they serve under non-technical persons and have a lower position in society.

Also, departments like the police, health, space and others should be reporting directly to the ministers rather than through the senior bureaucracy.

Lastly, political parties need to be more sensitive to the needs of the country and society. Politicking should be avoided. The good of the nation and showing unity to the world in adversity should be the aim of parties. It doesn't mean that they shouldn't find fault with each other for the wrongs that are being done in their assessment, but the tools used to criticize should be decent. They shouldn't oppose always for the sake of opposing.

India is great and so are Indians. Nobody can stop our march to being a super-power in the current century, but for that, a lot of hard work is required, and specially to acquire competency in dealing with sudden situations for which we should be well prepared.



The lost childhood

(The author is a former DGP, Tripura)

Aid seekers' stampede leaves 3 dead in Lanka

COLOMBO (TIP): At least three women were killed and eight others injured in a stampede on Thursday when a large number of people gathered at the residence of a wealthy businessman who was distributing cash to the families affected by the coronavirus lockdown.

The Muslim businessman was distributing Rs 5,000 to persons, who lost their livelihood in the coronavirus crisis, to mark the 27th day of the Ramzan fast, police said.

A large number of people gathered at the businessman's house in Central Colombo's Maligawatta area violating the Covid-19 lockdown curfew, police said. Police said at least six persons have been arrested.

The health authorities reported that Sri Lanka, which has 1,045 Covid-19 cases and nine deaths, eased the lockdown rules allowing businesses and offices to re-open while complying with health regulations. The health authorities claim that curfew would continue till all Covid clusters were deactivated. —PTI

2 quakes jolt Nepal in 2 hrs

KATHMANDU (TIP): Two medium intensity earthquakes hit Nepal on Thursday in a span of six hours, the National Seismological Centre said.

However, there was no report of any loss of life or damage to property due to the tremors. The first jolt measuring a magnitude of 3 on the Richter scale hit Darchula district in far-west Nepal at 2.45 am.

Another quake of 3.4 magnitude struck Bhaktapur district, 15 km east of Kathmandu, at 8.14 am. The epicentre of the quake was at Anantalingeshwor area in the district.

Slight tremor was also felt in and around Kathmandu city. —PTI

Pak woman legislator dies of coronavirus

ISLAMABAD (TIP): A 60-year-old woman legislator of the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party in Punjab province died of COVID-19 on Wednesday, making her the first lawmaker in the country to succumb to the virus that has killed over 900 others in Pakistan.

Shaheen Raza, 60, was admitted to the Mayo hospital in Lahore a few days ago after she was tested positive for the coronavirus.

Her health deteriorated over the weekend following which she was put on ventilator, Gujranwala Deputy Commissioner Sohail Ashraf said.

However, Raza succumbed to the viral infection in the hospital on Wednesday, he said.

She was also suffering from other diseases like high blood pressure and diabetes and her situation deteriorated fast, officials said.

Prior to developing coronavirus symptoms, Raza had been inspecting various quarantine centres. PTI

Over 1 million consumers lose power supply as super cyclone hits Bangladesh coast; 1 dead

DHAKA (TIP): Over one million consumers in the coastal areas of Bangladesh were without power after strong winds snapped electricity lines and many houses destroyed as the country was hit by a powerful cyclone on Wednesday that killed at least one person.

Cyclone 'Amphan', the strongest to hit the region in nearly two decades, made a landfall on Wednesday evening. Authorities raised the alert level to 'great danger' for some districts in the country as the cyclone, the most powerful storm since cyclone 'Sidr' killed nearly 3,500 people in 2007, approached the coastline.

"More than one million consumers in at least 17 associations of the Rural Electrification Board have lost electricity," bdnews24.com reported.

Apart from this, almost 40,000 customers of West Zone Power Distribution Company have lost electricity supply.

The cyclone made landfall at 2.30 pm between Digha in West Bengal and Hatiya island in Bangladesh, flattening fragile dwellings, uprooting trees and electric poles.

The cyclone 'Amphan' started crossing the Bangladesh coast around 5 pm on Wednesday packing a wind speed of around 160 to 180kph rising to 200kph within 80km of its centre, meteorologist Abdul Mannan was quoted as saying by the news portal.

A Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRS) volunteer drowned on Wednesday when a boat capsized while evacuating villagers to safety in south-western Patuakhali, becoming the first



victim of cyclone Amphan.

"He was on a boat along with four others when a sudden storm under advancing Amphan's influence overturned it. Three others managed to escape," BDRS's cyclone preparedness programme Nurul Islam Khan told PTI.

Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said authorities had shifted over two million people to storm shelters and deployed the military to deal with the powerful cyclone 'Amphan'.

"We have the preparations (to face cyclone Amphan). We are taking all possible measures that we should adopt for protecting the lives and properties of the people from the cyclone," Prime Minister Hasina told a meeting of the National Disaster Management Council (NDMC) formed to review the

preparations in facing the possible assault of the super cyclone.

"Twenty lakh people have so far been evacuated to the cyclone centres as part of the prior preparation," Hasina was quoted as saying by The Daily Star newspaper.

The Bangladesh Army, Navy and Air Force have made preparations to tackle the super cyclone which has moved within 400km of Bangladesh's coast and is expected to make landfall on Wednesday evening, Bdnews24.com reported.

Meanwhile, some 740 houses in Patuakhali were washed away as an advanced surge of tidal wave cracked a coastal embankment while the cyclone was approaching, officials said. PTI

Pakistani man arrested for killing 2 teenage girls over leaked video

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Police in Pakistan's North Waziristan has arrested a man suspected to have killed two teenage girls in the name of 'honour' after a short mobile video of them with a young man surfaced online, the media reported on Thursday.

The girls were gunned down on May 14 in Shamplan Garyam village after their 'objectionable' video footage went viral on social media, said the Dawn news report.

On Wednesday, North Waziristan district police officer Shafiullah Gandapur said the suspected killer, Mohammad Aslam, who was a cousin of the two girls, was held during a raid in an unidentified location.

He had gone into hiding after the murders.

Earlier in the day, a central character of the incident, Umer



Ayaz, confessed before a local court that he had recorded the video.

A senior police official said Ayaz told the court that he used the mobile phone of his friend, Fida Wazir, who had already been held by the police.

Meanwhile, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Inspector General of Police Sanaullah Abbasi announced cash reward and commendation

certificates for police officials over arrests in the honour killing case.

Besides Aslam, the police have arrested four suspects in the case—Ayaz, Fida Mohammad, father of one of the girls, Zadwal Khan, and the girl's cousin, Roohuddin.

The police claimed that the family of the deceased had kept the killings a secret, so the relevant station house officer registered the FIR as the complainant, reports Dawn news.

The area where the incident took place is far-flung and considered risky in terms of security.

The incident comes nearly eight years after the 2012 Kohistan video scandal, in which three women were killed for honour after a grainy video showing them singing and clapping while two boys danced had gone viral in the ultra-conservative and remote district. — IANS

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Michigan river rises to highest level ever after dam break

MICHIGAN (TIP): A dam breach in central Michigan that forced thousands to evacuate has swelled the Tittabawassee River to its highest level in history, forecasters said Wednesday, May 20.

The earthen Edenville Dam held back the river, which reached the record high of 34 feet in Midland, the National Weather Service said.

Forecasters from the NWS said the Tittabawassee River is expected to fluctuate to around 35 feet before beginning to drop at around midnight. They previously predicted the river could crest at 38 feet.

The Edenville Dam ruptured Tuesday, May 19, after swelling with several inches of rain, and was followed by the failure of Sanford Dam in Midland County. The failures forced thousands to evacuate Midland and surrounding areas and Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer declared a state of emergency.

"This is unlike anything we've seen in Midland County," Whitmer said at a news conference Tuesday. "If you have a family member or loved one who lives in another part of the state, go there now."



Flooding is seen in Midland, Mich., after a dam failed on Tuesday and forced thousands to evacuate.
Photo courtesy City of Midland/Facebook

Downtown Midland, the site of a major Dow Chemical plant, is projected to be under as many as 9 feet of water by late Wednesday, Whitmer said.

Midland City Manager Brad Kaye said

Wednesday that the flood is expected to reach its peak height at around 9 p.m. and encouraged residents to remain vigilant. "The important point that I really want to stress ... is that this is not

over," Kaye said. "It's a bright sunny day. For those of you that are Midlanders that have been here in the past, you know that every time we flood, it seems to be a bright, sunny cloudless day ... that doesn't mean it's over. It doesn't mean that things aren't going to get worse than they are right now."

According to records, the company that owns the dam had a federal license revoked in 2018.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission revoked the license for Boyce Hydro Power to generate power at the Edenville Dam, citing the company's failure over a years-long span to correct safety problems, including its ability to withstand a major flood.

FERC regulators said they were revoking the license because of the company's "longstanding failure to increase the project's spillway capacity to safely pass flood flows, as well as its failure to comply with its license" and commission regulations.

Midland County and neighboring Gladwin County agreed to buy the dams from Boyce Hydro in January.

(Source: UPI)

University of California eliminates SAT/ACT requirement

OAKLAND(TIP) : University of California regents voted Thursday, May 21, to stop requiring high school students to submit an SAT or ACT score for admission, the biggest blow yet to the traditional standardized tests as leaders of the elite public system attempt to address fairness concerns.

UC's new policy, proposed by system President Janet Napolitano, calls for the SAT and ACT to be suspended through 2024 as the university attempts to develop its own testing standard. The tests will be completely eliminated in 2025, regardless of whether a new or modified UC-specific standard has been approved for use.

Prospective students will have the option of submitting standardized test scores through 2022, keeping intact a strategy recently implemented by universities across the nation as the coronavirus pandemic has hindered the ability of many students to take the tests. Beginning in 2023, the SAT and ACT will have no impact on the admissions process, though students could still submit scores to determine eligibility for certain scholarships and post-enrollment class placement.

The vote comes after decades of opposition to standardized testing from civil rights groups and education experts who say it favors wealthier, predominantly white students who can pay for extensive test prep. Most recently, the UC system was sued by a group of students, education advocacy groups and public-school districts



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University of California office of the President claiming the SAT and ACT are discriminatory.

"We consider the use of the exam to be an antiquated approach to admissions, and one that undermines equity and ignores appropriate indicators of college aptitude," said Frances Contreras, a UC San Diego professor and co-chair of the UC Chicano/Latino Advisory Council, during public comment. "We asked the question, what is added value?"

The regents' vote comes despite recommendations from the UC academic senate that the SAT and ACT remain in use until the system develops a new test.

In a 200-page report released January, the academic senate's Standardized Testing Task Force argued that dropping the tests without another option in place would result in lower student GPAs after their first years, lower probability of graduating within seven years and lower GPAs at graduation. (Agencies)

More than 43 Million file for unemployment benefits

WASHINGTON (TIP): More than 4 million U.S. workers filed for jobless benefits last week, the Labor Department said Thursday, May 21. That brings the total number of people applying for aid to more than 43 million, on a seasonally adjusted basis, since the coronavirus pandemic spread across the nation.

Put another way, 1 in 4 U.S. workers has applied for jobless aid in the last 10 weeks.

"Unemployment claims made during the coronavirus crisis have already exceeded the 37 million claims made over the entire 18 months of the Great Recession," Daniel Zhao, senior economist at Glassdoor, said in a note. "[T]he labor market remains in a deep hole it will have to climb out of."

Some 2.4 million workers applied for regular unemployment insurance in the week ending May 16, marking a slight decrease from the week before. But nearly as many - 2.2 million - applied for aid under Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, a new federal program for self-employed and gig workers.

The self-employed were not being counted in previous weekly jobless figures until last week. The true number of jobless self-employed people is likely even higher, as not all states are currently reporting their PUA payout figures, noted economist Heidi Shierholz.

The number of first-time applications for traditional jobless aid has steadily declined each week since peaking in late March, indicating that the waves of



layoffs are slowing. However, the figures remain staggering by historical standards, demonstrating that severe economic pain is widespread even as the majority of U.S. states reopen their economies.

"Reopening the economy does not necessarily equate with robust rehiring," Andy Stettner, a senior fellow at the Century Foundation, wrote in a note. While 35 states reopened last week, nine of them actually saw an increase in the number of new workers claiming unemployment benefits, he pointed out.

"The unemployment rate now stands at a staggering 14.7% - a figure I hoped that I would never see in my lifetime, and one that is sure to get worse before it gets better," John Williams, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, said Thursday morning.

"It's likely that the latest numbers do not reveal the full extent of the financial devastation faced by millions of American families. The data don't capture those who had to leave their jobs, either for their own health or to take care of loved ones," Williams said.

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American Congressman Votes to Provide Urgent Relief to Frontline Health Care Workers

WASHINGTON (TIP): Indian origin Congressman Ami Bera, M.D. (CA-07) voted May 15 to provide urgently needed support for frontline health care workers, families, and small businesses. The Heroes Act, which passed the House of Representatives, would provide \$900 million in relief funding for Sacramento County and \$190 million to cities in CA-07 over the next two years.

"Our country is indebted to our brave frontline health care workers and emergency personnel who continue to courageously put themselves in harm's way to keep our communities safe and healthy. We have a responsibility to ensure our heroes receive all the support possible, and that's why I'm proud to vote to get additional resources to them," said Rep. Bera. "Today's vote is also an important step in getting our communities back on a path to economic recovery. American families and small businesses have been hit incredibly hard by this pandemic and they need to know that help is on the way."

The Heroes Act would:

- Provide strong support for our heroes by sending nearly \$1 trillion in funds to state and local governments on the frontlines to pay the health care workers, police officers, firefighters, transportation workers, EMS personnel, teachers and other vital workers who keep us safe every day. The Heroes Act will also establish a \$200 billion Heroes' Fund to ensure that essential workers receive hazard pay.
- Put money in the pockets of workers with a second round of direct payments to families for up to \$6,000 per household, new payroll protection measures to keep 60 million workers connected with their jobs, and extending the emergency weekly \$600 federal unemployment benefits through next January.
- Support small businesses by strengthening the Payroll Protection Program to ensure that it reaches underserved communities and nonprofits of all

types and offering flexible support to small businesses by providing \$10 billion for Covid-19 emergency grants through the Economic Injury Disaster Loan program.

- Support housing security with \$175 billion in resources to assist renters and homeowners pay for their rent and mortgages, utility payments, and other housing-related costs.
- Supports food security with a 15 percent increase to the maximum SNAP benefit and additional funding for nutrition programs that help families put food on the table.

Included in the Heroes Act are Bera-led provisions to increase COVID-19 testing and contact tracing.

"Widespread testing and contact tracing are key to ensuring states and communities can safely and confidently reopen. I'm proud that the House voted to include my proposals to get additional testing funds to communities," said Rep. Bera.

Rep. Bera has been a leader in Congress on calling for the creation of a national testing strategy that includes



Included in the Heroes Act are Bera-led provisions to increase COVID-19 testing and contact tracing

widespread antibody testing and contact tracing. He sent a letter to Administration on April 8 urging them to address testing shortfalls during the pandemic.

Indian American Lawmaker Introduces Paycheck Recovery Act



With wide -ranging support, Jayapal Paycheck Recovery Act to keep workers in their jobs, stop mass unemployment and deliver direct relief to businesses of all sizes

WASHINGTON (TIP): U.S. Representative Pramila Jayapal (WA-07), Co-Chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, introduced H.R. 6918, the Paycheck Recovery Act today as a policy solution that delivers working people immediate relief and certainty while matching the scale of the current public health and economic crisis. The Paycheck Recovery Act ends mass unemployment, keeps workers connected to their paychecks, returns millions of workers who have been laid off or furloughed since March 1 back to payroll

and health care and prevents employers of all sizes from being forced to close permanently. H.R. 6918 is co-sponsored by 93 members of Congress from across the ideological spectrum, including many Frontline Members.

"Mass unemployment is a policy choice, and we must choose differently by passing an urgent proposal that matches the scale of this crisis while delivering certainty and direct relief to workers, businesses of all sizes and the economy," said Congresswoman Jayapal. "The Paycheck Recovery Act will end mass unemployment, put workers back on their paychecks and health care and keep businesses from closing permanently while ensuring workers aren't forced to return to work before it is safe to do so."

At a time when the unemployment rate is at its highest level since the Great Depression and more than 37 million workers have lost their jobs during COVID-19, the Paycheck Recovery Act would deliver certainty and stability by covering the full wages of workers earning salaries up to \$90,000 and ensuring employers can rehire those laid-off or furloughed since March 1. It does this in a quick and direct manner by utilizing existing payroll tax infrastructure instead of relationships with banks and lending institutions.

Senate confirms Rep. John Ratcliffe as next director of national intelligence

WASHINGTON (TIP): The Senate confirmed Rep. John Ratcliffe (R-Tex.) as the next director of national intelligence on Thursday, May 21, capping an unusually protracted process that saw the congressman withdraw his nomination last year in the face of bipartisan opposition, only to have President Trump challenge members of his own party and nominate Ratcliffe again seven months later.

The Senate voted 49-to-44 to confirm Ratcliffe along party lines. He received more votes against his confirmation than any DNI in the 15-year history of the office.

Ratcliffe will assume leadership of a sprawling federation of 17 intelligence agencies, with a collective budget of at least \$60 billion, at an acutely vulnerable moment for U.S. national security. Still in the throes of a pandemic that has killed more than 90,000 people in the U.S. and wrought economic devastation, the U.S. is facing a dramatic escalation in tensions with China, the source of the viral outbreak; the prospect of repeated Russian interference in the 2020 election, which the intelligence community Ratcliffe will lead has said is all but certain; and painful decisions about how to support security and defense budgets when the government is spending trillions of dollars to keep the economy from collapsing.

When Trump first tapped Ratcliffe for the post last June, Democrats and Republicans alike were cool to the choice. Ratcliffe had never worked in the intelligence community. And his connections to national security more broadly proved both tenuous - a few years as a federal prosecutor - and exaggerated.

To bolster his nomination, Ratcliffe pointed to his service, beginning in 2004, as the chief of



The Senate voted 49-to-44 to confirm Ratcliffe along party lines

anti-terrorism and national security in the Eastern District of Texas, a position created after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in a jurisdiction that didn't see a high volume of terrorism cases. President George W. Bush later appointed Ratcliffe as the interim U.S. attorney.

But former colleagues and records showed that Ratcliffe didn't play a significant role in any terrorism cases, contrary to his public claims. In a news release, Ratcliffe had touted his "special appointment as the prosecutor" in a high-profile terrorism financing case in 2008, U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation. But a spokesperson later acknowledged that Ratcliffe's assignment wasn't to prosecute the case but rather "to investigate issues related to" why an initial prosecution of Holy Land Foundation resulted in a mistrial.

Ratcliffe also distorted his record on immigration enforcement, a key policy priority of the Trump administration, boasting during his campaign and on his congressional website that he "arrested 300 illegal immigrants in a single day." That wasn't true.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Another biggest single-day spike, over 6,088 new Covid-19 cases in 24 hours

NEW DELHI (TIP): India's tally of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) stood at 118,447 on Friday as 6,088 new cases, the second biggest single-day surge in a week, were reported in the last 24 hours, according to the Union health ministry.

The number of Covid-19 cases had risen by 5,611, the country's biggest single-day jump, to reach 106,750 on Wednesday.

According to the health ministry dashboard at 8am, there were 66,330 active cases of the respiratory disease in the country and 3,583 people succumbed in the last 24 hours.

With 48,533 Covid-19 patients sent home, the recovery rate went up to 40.97% on the fifth day of the fourth phase of the national lockdown, data suggested. This is up from about 7% before the first phase of the lockdown began on March 25.

The worst-affected state in India, Maharashtra has more than 41,000 Covid-19 and has reported 1,454 fatalities. It had reported more than 2,000 Covid-19 infections for the fifth straight day on Thursday as it breached the 40,000-mark with 2,345 new cases, the second-highest single-day spike so far.

Tamil Nadu is the second-worst hit state with 13,967 cases as Gujarat recorded 12,905 patients so far. However, the western state has 773 fatalities as compared to 94 in Tamil Nadu.

According to the health ministry, Delhi has 11,659 cases of the coronavirus disease and 194 people have died in the national capital so far. With over 500 new cases each day, Delhi has been recording the highest single-day spike for the last



SONIA BOOKED FOR CONG TWEET CLAIMING MISUSE OF PM FUND

BENGALURU (TIP): A case has been registered against Congress president Sonia Gandhi in Karnataka in connection with a tweet posted on the party's official handle alleging misuse of PM-CARES Fund. The Sagara town police in Shivamogga district registered the case on Wednesday based on a complaint by Praveen KV, who alleged that @INCIndia, the official Twitter handle of the Congress, tried to create distrust among masses with its tweet by spreading 'baseless charges'. The state Congress condemned the

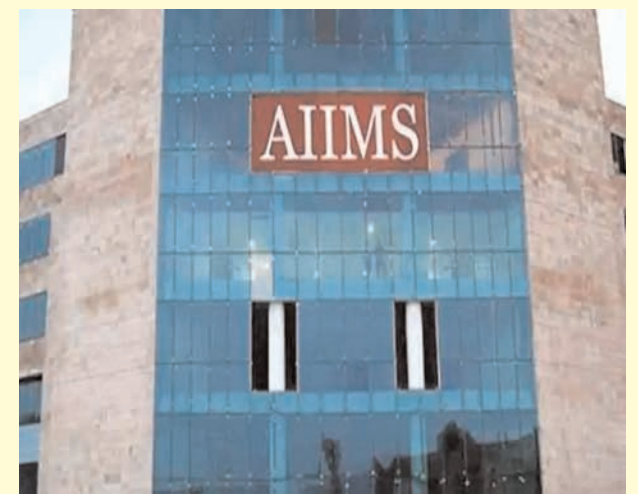
registration of the case. The case has been registered under Sections 153 and 505 (1)(B) of the IPC, which relate to wantonly provoking people and inciting them to commit offence against any other class or community. The complainant alleged that on May 11 at 6 pm, the INC India Twitter account posted messages against Prime Minister Narendra Modi alleging 'misuse' of PM-CARES Fund set up to enable people contribute to help the government fight against coronavirus and "similar distressing situations".

three days, the data shows.

As the government announced on Thursday it will reopen air travel on 383 routes across the country after a two-month gap and allowed one-third of the operations beginning May 25, the ministry of home affairs (MHA) again nudged states to strictly follow lockdown guidelines,

particularly the night curfew, to make sure people observe social distancing norms and contain the risk of infection spreading.

The two-week fourth phase of the nationwide lockdown is scheduled to end on May 31, but with several restrictions having been relaxed to boost economic activities.



AIIMS TO STUDY HOW LONG CORONAVIRUS CAN SURVIVE IN DEAD BODIES

NEW DELHI (TIP): AIIMS doctors are contemplating autopsy of a COVID-19 victim to study how long the coronavirus can survive in a dead body and if it can transmit the infection, the Delhi hospital's forensic chief said on Thursday.

The study will also help ascertain how the virus affects the organs, Dr Sudhir Gupta said.

An informed consent will be obtained from the legal heirs of the deceased for it, he said adding that many more departments like pathology and microbiology would be involved in the study. "It is going to be a first-of-its-kind exercise and thus has to be planned meticulously. It will help us understand how the virus behaves in the body and the way it affects the organs. Also, it will help us assess how long the novel coronavirus can survive in a dead body," Dr Gupta explained.

On Tuesday, the apex health research body ICMR said COVID-19 is a respiratory infection and mainly spread through aerosols.

As per the available scientific literature till now, the survival of virus gradually decreases with time in a dead body but there is no specific time limit to declare the body non-infective. So, it is advisable to adopt precautions and non-invasive autopsy technique, it stated.

Non-invasive autopsy technique as described in ICMR guidelines should be used, if at all required, to prevent the risk of spreading the infection to mortuary staff, police personnel and contamination of mortuary surfaces.

"If autopsy surgeon feels that he will not be able to conclude cause of death or any other related issue without dissection, then he can proceed with minimal invasive/limited internal dissection.

Centre cites lockdown violations, asks states to ensure strict implementation

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Centre on Thursday asked states to ensure strict implementation of lockdown and night curfew protocols, saying it has noticed violation of the restrictions at several places.

In a communication to all states and union territories, Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla asked them to strictly ensure prohibition of all non-essential activities between 7pm and 7am, saying the night curfew imposed to contain the coronavirus spread is an "important element of the Home Ministry guidelines".

He said the night curfew has been imposed to ensure that people observe social distance.

"Accordingly, local authorities should be asked to issue orders in the entirety of their jurisdiction, under proper provisions of law, for imposition of night curfew. Strict compliance of these orders should be ensured by the local authorities," he said.

Bhalla said the Home Ministry has



noticed reports of violation of its guidelines at several places.

"I would like to emphasise that the MHA guidelines should be strictly implemented, and all authorities in states and UTs should

take necessary steps to ensure the same," he said.

These stipulations, such as wearing face covers, ensuring social distancing at work, transport and in public places, maintaining

hygiene and sanitation etc., are important for containing the spread of COVID-19. "It is the duty of all district and local authorities to enforce the national directives," he said.

"I would request all the chief secretaries of states and administrators of union territories to remain vigilant in the fight against COVID-19 and ensure that all measures that have either been mandated by MHA or laid down by the States and UTs, are scrupulously adhered to at all levels," Bhalla said. After the lockdown was extended till May 31, the Home Ministry issued fresh guidelines relaxing some curbs that were imposed during the first three phases, except in the containment zones.

Bhalla said a proper delineation of containment zones and effective implementation of containment measures is key to preventing the further spread of COVID-19. In this respect, the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare need to be followed and containment zones properly demarcated.

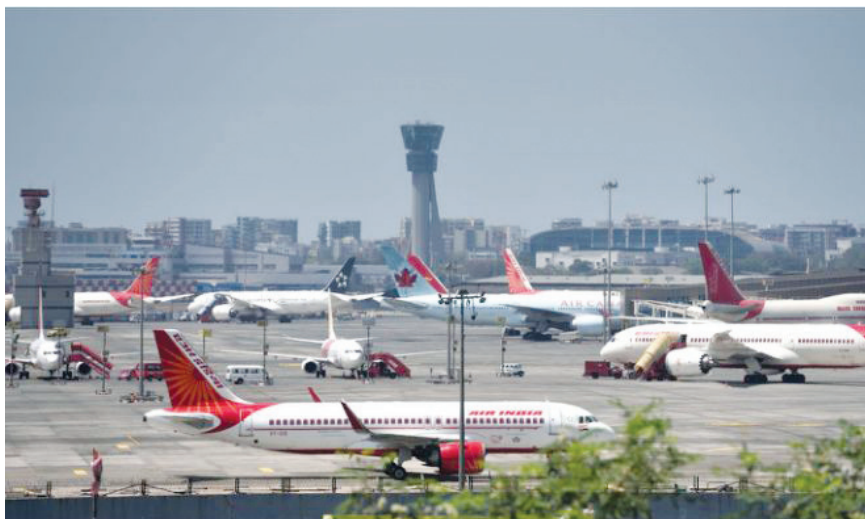
What passengers need to know before boarding domestic flight

ELABORATE GUIDELINES, FROM ONE CHECK-IN BAG TO INSTALLING AAROGYA SETU APP

NEW DELHI (TIP): A day after announcing the resumption of domestic commercial passenger flights from May 25, the Civil Aviation Ministry on Thursday, May 21, issued detailed guidelines for airlines, airports, passengers and other stakeholders on issues ranging from control on air fares to restrictions on number of bags.

Here are the points passengers should keep in mind:

- Before entering the terminal, passenger to ensure that he or she is wearing a mask
- Passenger to report at the airport 2 hours before flights
- Passenger to travel in an authorized taxi/personal vehicle following the norms specified by the Home Ministry
- During transit to airport, the passenger should take all precautions to prevent infection
- Passenger to certify the status of history of his or her health through the Aarogya Setu App or a self-declaration form
- Ensure web check-in and obtain a boarding pass
- Baggage limitations - Only one check-in bag and one cabin bag allowed
- Vulnerable persons such as very elderly, pregnant women, passengers with ailments are advised to avoid air travel
- Passenger to download the baggage tag and baggage identification number, print it and affix it on the bag at a prominent place
- In case the passenger is not able to print the baggage tag, then he or she should mention the PNR number and his or her name on a thick piece of paper and affix it / tag it with a strong string
- Passenger to proceed to security hold area after security screening
- While waiting in the security hold area, passenger to



Some domestic flights will start on Monday, May 25.

- maintain social distancing and sanitation protocols
- Chairs marked 'Not For Use' should not be occupied
- Passenger to dispose all the bio-hazardous material like used masks, gloves, tissues etc. in the yellow-colored disposable bins/bags placed at strategic locations at the airport
- Passengers to collect the safety kit (three-layered surgical mask and sanitizer) from the airlines near the boarding gate
- Passengers to wear mask and sanitize his/her hands before proceeding to the boarding gate for scanning of the boarding pass
- Passengers to be attentive towards boarding announcements and reach the boarding queue by following social distancing
- Display of identity cards by passengers is a must & check-in of the boarding pass would be done by the passenger by self-scanning of e-boarding pass
- During the flight, passengers to strictly follow hygiene and sanitation. Face-to-face interaction to be minimized
- Passenger to minimize the use of toilets and avoid any non-essential movement in the aisles
- No queuing at the toilets and only one companion for children and the elderly would be allowed
- No meal service in the aircraft. Water bottle to be made available in the galley area or on the seats. Eatables not to be consumed during the flight
- No newspaper or magazine will be available, no onboard sale of any item
- If the passenger feels uncomfortable, fatigued or has respiratory distress, it should be brought to the immediate notice of the crew
- The disembarkation from the airlines would be sequential
- Social distance and sanitation should be maintained at the arrival gate aerobridge, coaches, jet ladders ramps etc.
- To disembark passengers to strictly follow the instructions of the crew
- Trolleys in the arrival area to be used sparingly
- Passenger to wait at the baggage hold area till the baggage arrives in batches. - (Agencies)

HC EXTENDS 1984 ANTI-SIKH RIOTS CONVICT'S PAROLE BY ANOTHER 3 MONTHS

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Delhi High Court on Thursday extended by three months the parole granted to Captain Bhagmal, convicted and sentenced to life term in a 1984 anti-Sikh riots case, saying he was over 90 years of age.

Bhagmal's parole, last extended on March 20, was expiring on Thursday.

Justice Suresh Kumar Kait said, "Keeping in view the fact that age of petitioner (Bhagmal) is more than 90 years, I hereby extend the parole of the petitioner for a further period of three months on the same terms and conditions as imposed vide order dated March 20, 2020."

The high court said Bhagmal shall surrender after expiry of the three month parole.

He was convicted and awarded life term for the murder of five members of a family in Raj Nagar area of Delhi Cantonment on November 1, 1984, after the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Delhi government standing counsel Rahul Mehra opposed the plea for extension saying that the convict was on parole since September 19 last year and it was already extended once on March 20, 2020 for two months.

India becomes world's second-largest manufacturer of PPE body coveralls: Govt



NEW DELHI (TIP): India has become the world's second-largest manufacturer of personal protective equipment (PPE) body coveralls within a short time span of two months, the government said on Thursday.

China is the world's leading producer of PPE body coveralls, crucial to safeguard against the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a statement, the Ministry of Textiles said it had been taking several steps to ensure that both quality and quantity of PPE coveralls was going up to the desired levels within a very short span of time of two months, "thereby catapulting India into the world's second-largest manufacturer of body coveralls, next only to China".

The Ministry has taken steps to ensure that only certified players across the entire supply chain were allowed to supply body coveralls to governments, an official statement said.

Besides, Textiles Committee, Mumbai, too, will now test and certify PPE body coveralls required for healthcare workers and other COVID-19 warriors.

Ajit Chavan, secretary, Textiles Committee and Additional Textile Commissioner, Ministry of Textiles, explained how the committee rose up to the occasion to surmount the challenge of non-availability of reputed domestic manufacturers of PPE testing equipment.

"We faced the humongous challenges of non-availability of domestic manufacturers of repute and incessant delay/long gestation period to import machine from China as also challenges of ever-increasing prices by the opportunist companies in China due to demand for such equipment the world over. We, therefore, decided to do it indigenously," he said.

India junks China's charge of sparking tension

BEIJING/NEW DELHI (TIP): India on Thursday strongly rebutted China's contention that tensions in the Ladakh and Sikkim sectors were triggered by Indian troops crossing the Line of Actual Control (LAC), even as it accused Chinese forces of hindering patrols on the Indian side.

The Indian side said it is committed to peace and tranquillity along the border, but will take all steps to safeguard the country's sovereignty and security. The remarks by external affairs ministry spokesperson Anurag Srivastava came against the backdrop of continuing tensions along the LAC, especially

in Galwan Valley of Ladakh, where both sides have deployed additional troops.

New Delhi's first official reaction to the tensions came a day after India was strongly supported by the US, with top American diplomat Alice Wells saying such disputes are a "reminder of the threat posed by China".

In Beijing, foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian reiterated that Indian troops had trespassed across the LAC and dismissed Wells' remarks as "just nonsense". India should work with China and "refrain from unilateral actions" that complicate the

situation, he said.

China's foreign ministry side had first accused Indian troops of trespassing across the LAC in a statement to Hindustan Times on Tuesday, saying Beijing had to take "necessary countermeasures" after the Indian side allegedly obstructed normal patrols by Chinese troops.

Asked about China's position on the standoff in Ladakh, external affairs ministry spokesperson Srivastava told an online news briefing: "Any suggestion that Indian troops had undertaken activity across the LAC in the western [Ladakh] sector or the Sikkim sector is not accurate."

MIGRANT WORKERS AMID LOCKDOWN

MYRIAD MISERY, DESPERATE EXODUS



Ever since the announcement of the first national lockdown on 24th March, shutdown of transport and sealing of states/districts has created a humanitarian crisis in many states for panic stricken migrant workers, students, those between travels and transit. There has been some relaxation in the rules since lockdown 3.0 with relaxations rules and this crisis and ways and means to tackle it has taken the center stage, with many pertinent viewpoints, evidences, experiences and learnings.

Amid a lack of responsive mobility option, despair, treatment alike commodity and inferior citizens and serious concerns of being infected and the craving to be at the comforts of their homes, several million migrant workers and families, begun to tread on foot. With no government support of travel, their journey has often been several hundred miles following highways and railway tracks, often hungry and relentlessly tired. This has turned into the great human tragedy.

Migrant workers and families are now desperately leaving from their destination to their native places. They are hurt by the fact that the destination places particularly the cities are treating them badly and most of them have lost the trust on the government, and a hope to make ends meet in their native places. Despite repeated assurances from the central and state governments, millions of migrants are desperate to return from cities with double threats of life and livelihood by covid-19. However, the early sign of unexpected surge in unemployment rate (Bihar: 47%; Jharkhand: 47%; UP: 22%), at the native places of migrants indicate a threatening picture ahead.

Number of migrants

The total number of internal migrants in India, as per the 2011 census, is 45.36 crore or 37% of the country's population. This includes inter-state migrants as well as migrants within each state, while the recent exodus is largely due to the movement of inter-state migrants.

The annual net flows amount to about 1 per cent of the working age population. As per Census 2011, the size of the workforce was 48.2 crore people. This figure is estimated to have exceeded 50 crore in 2016 — the Economic Survey pegged the size of the migrant workforce at roughly 20 per cent or over 10 crore in 2016.

State to state, 2020

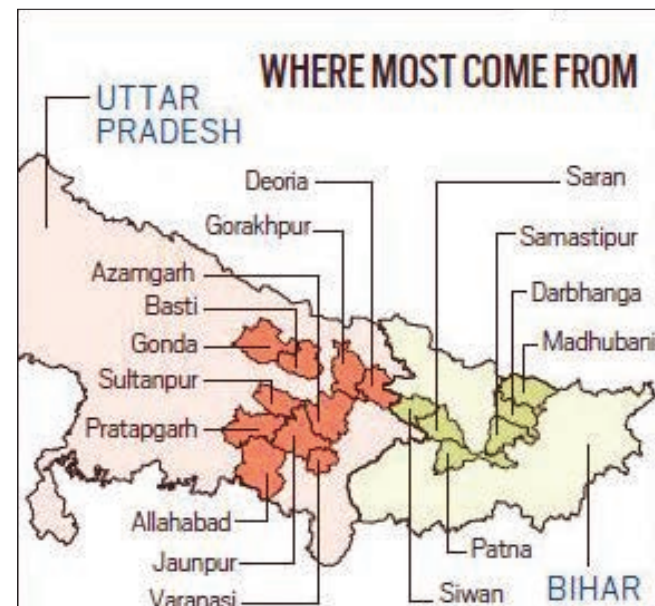
While there is no official data for the inter-state migrants in the country, estimates for 2020 have been made by Professor Amitabh Kundu of Research and

information System for Developing countries. His estimates, which are based on the 2011 Census, NSSO surveys and economic survey, show that there are a total of about 65 million inter-state migrants, and 33 per cent of these migrants are workers. By conservative estimates, 30 per cent of them are casual workers and another 30 per cent work on regular basis but in the informal sector.

If you add street vendors, another vulnerable community which is not captured by the worker data, that would mean that there are 12 to 18 million people who are residing in states other than that of their origin and have been placed at a risk of losing their income. A study by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) and Azim Premji University in 2019 estimates that 29% of the population in India's big cities is of daily wagers. This is the number of people which would be logically wanting to move back to their states.

What they earn, experience

As per the 'Politics and Society Between Elections Survey' from 2017-19 conducted by the CSDS, the monthly household income of 22% daily and weekly wagers is up to Rs 2,000; of 32%, between Rs 2,000 and



17 districts account for 25% of male out-migration in the country. The map shows 16; Ganjam in Odisha is not mapped.

Source: Customised from the Registrar General of India, based on Census 2001 in the Report of Working Group on Migration, 2017

SHARE OF MIGRANT WORKERS AMONG TOTAL WORKERS BY MAJOR SECTORS

Sector	Rural		Urban	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Primary	4%	75%	20%	65%
Manufacturing	13%	59%	38%	51%
Public Services	16%	69%	40%	56%
Construction	8%	73%	32%	67%
Traditional Services	10%	65%	29%	55%
Modern Services	16%	66%	40%	52%
Total	6%	73%	33%	56%

Source: NSS 2007-08, Report of the Working Group in Migration, 2017

5,000; of 25%, between 5,000 and 10,000; of 13%, between Rs 10,000 and 20,000; and of 8%, more than Rs 20,000. A CSDS survey during the recent Delhi Assembly elections also found that 20% of respondents reported their monthly household income to be less than Rs 10,000. Among migrants from Bihar and UP, this was even higher at 33% and 27%, respectively.



MIGRANT WORKERS AMID LOCKDOWN

OVER 100 KILLED ON THEIR WAY BACK HOME

An analysis of news reports in national media shows that more than 100 migrant workers were killed in accidents since March 24, while hundreds of others sustained injured. Moreover, many of the injured in such accidents were reported to have suffered critical injuries and the death toll could be higher.

After facing difficulties to meet basic ends without work, these migrants, in the absence of any means of transport, found no choice but to walk back home.

Unfortunately, not all of them reached their respective destinations.

Several of the migrants who either walked or travelled in other private vehicles met with accidents throughout the lockdown period.

An analysis of news reports in national media shows that more than 100 migrant workers were killed in accidents since March 24, while hundreds of others sustained injured. Moreover, many of the injured in such accidents were reported to have suffered critical injuries and the death toll could be higher.

In fact, a similar analysis by SaveLife Foundation, an independent, non-profit NGO advocating road safety and emergency medical care across India, put the death toll in road accidents among migrant workers at 159 between March 24 and May 18. The analysis estimated that 630 migrants were injured in these road mishaps.

It is to be noted that these figures are based on accidents and incidents that were reported in the media and, therefore, the numbers are not exhaustive. The actual death toll could be higher.

Among one of the major and recent incidents, at least 24 migrant labourers were killed, while 37 others were left injured when a truck in which they were travelling in collided with another vehicle in Uttar Pradesh's Auraiya on May 16.

Likewise, at least eight died and 55 sustained injuries when a truck they were traveling in collided with a bus in Madhya Pradesh's Guna on May 14. The deceased were residents of Unnao and Raebareli districts of Uttar Pradesh, according to police, who also said that the truck carrying the migrant labourers was going to Unnao.

In another incident, 16 migrant workers were crushed to death by a freight train in Maharashtra's Aurangabad district on May 8. The workers were walking from Jalna to Bhusawal to catch the 'special' train to return to their native place in Madhya Pradesh. They were sleeping on the tracks when the train ran over them.

A majority of migrant deaths in accidents to place during the third phase of the lockdown (May 4 - May 17) despite the fact that the government announced the 'Shramik Special' trains to ferry stranded migrant workers to their native places. The first such train ferried passengers on May 1.

The government has claimed that more than a million migrants have been ferried by over 1,000 'shramik specials' as on May 15. However, it may not be enough since thousands of labourers continue to walk as many could not managed to get a ticket for these 'special' trains, while others simply could not afford it.

While the economic disruption caused by the pandemic and the lockdown remained a cause of concern, the failure to provide authoritative solutions for the unprecedented migrant crisis, even after more than 50 days of the lockdown, has raised questions over the planning of the country's Covid-19 response.



TRAIN OF FORTUNE: 21 BABIES BORN ONBOARD SHRAMIK SPECIALS

NEW DELHI (TIP): Mamta Yadav boarded a Shramik Special train on May 8 at Gujarat's Jamnagar. She was travelling single. But, by the time her destination station in Bihar arrived she had a companion in her arms.

Since Shramik Special trains started operating, they have witnessed births of 21 babies onboard, officials say.

Mamta had decided to board the train in very difficult times: everybody was battling a coronavirus outbreak, her husband had lost his job as a factory worker in Jamnagar due to the lockdown, she was in advance stage of pregnancy and the home was hundreds of kilometres away.

But she made the tough choice, and on May 8 decided to take the Jamnagar-Muzaffarpur Shramik Special train to be with her mother at her village in Chhapra district of Bihar for the birth of the baby.

Officials say the train left the Jamnagar stations at 8 pm. Mamta, 35, began to experience the labour pain around the midnight.

Though the Railways had said that Shramik Special would be non-stop, this train was stopped at the Agra Fort station so that she could get the medical attention she needed.

Officials said doctors were alerted by the on board staff as the train approached Agra Fort station around 4.30 am.

Mamta's compartment was turned into a labour room of sorts with other passengers moving out. A team of doctors along with railway staff supervised Mamta's condition as she delivered a healthy baby girl, official said.

"We have a well-oiled system to deal with medical emergencies," said railway spokesperson RD Bajpai.

"Whenever a passenger needs help, our onboard staff alerts the station where medical aid is available next and the doctors who live in railway colonies around the station are always there to deal with any emergency," he said.

"We are happy that we managed to provide help in time every time and in each case the baby and the mother have been healthy,"

Mamta and her little one were allowed to continue their journey, officials said.

On May 13, the 20-something Pinky Yadav gave birth to a baby boy on board the Ahmedabad-Faizabad Shramik Special train with the help of RPF personnel. She got the medical attention at the Kanpur station.

But she had to be shifted to a district hospital for treatment.

The 23-year old Ishwari Devi gave birth to a baby boy onboard the Habibganj-Bilaspur migrant special train on May 17 with the help of onboard staff and other women passengers.

The Railways not only provided her the necessary medicines but also arranged for her admission to the Chhattisgarh Institute of Medical Sciences when she needed further care.

"We try to provide as much help as we can," said Bajpai. "At times these people are so keen to go home. We also advise them the dos and don'ts, give them medicines and allow them to continue their journeys.

"We also provide them ambulance to ferry them to the nearest district hospital. However, one thing must be told. The mother nature takes care of most of it. We are just glad our staffers were there to help." So far, the railways has run around 2,050 Shramik Special trains and these births, many officials said, provided a ray of hope to all in these difficult times.

Pandemic affected 93 million urban workers: Govt report

NEW DELHI (TIP): As many as 93 million urban informal workers, across five sectors -- manufacturing, construction, trade, tourism and hospitality -- have been affected by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown imposed to slow its spread, according to an informal Group of Ministers headed by labour minister Thawarchand Gehlot.

Among the suggestions, which were submitted in a report to the Prime Minister's Office last week are: a database of the workers; a job card for every migrant worker returning to their village and a complete tweaking of the rural employment guarantee scheme that allows work in a private factory or construction site, with the employer paying wages above the MNREGA wage component which will continue to be paid by the government; and an app named Kaushal (literally, skill) that allows workers to register for skill development courses and also reach out to potential employers.

Clashes erupt as migrants refused entry by villagers

LUCKNOW (TIP): With villagers not letting migrants enter their homes even after completion of their quarantine period, clashes are being reported from several districts.

In some cases, clashes have been reported over property issues. Around 24 cases of clashes have been reported in Prayagraj alone in the past five days.

Fifteen such incidents were reported in Pratapgarh district, where one person died and left more than 12 injured in separate cases.

Additional SP (Pratapgarh) Surendra Dwivedi said there were over 12 incidents, where migrants had either clashed with their family members or co-villagers over different issues.

He said a majority of the migrants were drivers. "The verbal disputes took a violent turn and left family members injured. The migrants are also involved in scuffles with people of the same village after they are called 'corona carriers'," he said.

In another incident reported from Teunga village in Pratapgarh district, a 32-year old migrant was allegedly killed by a group of nine villagers.

Though the police claimed to have solved the case with the arrest of five persons, the incident sparked off tension in the village.



SHRADDHA KAPOOR LIKELY TO STAR IN 'MALANG' SEQUEL

Mohit Suri, earlier while talking to DNA Online, had dropped major hints about a female actor's voice featuring in the climax of Malang. Now, as the sequel of the thriller film is finally confirmed, the voice heard in the movie is of none other than Shraddha Kapoor. Yes, the actor, as per reports in Pinkvilla is likely to play the female lead in the film which originally starred Anil Kapoor, Kunal Kemmu, Aditya Roy Kapur and Disha Patani in the lead role.

Talking about the same, a source told the entertainment portal, "Mohit had also spoken to Shraddha for Malang but her dates back then couldn't be managed. Then, he went on for a completely fresh pairing with Disha and Aditya. Given their equation, when Mohit asked her to just step in for the little voiceover, in the end, she immediately agreed. Of course, she was aware that this could spiral into part two, which she would be leading. That discussion has already happened between Shraddha and Mohit. They will be reuniting once again after Half Girlfriend."

Earlier while talking about the sequel and film's great run on Netflix, producer Ankur Garg said in a statement, "We are thankful to the audience who has shown such a phenomenal response to our film Malang after the theatres, now on OTT. While people are enjoying Malang on Netflix, yes, we are coming up with Malang 2."

DEEPIKA REVEALS SHE HAD POSTER OF LEONARDO DICAPRIO ON BEDROOM WALL

Actor Deepika Padukone has revealed that her sister Anisha and she used to have several posters of Hollywood star Leonardo DiCaprio in their room, and they'd kiss him goodnight routinely.

Deepika told Vogue India, "My sister Anisha and I shared a room. We used to sit on that sofa... and play 'house' for hours. We also had several posters of Leonardo DiCaprio on the wall and made it a point to kiss him goodnight every night before going to sleep."

Deepika and Anisha often express their love for each other on social media. A few days ago, Deepika shared a picture with Anisha on Instagram and captioned it, "I miss you peanut!!! Cannot wait to jump on you and squish you!!!!"

Deepika in an old interview had called Anisha her 'biggest critic'. She had told IANS, "She is very honest about her opinion. She is my most blunt critic and she speaks her heart. Even if she is criticising me, I don't mind it because she is very honest and she wants me to do well..." Deepika was last seen in the drama Chhapaak, in which she played an acid attack survivor. The actor has been signed for Karan Johar's untitled film to be directed by Shakun Batra. She will be joined by Gully Boy actor Siddhant Chaturvedi and Ananya Panday in the film. Deepika will also be seen as cricketer Kapil Dev's wife Romi Dev alongside Ranveer Singh in Kabir Khan's 83.



TAAPSEE PANNU POSES FOR MAGAZINE COVER IN HER WASHROOM

Days after Janhvi Kapoor did a at-home photoshoot for a magazine, Taapsee Pannu has also taken up work from home and posed for a magazine cover at her Mumbai residence. The actor shared a glimpse of the Man's World cover on her Instagram account which shows her sitting on a slab in her washroom area.

Sharing the cover shot by her roommate Devki, the Thappad actor wrote, "When you are under lockdown with your stylist, photographer, concept designer, photo editor, art director "all in one" (who also happens to be an amazing pizza chef) this is what comes out of it... Take a bow @devs213." She also gave credit to herself for the "hair, makeup and balancing".

The actor can be seen applying a lipstick while sitting on her washroom slab as the cover description says "writing her own script". Her Pink co-star Angad Bedi complimented in the comments section saying, "Nice very pretty woman font @taapsee."

Taapsee lives with sister Shagun Pannu and Devki at her Mumbai house which she purchased two years ago. Shagun was quick to take credit for setting up the set and wrote, "I had done the bathroom cleaning."



Taapsee occasionally gives a sneak peek into her house on Instagram. In an earlier post, the actor had talked about getting a logo instead of a name plate for her first property in the city.

Sharing a picture of the entrance, she wrote, "This is the day I had my apartment in Mumbai ready, with all interior work done. It was strange that when I left for the shoot of Manmarziyaan I left from the old apartment I had taken on rent when I

first moved to Mumbai n by the time I finished shooting the film n came back I entered the new apartment. Like a new chapter began just like that. It was a very seamless transition for me but it went through its share of teething issues which were all sorted by my sister n mom before I entered home. Made me realise no matter how much effort you put in, the house stays a house until it's lived in with your family who then make it 'Home'."

NAWAZUDDIN'S WIFE ACCUSES ACTOR'S FAMILY OF TORTURE



Nawazuddin Siddiqui's wife Aalia Siddiqui recently sent the actor a legal notice to "end the marriage". Now, Aalia has revealed why she is seeking a divorce.

In a conversation with Bollywood Life, Aalia said, "Problems (in the marriage) had begun long before, but I wasn't bringing them forward. I was trying to solve these issues, waiting for them to get better. I finally had to take this decision."

Aalia Siddiqui has accused Nawazuddin Siddiqui's family of physical and mental torture. She told the publication, "Nawaz had never raised his hands on me, but the shouting and arguments had become unbearable. But his family has mentally and physically tortured me a lot. His brother had even hit me."

"I've been bearing a lot for too many years. His first wife had also left him for this reason. It's a pattern. There are already seven cases registered by the wives of their house against them, and four divorces have taken place," she added.



JOAQUIN PHOENIX, ROONEY MARA EXPECTING THEIR FIRST CHILD

American actor Joaquin Phoenix and Rooney Mara are reportedly expecting their first child together. The couple at present is said to be quarantining together at their home in Los Angeles.

Page Six reports that Mara was recently been spotted wearing baggy clothes to cover her bump and is expected to be in the sixth month of her pregnancy. However, there has been no official confirmation about the same.

It was on the sets of the science-fiction romance "Her" where the two met for the first time, and since then their love life started blossoming. Phoenix told a magazine that he initially believed Rooney disliked him while making the movie only to later discover that she liked him but was just shy.

The couple had been first linked at the beginning of 2017 and a few months later, they confirmed their relationship. In May 2019, it had been reported that the actors got engaged after Mara was spotted with a ring on her finger, but there was no confirmation from their end. She has also accompanied Phoenix to the Toronto International Film Festival, as well as the LA Premier of the film.

ELIZABETH HURLEY WEARS 21-YEAR-OLD AWARDS SHOW DRESS IN QUARANTINE

Elizabeth Hurley is taking a trip down memory lane and donning a dress that's old enough to drink.

In posing for a photo for Harper's Bazaar's #TurnUpNotIn project, which asks celebrities to show how they stylishly shelter in place, the 54-year-old actress dusted off an oldie, but a goodie.

"I've got a zillion great memories and I can remember what I was wearing in all of them. The dress I unearthed for this shot is Atelier @versace and I wore it twenty one years ago to the CFDA Fashion Awards," she told Harper's Bazaar of the lavender dress. "I was with my then boyfriend Hugh Grant and had a blast. I put it away in acid free tissue paper straightaway and it's still perfect!"

In the new snap, Liz feigns watching TV while cuddled up on an oversized fur blanket.

Fans marveled at the image, noting how little she's aged between now and 1999, when she first wore the dress.

This isn't the first time the "Royals" star has done a deep dive into her closet. Last year, Elizabeth thought back to her past looks and modeled an updated version of a dress she wore in 1994 at the premiere of "Four Weddings and a Funeral," again alongside her former beau.



NICOLE KIDMAN SUFFERING FROM BROKEN ANKLE

Nicole Kidman has broken her ankle during the coronavirus lockdown, her husband Keith Urban has revealed.

The actress sparked concern when pictures emerged of her wearing a walking cast at the country singer's drive-in concert on Friday.

And during an interview with Entertainment Tonight on Saturday, Keith revealed the reason for Nicole's new accessory.

"She broke her ankle, but she's a trooper," he said. "There she was last night among all of the folks, hobbling around on her boot with her mask on."

The 52-year-old gave no further details of how his wife had injured herself. Nicole shared a snap from Keith's Nashville concert on Instagram on Friday, but cropped it so as to not show her injured leg.

"Keith just had to play! Isolating with live music at last night's first #UrbanUnderground drive-in gig for the incredible #frontline workers," she captioned the image of the stage and screen at the Stardust Drive-In movie theatre.

Keith invited around 200 people from the nearby Vanderbilt University Health in Tennessee to join him at the venue, and later shared a video from the event on his Instagram page, writing: "A huge THANK YOU to all @vanderbilthealth frontline workers who attended tonight's special show at the drive-in!"



JEREMY RENNER ACCUSES EX SONNI PACHECO OF TAKING MONEY FROM THEIR DAUGHTER'S TRUST

Jeremy Renner recently accused his ex-wife, Sonni Pacheco, of misusing money from their daughter Ava's trust fund. The 49-year-old Avengers actor filed court documents claiming that Pacheco has taken nearly USD 50,000 from their 7-year-old daughter's trust fund account in the last two years, People reported. However, his 29-year-old ex has denied his claims. She told Page Six that she is sick of being bullied by Jeremy. She asserted that there is no truth to Renner's claims.

"I am sick of being continually bullied, having my name slandered, and the truth muted," she wrote in an email. However, according to court documents filed by the Marvel actor Renner, who is known for playing the role of Clint Barton aka Hawkeye, Pacheco admitted to using the funds in an email. According to the documents, Renner has stated that the mother of one admitted to transferring funds in a 2019 email to his business manager. She reportedly admitted that she transferred around USD 50,000 from her daughter's account to her personal account.

Reportedly, transferring funds from



Ava's account to her personal account violated the Court's orders. Reacting to the allegations, Pacheco mentioned that even though she had transferred the money to her account, she was using it for her daughter only, "The money transfers to my bank were to keep my afloat/provide [the minor] Christmas presents/birthday gift bags and essentials for her bday party - after all my savings were spent on lawyers/child custody evaluator," Daily Mail reported.

HARI SINGH NALWA: A LIONHEART SIKH WARRIOR

Sardar Hari Singh is regarded as one of the greatest of Sikh generals. During 1881, European newspapers wrote articles comparing him to the great European Generals such as Napoleon, Field-Marshal von Hindenburg, the Duke of Wellington, as well as Asian Generals such as Haluka Khan and Genghis Khan. The British concluded that Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa was the greatest of them all. With a limited force of men and materials, he freed not only Kashmir and Multan, but also Peshawar state and made them part of the empire of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh. Peshawar had been under Afghan control for more than eight centuries after Afghans murdered Raja Jaipal in a battle fought in 998 A.D.

Sardar Nalwa was a courageous, devoted and farsighted general. He impressed the Governor General of India with his statesmanship when he met him at Simla in 1831 as an emissary of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh. When the question of a successor to Maharaja Ranjeet Singh was discussed among the top Sikhs, Nalwa opposed the opinion of the majority. He suggested that not Kharak Singh, but the Panj Pyaras should succeed Ranjeet Singh. Had his suggestion been listened to, the history of India would have been different today.

Early life

Hari Singh, born in 1791, was the son of Sardar Gurdial Singh of Gujranwala, now in Pakistan. His father died when he was only seven years old but his mother provided him a good religious education and trained him in martial arts. Hari Singh took Amrit at the age of ten. Observing his mastery in the use of arms, the Maharaja placed him in his army. When on a hunting mission with the Maharaja, Hari Singh was attacked by a tiger. He smartly defended himself and killed the tiger; this act gave him the title, Nalwa (tiger).

Sardar Hari Singh's first major battle was fought against the Nawab of Kasoor (now in Pakistan) who was always a troublemaker for the Sikhs in Amritsar during the 18th century. Later he participated in the battle against Multan to free the people from the Nawab of the region. Nalwa demonstrated his superb fighting skills during these battles.

Releasing Shah Shuja

Hari Singh's next expedition was to the state of Kashmir. He joined the other two famous commanders, Akali Phoola Singh and Sardar Sham Singh Attariwala, in obtaining the release of the imprisoned Shah Shuja, the king of Afghanistan. Shuja was ousted by his own brother and he had no alternative but to move to the Punjab and seek the protection of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh. Later, when Shuja attempted to take over Kabul, he was defeated, imprisoned, and detained in Kashmir. His begum (wife) requested that the

A tribute to Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa, the Sikh Commander-in-chief of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Army who the historians credit with dozens of heroic and historic victories, including a glorious victory over Afghanistan. He is more famous for his role in the conquests of Kasur, Sialkot, Attock, Multan, Kashmir, Peshawar and Jamrud. The commander has been named as number one general in a list of top ten generals of the world by an Australian magazine.

Born in 1791, Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa died on April 30, 1837.

This article is a tribute to world's best military commander on his death anniversary, April 30.



Maharaja once again free her husband. In return, she offered him the greatest and most famous of all diamonds, the Kohinoor.

The success of the expedition to bring Shah Shuja safely from Kashmir to Lahore so enraged the ruler of Afghanistan, that he sent his army to take over the fort of Attock in 1813, and oust the Sikhs. Hari Singh Nalwa, however, led his army to victory against great odds and retained Sikh control over the area.

Annexation of Multan

The Nawab of Multan, who was governing that state on behalf of the Maharaja, refused to observe the agreements and promises made by him. Nalwa was deputed to bring him under control. The General fought bravely and took over the strong fort of Multan. Ranjeet Singh granted him the estate of Gujranwala as a reward for his accomplishment. In 1818, the Nawab again rebelled against Lahore.

Nalwa had to fight a long bloody battle to annex Multan and make it a part of Punjab to resolve the problem forever.

Freedom for Kashmiris

In 1819, the Kashmiris sent a deputation to Lahore, asking Maharaja Ranjeet Singh to free them from four centuries of foreign rule. Three famous Sikh Generals, including Hari Singh Nalwa, were sent to Kashmir again. After defeating the ruler there, Sardar Nalwa was made the Administrator of Kashmir. He streamlined the whole administration and ensured justice for everyone, which made him very popular with the Kashmiri people. However, his stay there was short lived as he was recalled in 1821 to reassert Sikh control over the western regions.

Along with Nalwa, the Maharaja himself led the Sikh forces. Hazara was brought under the Lahore administration. Hari Singh Nalwa was appointed Governor of that area as the previous Governor died fighting against the rebels.

Retaking Peshawar

General Nalwa could never be free from fighting the Pathans and Mughals of Afghanistan. Yar Mohd Khan, who had been appointed Governor of Peshawar, was the brother of the king of Afghanistan. He became disloyal to the Sikh raj and joined his brother, which necessitated sending another Sikh expedition to Peshawar.

The Sikh army built a pontoon bridge over the river Attock and challenged the Pathans. At the height of the battle, a contingent of Pathans cut the bridge. When Maharaja Ranjeet Singh and Akali Phoola Singh reached the scene, they found the bridge washed away. They could hear the fighting on the other side of the river. They had no other choice but to take the great risk of crossing the flooded river on horseback. The battle, however, had been won by Nalwa by the time the Maharaja reached there.

The major battle for retaking Peshawar still lay ahead. Thousands of soldiers and Mujahideens (religious zealots) had gathered there to stop the Sikhs from reaching Peshawar. A bloody battle was fought, where both sides were determined to win at any cost. The Mughals and Pathans found the Sikh sword too strong and beat a hasty retreat to Kabul. The Sikhs again took over Peshawar, although they paid a very high price for it. They lost their general Akali Phoola Singh who was shot by a Pathan hiding behind a rock when he was forcing his opponents to retreat.

In another uprising of a local Nawab in 1824, Sardar Hari Singh was severely injured. One of the boulders, exploded by the retreating enemy, hit him and he rolled down the hill. However, an urgent and timely search saved his life.

Continued from page 20

The king of Kabul made yet another attempt to take over Peshawar. A Syad, after returning from Mecca, went to Kabul. He told the king that God had advised him to take over Peshawar. Another attack on Peshawar was therefore organized by them. The Sikhs proved to be too powerful to be ousted and Syad was defeated and killed in May of 1831. The remaining army returned to Kabul leaving the Khalsa to rule Peshawar. Sardar Nalwa was given an award of 50,000 rupees for winning the battle. Under an agreement with Maharaja Ranjeet Singh, a local Burkzace was appointed Governor. In 1834, the Maharaja decided to annex Peshawar and make it a part of Punjab, as every local Governor appointed there had rejoined Kabul once the Sikh army left. Nalwa was appointed as the Governor of Peshawar.

The annexation of Peshawar enraged Dost Mohd, the King of Kabul. He sent a very large, well equipped army to take Peshawar back from the Sikhs. General Hari Singh was the commander-in-chief of the defending Sikh army. Though fewer in numbers, the Sikhs organized a defense and counterattack so brilliantly that the larger Kabul army was disarrayed and defeated. Dost Mohd was able to save his life by running away at night.

The Khalsa Raj was thus established over all the areas of the present Pakistan, Kashmir, and Punjab up to the West of Sutlej.

Nalwa as the Governor of Peshawar

Nalwa, as the Governor of Peshawar, relieved the Hindus of the tax which they had been paying since the 17th century. He managed the whole state effectively to bring peace, and stopped the looting of the people by Pathans and Afghans. To maintain order in the state, he established police stations all over the region and built forts at strategic places. The fort of Jamrud was the most famous and it blocked the Khyber Pass, not permitting any army to come from the Kabul side. The king of Kabul, finding himself controlled by the chain of forts built by Nalwa, was always devising plans to break the Sikh administration.

The last battle

The Dogras in the cabinet of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh were working secretly with the British and the King of Kabul to bring down the Khalsa Sarkar. These traitors, Gulab Singh and Dhyani Singh, finally succeeded. They obtained the rule of Kashmir and handed over the Punjab to the British in 1849. Kabul would have never dared to attack Peshawar during the lifetime of Hari Singh Nalwa. The mention of the name of the general would scare the Pathans. If they wanted to silence their crying children, they would say, "Be silent. Hari is coming."

The Dogras knew every secret of the army and its deployment. Being in charge of the government, they were in a position to misinform the Maharaja.

In 1837, the Peshawar army was back at Lahore for the wedding of Kanwar Naunihal Singh, the son of the Maharaja. General Nalwa was tired and exhausted, lying sick in bed. No senior person was in Peshawar to guide the Sikh soldiers. All of this



information was sent to Kabul by the Dogras and the Afghans were told to attack Peshawar. Such a message was very encouraging to the Afghans and the king of Kabul immediately sent his army to drive the Sikhs out of Peshawar.

After crossing the Khyber Pass, they attacked Jamrud. It was here that Bibi Harsharan Kaur (Sharnagat Kaur) played a heroic role by walking from Jamrud to Peshawar and reporting the attack on Jamrud. Nalwa, though sick, repulsed the attack, losing his own life due to the treachery of the Dogras. It was Nalwa's presence which resulted in the Sikh victory; otherwise, the small Sikh army numbering only a few thousand, was no match for the 30,000 Afghan army supported by civilian fanatics.

During this time, Hari Singh Nalwa sent to Maharaja Ranjeet Singh three letters, all of which were kept by the Dogras. They did not let the Maharaja know of them. Recent research has shown that the Afghans and Dogras connived to murder the General. This is evidenced by the fact that the person who shot Nalwa from very close range, was wearing a Sikh soldier's uniform.

By the time help arrived from Lahore, the battle had been won by the Sikhs. Peshawar was thus retained in the Khalsa raj, the credit for this going to Bibi Harsharan Kaur and General Nalwa's bravery.

General Hari Singh Nalwa was an eloquent statesman and an able administrator. He was instrumental in bringing Kashmir under Sikh control and brought peace and prosperity to the people as the Governor of the state. Peshawar, a region of Punjab which had been partitioned from it for eight centuries, was again made a part of it due to the bravery of Nalwa. He has since been known as the "Hero of Peshawar" and was rated as the greatest general of his time. The forts he built there to stop invaders from looting Punjab and Delhi, were effective long after his death. A large part of his successes can be attributed to his being a kind and devoted Sikh, committed to his people and possessing a keen sense of duty and responsibility.



New Zealand party replaces leader to face Ardern in election

WELLINGTON (TIP): New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has proved so popular during the coronavirus pandemic that it has prompted a change of leadership in the conservative opposition party just four months from a general election.

Todd Muller on Friday deposed Simon Bridges as leader of the National Party following two disastrous opinion polls for the party which indicated Ardern was headed for a huge victory in September.

Muller, 51, is not a household name in New Zealand but has support from other lawmakers and farmers. He was a manager at a kiwifruit company and a dairy company before he was first elected to Parliament in 2014. He had been acting as the opposition spokesperson for agriculture.

Before the pandemic hit, polling indicated the National Party and Ardern's Labour Party were running neck-and-neck. But Ardern's leadership since then has been praised, while Bridges' criticism of some of her actions appeared to be turning away even some of National's longtime supporters.

Ardern took bold steps when the virus arrived in New Zealand, closing the border and putting the country under a strict lockdown with a motto: "Go hard and go early." Her goal of eliminating the virus has been largely successful, with only two new infections reported over the past six days.

Ardern's government has also announced a huge program of borrowing and spending as it attempts to keep unemployment below 10 per cent in the wake of the pandemic.

Following a week of internal rumblings, National's caucus met Friday and elected Muller as the party's new leader and lawmaker Nikki Kaye as the new deputy. Kaye, 40, replaces Paula Bennett.

"New Zealanders need a National government with the experience and management skills to get our country through the worst crisis since the end of the Second World War," Muller said in a statement. "My focus as leader is our country's economic recovery and the strengthening of every community throughout New Zealand." — AP

CHINA SET TO IMPOSE NEW HONG KONG SECURITY LAW

HONG KONG / BEIJING / WASHINGTON (TIP): China is set to impose new national security legislation on Hong Kong after last year's pro-democracy unrest, a Chinese official said on Thursday, drawing a warning from President Donald Trump that Washington would react "very strongly" against the attempt to gain more control over the former British colony.

The U.S. State Department also warned China, saying a high-degree of autonomy and respect for human rights were key to preserving the territory's special status in U.S. law, which has helped it maintain its position as a world financial centre.

China's action could spark fresh protests in Hong Kong, which enjoys many freedoms not allowed on the mainland, after often violent demonstrations of 2019 plunged the city into its deepest turmoil since it returned to Beijing's rule in 1997.

Trump, who has ratcheted up his anti-China rhetoric as he seeks re-election in November, told reporters "nobody knows yet" the details of China's plan. "If it happens we'll address that issue very strongly," he said.

Zhang Yesui, spokesman for the China's National People's Congress, said details of the legislation would be given on Friday when the parliament holds its annual session.

"In light of the new circumstances and need, the National People's Congress (NPC) is exercising its constitutional power" to establish a new legal framework and enforcement mechanism to safeguard national security in Hong Kong, he told a briefing.

The "Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act" approved by Trump last year requires the State Department to certify at least annually that Hong Kong retains enough autonomy to justify favourable U.S. trading terms.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on May 6 he was delaying this assessment to account for any NPC actions. If the State Department decertifies the territory, it would still ultimately fall to Trump whether to decide to end some, all, or none of the privileges Hong Kong currently enjoys.

On Thursday, Democratic and



Republican U.S. senators said they would introduce legislation to strengthen the Hong Kong act's sanctions provisions.

"A further crackdown from Beijing will only intensify the Senate's interest in re-examining the U.S.-China relationship," U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, a Republican, said in a statement.

Wall Street ended lower on Thursday as U.S.-China tensions raised doubts about a trade deal reached this year between the world's two largest economies. Tensions have heightened significantly in recent weeks, with bitter exchanges over the coronavirus.

Pro-democracy demonstrators have for years opposed the idea of national security laws, arguing they could erode the city's high degree of autonomy, guaranteed under the "one country, two systems" formula in place for two decades. A senior Hong Kong government official said details on the move and its implementation remained unclear, but Hong Kong media have reported the legislation would ban secession, foreign interference, terrorism and all seditious activities aimed at toppling the central government. U.S. State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortogus said any Chinese move to impose legislation that did not reflect the will of the people would be highly destabilising and met

with strong condemnation.

Ending Hong Kong's special status would be a big blow for U.S. firms. The State Department says 85,000 U.S. citizens lived in Hong Kong in 2018 and more than 1,300 U.S. companies operate there, including nearly every major U.S. financial firm.

A previous attempt to introduce Hong Kong national security legislation, known as Article 23, in 2003 was met with mass peaceful protests and shelved.

Online posts had urged people in Hong Kong to protest on Thursday night and dozens were seen shouting pro-democracy slogans in a shopping mall as riot police stood nearby.

Opposition lawmakers said the move would gravely wound Hong Kong's reputation as a financial centre and its autonomy.

"If this move takes place, 'one country, two systems' will be officially erased," said democratic lawmaker Dennis Kwok.

"This is the end of Hong Kong."

Daniel Russel, the top U.S. diplomat for Asia until early in the Trump administration, suggested Chinese President Xi Jinping might see "muscle-flexing" on Hong Kong as a means to make up for a series of setbacks, most notably the coronavirus pandemic that began in China - despite the risk of severe economic consequences for Hong Kong, China and others. Reuters

UK scheme for overseas doctor's kin

LONDON (TIP): The British government has extended a Covid-19 Bereavement Scheme, which grants permanent UK residency to the family members of overseas medics who die after contracting the coronavirus, to all healthcare staff and social care workers.

UK Home Secretary Priti Patel on Wednesday said the scheme will apply not only to the families and dependents of foreign doctors and nurses killed on the National Health Service (NHS) frontline during the pandemic, but also

to lower-paid NHS support staff, including from India.

"Every death in this crisis is a tragedy, and sadly some NHS support staff and social care workers have made the ultimate sacrifice in the pursuit of saving the lives of others," the Indian-origin Cabinet minister said.

The UK has so far officially recorded 312 healthcare-related deaths from coronavirus — 181 of them in the NHS and 131 social care workers within the healthcare sector. —PTI



Recession-hit Japan's exports, imports fall due to pandemic

TOKYO (TIP): Recession-hit Japan's exports plunged nearly 22 per cent in April, the country's worst drop in more than a decade as the coronavirus pandemic slammed global demand.

The Finance Ministry also said on Thursday that imports fell 7 per cent.

The drop in exports is the worst since the 2008 financial crisis, as export-dependent Japan struggles to juggle the health risks of COVID-19 with the dire need to keep the economy going.

Like many other nations, Japan has asked people to work from home and maintain social distance to stop the virus from spreading. The government initiative was eased this month in regions with few or no new infections, though it remains in place for Tokyo and some other areas.

For April, exports totaled 5.2 trillion yen (USD 48 billion), down from nearly 6.7 trillion yen the same month in 2019. Imports dropped to 6.1 trillion yen (USD 57 billion) from 6.6 trillion yen.

Exports fell most dramatically to the US, India, Australia, South America, Russia, Iran and Italy. Exports also declined to China, where the outbreak began.

By sector, exports were lower in vehicles, machinery, chemicals and



textiles.

Imports edged down in iron and steel products, food such as fish and cereal, and computer parts.

Japan is in a technical recession after a contraction that began in the last quarter of last year deepened in the January-March quarter. Analysts say worse may be ahead, given the economic pain of the pandemic may be

prolonged.

Tourism and travel had dwindled. Restaurants are closed or resorting to takeouts, and those that stay open are seeing fewer customers.

Even before, the world's third-largest economy barely eked out growth over some periods. The recent trade conflict between China and the US also hurt Japan. — AP

Tornado hits Sumatra, kills two

JAKARTA (TIP): A tornado ripped through several villages on Indonesia's Sumatra island, killing at least two persons, damaging hundreds of homes, and fatally knocking over a cow, a disaster official said on Thursday.

Another six people, most with serious injuries, were taken to a hospital after the tornado touched down on Wednesday evening in Lampung province's Tulang Bawang district.

The powerful winds damaged 245 homes in three villages and knocked out power to most of the area. Officials were still evacuating villagers from affected areas on Thursday. —AP

Court orders Netanyahu to appear for trial

JERUSALEM (TIP): An Israeli court on Wednesday ordered Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to appear for the opening of his criminal trial in Jerusalem on Sunday. Netanyahu's attorneys had asked the court for an exemption from appearing for the opening of proceedings.

The court rejected the request, saying the accused appearing for the reading of the indictment is the rule and there are no grounds for granting Netanyahu an exemption in this case.

Netanyahu was indicted on charges of fraud, breach of trust, and accepting bribes last year. He has denied any wrongdoing in the series of scandals involving accepting lavish gifts from wealthy friends, trading media reforms for positive coverage. Netanyahu's trial was supposed to begin last month, but was delayed by his justice minister due to the pandemic. Israel's longest-serving Prime Minister, Netanyahu swore in his fourth consecutive government earlier this week after the country's third national election in under a year. —AP

Taiwan President rejects China rule

TAIPEI (TIP): Taiwan cannot accept becoming part of China under its "one country, two systems" offer of autonomy, President Tsai Ing-wen said on Wednesday, strongly rejecting China's sovereignty claims and likely setting the stage for an ever worsening of ties. China responded that "reunification" was inevitable and that it would never tolerate Taiwan's independence.

In a speech after being sworn in for her second and final term in office, Tsai said relations between Taiwan and China had reached an historical turning point. Tsai and her Democratic Progressive Party won January's presidential and parliamentary elections by a landslide, vowing to stand up to China, which claims Taiwan as its own and says it would be brought under Beijing's control by force if needed. —Reuters

SPAIN PM SEEKS 2-WEEK EXTENSION OF LOCKDOWN

MADRID (TIP): Spain's fragile left-wing coalition sought support from political foes to extend a state of emergency on Wednesday as public protests simmered over the coronavirus crisis' damage to the economy and tough social restrictions.

Even though deaths are slowing and Spain hopes to mostly lift a strict lockdown by the end of June, Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez wants to keep special powers for two more weeks to control the easing of restrictions.

"We have not got this far by inertia, but by the work of the health workers," Sanchez said. Spain has recorded 27,778 deaths and 232,037 cases of COVID-19, but new fatalities have slowed to under 100 a day. The leader of the conservative People's Party accused Sanchez of going too far in one of Europe's toughest lockdowns. "Your plan has been a failure. Confinement prevents contagion but that cannot be an unlimited measure," Pablo Casado said in parliament. "Your policies are causing wreckage."

With Spain's tourism-dependent economy forecast to contract up to 12.4% in 2020, frustration is boiling into protests. Groups of up to several hundred demonstrators have been gathering daily to bang pots outside homes and call for the government's resignation, violating social-distancing rules. —Reuters



COMBATTING THE VIRUS

US immunotherapy company Inovio Pharmaceuticals said its experimental vaccine was shown to produce antibodies and immune system responses in mice and guinea pigs.

The United States, Mexico and Canada said on Tuesday they would extend a ban on non-essential cross-border travel by another 30 days.

The WHO expressed concern on Wednesday said 1,06,000 new cases were recorded in the past 24 hours, the most in a single day since the outbreak began.

Brazil's daily toll jumped to a record 1,179 on Tuesday as President Jair Bolsonaro doubled down on chloroquine as a possible remedy, while Donald Trump said he was considering banning travel to and from Brazil.

Cambridge has become the first university in Britain to cancel all face-to-face lectures for the 2020-21 academic year after 800 years of welcoming students to its cloisters, quadrangles and classrooms.

WANT TO AVOID DRY SKIN? HYDRATE, EXFOLIATE AND MOISTURISE

To save your skin from dryness and dehydration increase water intake and exfoliate the dead skin cells to achieve smooth skin, says experts.

Use these tips to get spotless skin in summer:

Hydrate

Hydrating yourself is absolutely essential to keep your skin healthy. A lot of water content from the body is lost while you sweat during summer season. Therefore, it is essential to increase water intake by a couple of glasses every day. Avoid caffeinated drinks and keep away from aerated drinks too as they further dehydrate the skin. Instead, opt for freshly squeezed lime juice or go for coconut water and other fresh juices.

Exfoliate

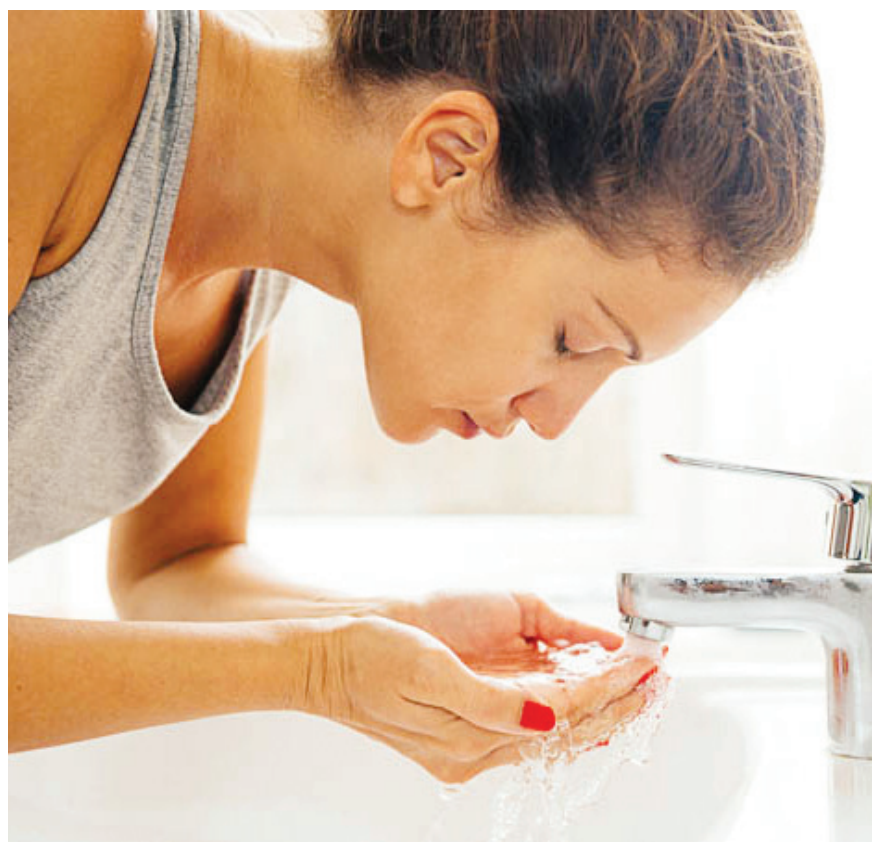
Exfoliation helps in the removal of dead skin cells and in achieving smooth skin. You can do it yourself at home with the right mix. Oatmeal, honey, lemon, curd, cucumber are some of the ingredients that can work wonders on your skin. In summer season, exfoliate at least thrice a week to remove dead skin and improve blood circulation.

Moisturise

It is necessary to moisturise your skin before you step out in the searing sun. This will keep your skin hydrated and prevent it from becoming dry and scaly. Apply a light and non-greasy moisturiser after you step out from a shower and before applying sunscreen. Follow this procedure in the night.

Air conditioners

Air conditioners soak up the skin's natural oils and moisture



content in your body, thereby causing dryness. Try to use a fan as much as possible and keep the AC to a moderate level or switch it off after regular intervals.

Balanced diet

It is not just water that helps you to stay hydrated; indulging in fresh fruits, leafy vegetables and salads help as well. Eat the right food to nourish your skin and stay fit during summer. Avoid boiling or steaming vegetables for too long, as this will reduce their water content. Junk food, beverages, non-vegetarian and spicy preparations are a strict no-no as well during summer.



TAKE CARE OF YOUR HAIR

Cleanse and condition: Begin your hair care routine by cleansing your hair with a shampoo, best suited for your hair type and concerns. Make sure that the water used is warm and avoid using extremely hot water – which may cause hair strands to break off. Follow it up with a nourishing conditioner that will keep the nutrients intact leaving you with soft and silky smooth hair.

Hydrate and nourish

Show your hair some tender love and care by using a hair mask once a week which will leave your hair deeply conditioned. Ensure that the mask you are using is formulated using nourishing ingredients like aloe vera for restoring hydration, which will help restore and rejuvenate dull hair. Use this post your conditioner and leave it on for 20-30 minutes.

Manage and transform

Tame unruly hair with a serum or leave-in cream which will protect your hair from humidity and the subsequent frizz. Apply on wet or dry hair and



Sheila Chaman

CONNOISSEUR'S CHOICE



Spinach-chicken recipe

Ingredients

- 1 Chicken breast - cut into small pieces
- 2 large tomatoes
- 1 green chili
- 2 onions chopped
- 2 teaspoons grated ginger
- 2 teaspoons grated garlic
- 1 bunch Spinach finely chopped and thoroughly washed
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 cardamoms - crushed
- Salt, coriander powder & turmeric
- A few baby carrots or baby potatoes (optional)
- 2 tablespoons cooking Oil

Method

- Heat Oil in a flat large pan
- Throw in the cumin seeds and let it splutter- add ginger, garlic, cardamoms, bay leaf and stir a bit before adding onions. Sauté a bit till semi brown. Put the chicken pieces and keep stirring till it is well sautéed. Put in the spinach (and carrots/potatoes if using those too). Cover and cook on medium heat till it is dry- stir a bit. Add The salt, coriander powder and turmeric and the tomatoes -chili paste which have been puréed in blender. Mix well and add a little water (depending on the consistency you need and eating with rice/roti or just plain dry). Cook well (Stirring occasionally) till Chicken is done. Cover and let it simmer on slow fire for a while before serving.

(Sheila Chaman can be reached at sheilachaman@hotmail.com)



massage into your hair strands for frizz-free smooth tresses.

Repair and protect

Use products that are specially formulated to treat fragile hair, to maintain elasticity of hair and restore shine. Protect your tresses by avoiding common mistakes such as – using products without seeking advice from a professional, using thermal styling tools without using a heat protectant or using the wrong comb that can in turn cause damage (use different combs for detangling, styling, flattening frizz).

Coloured hair

For people with coloured hair, the summer calls for some extra care as the heat can make the already dry hair even more dry and lead to dullness. Make sure you use products that are specially made for coloured hair and address the concerns of dull and dry hair to give shine and vibrancy. This will also help in maintaining the longevity of the colour and reduce fading.

GET RID OF MOUTH ULCERS WITH KITCHEN INGREDIENTS

Do you often suffer from mouth ulcers? Does it make it difficult for you to talk, eat, and even drink water? Mouth ulcer is a health condition when open sores develop on the inside of the cheeks or tongue. Most of the time they heal naturally within a few days, but in some cases, they need medical attention.

But if you are suffering from common mouth ulcers, then here are some home remedies that can help you get rid of them naturally.

Causes

The exact cause of mouth ulcers is still a mystery. However, there are certain factors that may aggravate mouth ulcers. These include:

- Quitting smoking
- Biting the tongue
- Eating fruits that are acidic in nature
- Lack of essential nutrients
- Stress or anxiety
- Fungal infections
- Hormonal changes during pregnancy, puberty, and menopause
- Intake of pain killers
- Genetic factors

Home Remedies

If you are looking for an effective home remedy for mouth ulcers, try these remedies.

Tulsi Leaves

Tulsi leaves are known to possess medicinal, anti-inflammatory, and



antimicrobial properties. Simply, chewing some fresh leaves will cure mouth ulcers and give you instant relief from the pain. You might find them bitter in taste but it really works great for your mouth. You can also boil some holy basil leaves and use the water to gargle two-three times a day. Make sure you try this remedy daily for effective results.

Honey

Honey has natural anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties which are beneficial for your mouth. It also fastens the process of new tissue growth which in turn gives you relief from mouth ulcers. You can either apply it directly on the affected area, or mix

it with some amla powder and then apply it on the affected area.

Mulethi Powder

Mulethi is known for its medicinal properties. As per Ayurveda, mulethi helps in cleansing the stomach and removes toxins that could be responsible for the ulcers. You can either consume it with water or honey.

Aloe Vera

Another great ingredient which helps in curing mouth ulcers is Aloe Vera. It has natural anti-inflammatory properties that fight bacteria and make your mouth ulcer free. Simply, drink one cup of aloe vera juice daily to cure mouth ulcers.



TIPS TO KEEP YOUR BLOOD SUGAR LEVELS IN CHECK AMID PANDEMIC

Keep a check on your diet

- Maintain a balanced diet plan and follow it religiously.
- Eat calculated amount of calories to meet the body's requirement. This will help achieve ideal/desirable body weight.
- As far as possible, try to eat high fibre foods (whole grains, pulses, and all green vegetables) as well as greens and vegetables. During meals, take equal quantity of grain, dal, cooked vegetables and salads.
- Eat less fruits.
- Eat diet which is low in glycemic index to keep blood sugar levels within desired range.
- Filtered mustard oil, groundnut oil, rice bran oil and gingelly oil should be preferred. Olive oil is best used for salads.
- Drink sufficient amount of water: 250 ml per 10 kg body weight.
- Sleep before 11 pm.

What type of exercises can diabetics do?

- Stairs can help you workout. Here's how.
- Diabetics should concentrate more on exercise than diet, suggests Dr Tripathi. They should do:
- Full range of motion (ROM) exercises — neck exercises, head tilts, forward and back and side-to-side and head turns, arms and elbow exercise, hip and waist twisting, leg movements
- Chair Surya Namaskar or regular Surya Namaskar at least 6-12 times per day
- Chair-based exercises (yoga and stretching)
- Stair climbing — two hours after meals brings blood sugar under control rapidly (100-300 steps)
- Skipping ropes (if knees are in good shape, and weight under control)
- 15-20 minute walking can be done everyday
- Deep breathing exercises (pranayamas)
- Minimum 30 minutes of workout should be included in daily routine.
- Along with diet and exercise, mental health is equally important. With the current lifestyle, there is also a lot of stress and negativity around, and one should be careful.

BEST FOOD FOR YOUR LUNGS

What you eat has an effect on pretty much every aspect of your health—and that includes your lungs, too. That's right, there are some foods that can promote good lung health, reduce inflammation and the presence of mucus, increase lung capacity, and improve your body's ability to ward off lung disease. It's especially important to do all you can to make sure your lungs are in the best shape possible right now, too. And you can easily do that by adding some of these foods to your diet.

Here's what our experts recommend you add to your shopping list to help your lungs be as healthy as they can be with these best foods for lungs.

Bananas

Potassium-rich bananas are an excellent choice for improved lung function, according to Lisa Richards, nutritionist and author of The Candida Diet, who notes that potassium is "essential" for good lung health and function. According to one study from the Keck School of Medicine, consuming enough potassium, specifically as a child, helps to increase lung function and capacity. Along with bananas, avocados, squash, and oranges, are



rich in the mineral as well.

Tomatoes

Tomatoes, too, are rich in potassium, and that's not the only way they help to improve lung health. One study led by researchers at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health found that a diet high in tomatoes slowed the decline of lung health in former smokers.

Tomatoes are also rich in vitamin C, which not only bolsters immune health but can also specifically improve lung health,

according to Trista Best, registered dietitian at Balance One Supplements and adjunct nutrition professor.

Fatty Fish

When our bodies metabolize food, we use oxygen and produce carbon dioxide. As Dr. Lina Velikova, MD, Ph.D., a medical advisor at Supplements101.net, explains, the lungs' primary function is to load the blood with oxygen—and filter out carbon dioxide—"reducing the level of carbon dioxide means less work for the lungs."

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INSTAGRAM MAKES IT EASIER TO SEE WHEN YOU'RE BROADCASTING MUSIC YOU CAN'T USE

Instagram has posted its guidelines for using copyrighted music during live videos, Stories, and other posts on the platform, and part of the announcement includes a new update to the notification that pops up to tell users they're using unlicensed art in ways that violate its rules. The changes to the pop-up notification are designed around helping users avoid Instagram's automated interruptions — like muting or outright blocking — that occurs if a piece of licensed music plays for too long over or in the background of a live video.

Now, the notification pops up earlier in live broadcasts to give users more time to remove the audio so they can avoid having the stream disrupted or taken down. Instagram will also give clearer instructions to remedy the situation in the event a stream is automatically muted or blocked due to use of unlicensed music.

"These notifications are intended to alert you when our systems detect that your broadcast or uploaded video may include music in a way that doesn't adhere to our licensing agreements," reads Instagram's blog post on the changes. "Updates include making notifications clearer and surfacing notifications earlier to live broadcasters, to give people time to adjust their streams and avoid interruptions if we detect they may be approaching our limitations."

Get notified the day your stimulus check arrives in the mail. Here's how

If you're craning your neck every time the mail carrier walks by, you can make it easier to predict when your stimulus check will turn up. The US Postal Service can save you some time and anguish with a free service that will share you a digital image of your actual check-containing envelope and even alert you when your payment is in transit.

The free service, called Informed Delivery, does have some limitations, so you might prefer to start by tracking your payment through the online IRS portal first. This should give you a ballpark estimate of when your payment will arrive. After that, Informed Delivery verifies that the check has in fact been processed by the USPS and is on its way.

A word before you begin. If you're using the IRS' online tracking tool, which is called Get My Payment (remember, this is separate from the USPS service), there's a chance you could run into trouble, like an error message that's hard to discern or issues identifying who you are. If you do, here are 12 possible explanations for what's going on and how you might be able to work around them.

If you're starting to get nervous, here are nine reasons why you may not have received your stimulus check yet. And if you're hearing chatter about another economic relief bill, here's what we know about the possibility of a second round of stimulus checks.

MICROSOFT UNVEILS CLOUD TOOLS TAILORED FOR HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS

Microsoft Corp unveiled a package of cloud software designed for health care systems, starting with a free trial to help the industry weather a viral pandemic that is both increasing the need for technology solutions and putting hospitals in financial peril.

Microsoft Cloud for Healthcare includes tools that allow for digital triage, telemedicine and coordination of care using internet-based services, chat and conferencing apps. The product, unveiled Tuesday as part of a virtual version of the company's annual Build conference for software developers, is Microsoft's first industry-specific cloud-computing offering. It's available now via a preview and free trial for the next six months.

The package combines Microsoft's Azure cloud service — which helps organizations run programs and store and analyze data — with the Teams communication app and developer tools for creating applications. Microsoft, the second-biggest cloud infrastructure provider behind Amazon.com Inc, has made the health care industry a focus as it tries to gain customers. Some of the tools Microsoft has been working on for several years, including artificial intelligence and automated chat-bot software for



communicating with patients, have gained traction as the Covid-19 outbreak has health care industry customers looking for ways to track the spread of the virus, predict equipment needs and connect patients and doctors online.

"At this particular time there's the increased demand to go virtual and have connectivity, while needing to pay attention to the bottom line so they can continue to serve," said Greg Moore, corporate vice president of Microsoft Health. "This is a time for Microsoft to come in and help what are already our deep partners in health care." Hospitals have been hit especially hard, with costs rising as they care for Covid-

19 patients while revenue plunges because other procedures have been delayed.

Providence St Joseph Health, a chain with hospitals in seven Western states, has used a version of Microsoft's health care chat bot to screen patients for Covid-19 and funnel those who need care to a provider or a telemedicine consultation, Moore said. In total more than 1,600 Covid-19 care bots are in use that rely on Microsoft's software, largely as a tool to reduce strain on emergency hotlines. They're deployed in 23 countries in cities from Copenhagen to Tel Aviv, including a Covid assessment bot from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

HIGH-SPEED VIDEO SHOWS EVERY SECOND OF A PRAYING MANTIS'S LETHAL STRIKE

New slow-motion video shows how praying mantises snatch their prey with lightning-fast, deadly precision.

Though these strikes are completed in microseconds, the long-armed predators calibrate their attacks even more quickly than that, adjusting to prey's speed and movements; praying mantises can even halt mistimed attacks mid-strike, scientists reported in a new study.

Mantises are ambush predators; rather than stalking or chasing their prey, they select a perch and then wait, motionless, their spike-studded arms folded and ready. When an unsuspecting victim wanders too close, the mantis lunges and grabs, holding tight to the prey's wriggling body. The mantis then begins to feed on its living victim almost immediately.

This type of sit-and-wait approach was long thought to be mostly one-size-fits-all, with predators using the same technique over and over again, said lead study author Sergio Rossoni, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Zoology at the University of Cambridge's Clare College, in England.

"This is because a lot of famous sit-and-wait predators use attacks, which rely on a loaded spring (like a jack-in-the-box toy), such as the projectile tongue of



frogs, or the loaded punch of mantis shrimps," Rossoni told Live Science in an email.

"The assumption was that a spring needs to be loaded with a set force in order to spring back, leaving little room for variability," he explained.

But Rossoni and his co-author Jeremy Niven, a senior lecturer at the University of Sussex in England, suspected that mantises' ambush attacks could be more flexible. The scientists put that to the test by observing and documenting the hunting habits of Madagascan marbled praying mantids (*Polyspilota aeruginosa*), creating enclosed "arenas" for their mantises; offering them small insects or tiny beads as attack targets; and filming the mantis strikes at 200 frames per second.

Twitter starts testing feature that lets you choose who replies to your tweet

Twitter is making it easy for users to control their tweets and avoid unwanted replies.

Starting Wednesday, select Twitter users will be able to control who can respond to their tweets and who can't. From now on, before every tweet, you'll see three options: everyone, only people you follow and only people you mention. This one is quite similar to Facebook's custom option for posts that allows users to select who can see their post and who can't. The options will allow you to limit your tweet to a specific group of people and keep unwanted replies away. Everyone will be able to see these conversations though.

US private equity giant KKR picks 2.32% stake in Jio Platforms for Rs 11,367 crore

NEW DELHI (TIP): Reliance Industries on Friday announced the sale of a 2.32 per cent stake in its digital unit to US private equity giant KKR for Rs 11,367 crore, the fifth deal in four weeks that will inject a combined Rs 78,562 crore in the oil-to-telecom conglomerate to help it pare debt.

This is KKR's largest investment in Asia.

"This transaction values Jio Platforms at an equity value of Rs 4.91 lakh crore and an enterprise value of Rs 5.16 lakh crore. This is KKR's largest investment in Asia and will translate into a 2.32 per cent equity stake in Jio Platforms on a fully diluted basis," the company said in a statement.

The deal follows Facebook picking up a 9.99 per cent stake in the firm, housing India's youngest but largest telecom company, on April 22 for Rs 43,574 crore.

Within days of that deal, Silver Lake – the world's largest tech investor – bought a 1.15 per cent stake in Jio Platforms for Rs 5,665.75 crore.

On May 8, US-based Vista Equity Partners bought 2.32 per cent stake in Jio Platforms for Rs 11,367 crore. On May 17 global equity firm General Atlantic picked up 1.34 per cent stake in Jio Platforms for Rs 6,598.38 crore.

"Over the last month, leading technology investors, such as, Facebook, Silver Lake, Vista, General Atlantic and KKR have announced aggregate investments of Rs 78,562 crore into Jio Platforms," it said.



Diverse marquee investors are becoming long-term shareholders of Jio Platforms Ltd (JPL) because of a unique set of technologies and platforms under one entity. There are no similar opportunities available anywhere else globally. And an endorsement of the quality of the management.

Investments by leading global growth investors will enable Jio to scale its ecosystem and reaffirm the firm as a next generation software product and platform company.

"Jio Platforms, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Reliance Industries, is a next-generation technology platform focused on providing high-quality and affordable digital services across India, with more than 388 million subscribers," the statement said.



EMIs SET TO GET CHEAPER AS RBI CUTS REPO RATE

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced a cut in its key interest rates on Friday. RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said that the repo rate has been cut by 40 basis points (bps) to 4 per cent and the reverse repo rate stands at 3.35 per cent.

Following the announcement by the central bank governor, the loan EMIs are set to get cheaper particularly the home loans that are linked to the marginal cost of funds-based lending rate (MCLR) of the lending banks.

In his third press conference in two months, the RBI Governor said biggest blow of Covid-19 has been domestic consumption. "Industrial production shrank by 17 per cent in March due to India's lockdown, while manufacturing activity fell by 21 per cent. Output of core industries contracted by 6.5 per cent," he said.

Saying that the GDP growth is estimated to remain in the negative, with some pick up in the second half, Das said the simultaneous fiscal, monetary and administration measures will create conditions for a gradual revival of activity in the second half of 2020-2021.

Spain, Italy ramp up debt sales to confront daunting Covid-19 costs

Two of Europe's most cash-strapped countries are stepping up bond sales to fund the surge in spending needed to shore up their pandemic-battered economies.

Spanish officials on Thursday boosted net debt issuance for this year to 130 billion euros (\$143 billion), a fourfold increase from a target set in January. That exceeds a previous record set in 2009, in the depths of the region's last major economic contraction.

In Italy, the Treasury sold a record 22.3 billion euros of five-year retail notes. Mom and pop buyers submitted around 14 billion euros in orders and the proceeds are tagged to fund the "Covid-19 emergency."

Borrowing costs for both countries have dropped after France and Germany announced a plan to support a 500-billion-euro fund, backed by debt, as part of the euro area's effort to help the most indebted countries avoid an economic crisis that could tear the monetary union apart. Italy and Spain have been among the hardest-hit by the virus. Already saddled with much higher debt levels than northern neighbors, their economies are suffering a deeper recession because of strict lockdowns to curb the disease. Economists say the cost of spending too little could only mean a bigger fiscal crisis in the future.

But until European Union members endorse a deal to share the burden, support from the European Central Bank remains the main thing keeping bond yields from spiraling out of control. The ECB is vacuuming up securities issued by euro area members as part of its bolstered bond-buying program, which economists say could be expanded as early as June.



Govt stimulus package does not address immediate concerns of healthcare system: Fitch

NEW DELHI (TIP): Fitch Solutions has said that the latest stimulus package does not address immediate concerns of the healthcare system which is reeling under the pressure of COVID-19 pandemic.

On March 11, the Ministry of Finance increased allocation – 0.008 per cent of the country's GDP – to the health services division to support an expansion of healthcare spending, Fitch Solutions Country Risk and Industry Research (a unit of Fitch Group) said.

It is to be noted that this is not a new budgetary allocation, but only a rerouting of existing expenditure, it said, adding that the "stimulus package is lacking in addressing the immediate concerns of the healthcare system".

The unprecedented crisis due to COVID-19 has highlighted the need to increase investment in the healthcare sector in the country.

Despite several healthcare reforms, India is badly placed to tackle the rapid spread of coronavirus.

The continued lack of medical funding and healthcare infrastructure suggests that the impact of further spread of the disease will be worse in India if it is not adequately contained, it said.

Moreover, the significant inefficiency, dysfunctioning and acute shortage of the healthcare delivery systems in the public sector do not match up with the growing needs of the population.

The low level of public spending on health is both a cause and an exacerbating factor accounting for the poor quality, limited reach and insufficient public provisioning of healthcare, it said. "Dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic has brought out the critical importance of the public sector in health provisioning," Fitch added.

Rapidly declining revenues and sharply eroding profits are leading to the closure of many private hospitals.

Despite all its shortages and constraints, the public sector has had to step up to play the main role of addressing healthcare needs during this pandemic as the private hospitals have responded inadequately to the crisis, it said.

Private hospitals, which make up for two-thirds of hospital beds in India, and almost 80 per cent of available ventilators, are handling less than 10 per cent of the critical load of COVID-19 patients.



Gold slides on hopes of recovery in economic growth

Gold fell on Thursday on hopes of a swift recovery in growth following easing of lockdowns and possibility of a coronavirus vaccine, but bleak data from major economies limited losses.

Spot gold slid 0.7% to \$1,737.09 per ounce by 0744 GMT. US gold futures slipped 0.8% to \$1,738.40.

Global equities surged overnight, though gains during Asian hours were limited by lingering caution about the long-term impact of the coronavirus outbreak.

"There is still some optimism and risk-on sentiment about the possibility of a vaccine and talks of lockdown easing and growth slowly picking up," said National Australia Bank economist John Sharma.

"But it not a huge thing and if it was major, we would see gold going below \$1,700."

Gold rallied to its highest since October 2012 on Monday, driven by economic damage concerns, US-China tensions and massive monetary and fiscal stimulus.

US Federal Reserve policymakers acknowledged the possibility of further support measures if the economic downturn persists, the minutes from the latest policy meeting showed.

The latest round of dismal economic indicators have underscored the extent of damage inflicted by the virus, with data showing Britain's inflation slumped to its lowest since 2016.



Shree Ganeshaya Namah

Bejan Daruwalla is world's most famous astrologer today. He appears regularly on world wide TV shows. Bejan who has been a professor in English, has authored a number of books on astrology. India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on March 29, 2012, lunched one of Bejan's books, '2012- End of the World? Bejan contributes to a number of journals and newspapers in many parts of the world which include Berkley Communications (London) Times of India (Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai) and The Indian Panorama (New York and Texas). Bejan's predictions have mostly been correct and people the world over rely on his predictions.



Bejan Daruwalla is available for astrological consultations. He can be reached at info@bejandaruwalla.com and on phone

**91-8141234275
www.bejandaruwalla.com**

The Indian Panorama brings you Weekly and Birthday Horoscope from the World's most trusted astrologer Bejan Daruwalla. Latest correct prediction: Modi's historic victory

Weekly Horoscope May 18 - May 24, 2020

ARIES: Ganesha says you may come across many complex situations this period but you will manage to demonstrate a level of maturity that surprises yourself and manage to overcome all that is thrown at you. You will do whatever it takes to be happy. You have realised that nobody can take that away from you. You will orient yourself, evaluate the situation and develop a cognitive map.

TAURUS: There are many new realisations this period. The world is changing rapidly and you are forced to confront that reality. Don't indulge in criticism and learn to accept change, and that people around you are entitled to their beliefs and quirks. Life is dynamic. Learn to forget the past and don't hold on to it or be by it. Every moment changes and you must learn to go with the flow.

GEMINI: You realise that your own happiness is a by-product of the happiness of people around you. There is a lot of entertaining and you spend lavishly on your family and friends. You use your intelligence, imagination and knowledge to advantage and make rapid progress at work. You pore over blueprints for the home, office or a home away from home. There are many new interests which take hold of you this period.

CANCER: Life takes on a sense of adventure and there are exciting times spent outdoors. You are reliving your childhood through your children or simply engaging in activities that remind you of your youth. It's a pleasurable experience and immensely rewarding. Things may not be hot on the relationship front but your work is both engaging and profitable.

LEO: You take a radically different approach to work and the results are all too visible. You move away from old-fashioned practices and come up with brilliant ideas which win kudos from across the board. There is little time for family as you slog away with your new work schedules and ideas. You do outstandingly well but along with this come jealousy, backbiting and a lot of bitching.

VIRGO: You have recently come out of a long relationship or are thinking about an exit strategy. You feel you have been wronged and feel like you need to go on a shopping spree. You spend on apparel, jewellery, cosmetics, spirits, electronics and dining out. You are definitely indulging far more than you ever did before but it is making you feel good. You are hurting inside and prefer to bond only with your pets.

LIBRA: You concentrate heavily on money matters this period. Funds, loans, finances, borrowing, buying and selling will boost your self-confidence and pride. You want to experience travel and combine it with knowledge gathering. You may take an exotic vacation and may find yourself doing something adventurous, different and exciting. You feel refreshed and rejuvenated by all this and you may even wear your adventures like a badge of honour.

SCORPIO: You want it all, but are often exhausted trying to get it. You don't believe in debt, but you won't let back of money stand in the way of buying what you want. Financial liquidity is both necessary and desirable if your goal has to be realistically achieved. You are driven and determined. But there are many moments of anxiety and bouts of depression. You feel alone, and solitude and loneliness don't suit you.

SAGITTARIUS: You're dreaming and planning for the future. You're renovating the house. Your kitchen is the primary space for connecting; it is the command centre for family interactions and coordination. Your house has always been sought after for entertaining friends. People show up unannounced because you make them feel at home. You, thankfully, take a break from work and spend time with children, pets and your beloved.

CAPRICORN: You work to improve your spiritual plane by helping the underprivileged and needy. You make donations to causes and offer medical aid to those who cannot afford it. They bless you from their hearts for this gesture. Ganesha too gives you his blessings. You are able to enjoy moments of relaxation and revitalisation thanks to all this.

AQUARIUS: You have embarked on a journey where people are looking at you for answers. You must consolidate your discretionary time. Set yourself deadlines for various activities. Time is the scarcest resource and needs to be managed well. Every aspect of your existence will be galvanised, improved, and uplifted. You will be more active at home as well and there will be harmony at work and play.

PISCES: This could be a challenging period, delays, disappointments and adverse conditions spelling out defeat and even doom. You will have to be careful and not take undue risks. Learn to compromise and don't embark on new projects. Be wary of dangerous activities as the risk of accidents is quite high. There may also be minor illness and hospitalisation.

Birthday Horoscope May 18 - May 24, 2020

May 25: Ganesha says if there are shared assets, or intimacies, in question, the struggle for pursuit of them today can get craggy. Don't let possessiveness lead to assertive, unstable actions that cut into cash or love.

May 26: The Moon is in your house of shared assets, money, sexual intimacy, mystery, power, and regeneration, a signal to plant seeds of trust and growth in these areas to see them blossom.

May 27: If you've needed an extra dose of confidence and power regarding an ambition,

you can access it today. This could also manifest in needed funds showing up through a private supporter

May 28: News from afar or contact with someone who's travelling could make you wonder if there's some way you can get away, too. By late night, an inventive solution may help you on your way.

May 29: Sharing money, love, or sex can feel like a boundary - less intimacy today, any of which can provide sweet nothings or sweet profits.

May 30: This could be a banner day. Private gain or a beloved supporter could be reason to celebrate or rejoice secretly. Emotions are complicated and flying high, but seal happy accord by evening.

May 31: Because it might take awhile for this day to get into gear, you may feel caught in emotional logjams. If there isn't enough for needs or someone is withholding, remember to value your own worth.

THE PANCHANANA ASPECTS AND FORMS OF SHIVA

Shiva occupies a prominent place in Hinduism. He is one of the Trimurthis, or the three highest manifestations of Brahman. As the destroyer, in his function as Time (Kala) or Death, he represents the disintegration and dispersing mode of Tamas. However, in Shaivism, Shiva occupies the highest place and represents purity and auspiciousness (shivam). As Brahman (Mahesvara) himself, and Lord of the Universe (Isvara), he performs five functions.

The five functions of Shiva

The five functions of Shiva as the Supreme Lord of the universe are as stated below.

Creation, Srishti

He creates all the worlds and beings, manifesting himself as the individual souls or pure consciousness in the bodies and in the materiality of all existence.

Preservation, Sthithi

As preserver, Shiva is responsible for the continuation of all the worlds and beings. In the body he is the sustaining power of breath (praneswara) and the digestive power of fire (jatharagni). He is the source of all food and water for gods and beings.

Concealment, Tirobhava

As the concealer, Shiva casts the net of delusion (maya) upon the whole creation and keeps the beings deluded, so that the order and regularity of the worlds are not disrupted. Because of his deluding power (maya-shakti) beings cannot perceive him or realize their own essential nature, which remains suppressed or hidden behind a veil of impurities.

Revelation, Anugraha

As the revealer of truth, source of knowledge, and grace, Shiva is responsible for the liberation of beings. None can achieve liberation without his grace. In Shaivism individual effort and good karma are important, but the grace of Shiva is even more important to achieve liberation, for which the path of knowledge is the prescribed method.

Destruction, Laya or Samhara

At the end of each cycle of creation, Shiva withdraws all worlds and beings into himself and goes into a temporary restful mode. As Death and lord of destruction, he is also responsible for the renewal of life and rebirth of beings.

Panchanana Shiva

The five functions of Shiva are represented in the panchanana (pancanana) or the fivefold aspect of Shiva. In the iconography, he is depicted as the five faced deity (pancha muka Shiva), each face representing one of his five functions. The fivefold aspect of Shiva also represents the fivefold aspect of creation, the five bodies (kosas) in the human beings, five breaths, five directions, five elements, five senses, five colors, five energies, five divisions of time, and five human races. Significance of the panchanana form of Shiva is explained in the Linga Purana. A reference to it is also found in the Mahabharata. The five aspects of Shiva as represented in the five faced deity are described below.

Ishana, the Lord

He is Brahma, the lord of creation and represents the mind power (chit-shakti), the element earth (or air according to some), the ritual knowledge of the Vedas,



and the manifesting power of the mind. Among the senses, he represents the sense of touch and among the organs of the body, hands. In the iconography he represents upward looking face. His color is copper. In individual images, he is depicted along with a She-goat, holding in his hands the Vedas, the elephant hook, a noose, hatchet, skull, drum, rosary, trident, one hand showing the gestures of protection (abhaya) and another that of offering boons (varada).

Tat-Purusha, the Cosmic Being

He is Vishnu, the lord of preservation, cosmic egg (Hiranyagarbha), the enjoyer, nourisher, and the chief priest of the cosmic sacrifice who represents bliss (ananda shakti), the rising sun, liberating knowledge, the material abundance (Sri Siva tattva), and the element of water. Among the sense organs he is the sense of smell, and in the bodily organs, the anus. In the iconography he represents the eastward face and golden color. In individual images he is shown with three eyes and four faces, wearing yellow garments, and standing in the company of Gayathri.

Vamadeva, the Concealer

He is the suppressor who conceals Tatpurusha behind a veil of delusion. He is the opposite (tirobhava) of Tatpurusha, who is described as west faced, evening sun, and the left-hand (vama) deity. His color is red. In the body he represents egoism (anava), the power of action (kriya-shakti), and the element of air. Among the senses he is the sense of sight, and in the bodily organs, the feet. In individual images he is shown as red or lotus colored, adorned with red ornaments, with four hands, one holding

a rosary and the second a hatchet. The third and the fourth show the gestures of offering protection (abhaya), and granting boons (varada) respectively

Sadyojata, the Revealer

He is Sada Shiva, the eternal being, who manifests spontaneously (sadyojata), and who is described as the granter of grace, leader of delight (nanda) and enjoyment (sunanda). He represents the power of liberating knowledge (jnana shakti), and the element of space. In the body he represents the mind, the sense of taste, and according to some the sex organ. His color is white, the color sattva, or purity. In the panchanana form he represents the northern face. In the individual images he is shown as white colored, holding the Vedas and rosary in two hands and the other two showing the gestures of offering protection (abhaya),

and granting boons (varada) respectively.

Rudra, the Destroyer

He is also known Aghora (the non-fearful one), who is battle-ready, and who is mentioned in the Vedas as the howler and father of the war gods Maruts and Rudras. His main function is destruction (samhara). He represents the element fire, the power of desire (iccha-shakti), the punitive power of the law (dharma), the power of discrimination (buddhi), the sense of hearing, and the organ of speech. All these faculties are used in dispensing justice and enforcing the law as the lord of Dharma. His color is black or dark red. In the panchanana form he represents the southern face. In individual images he is shown as a fierce god with four faces and nine hands, holding ax, shield, elephant hook, noose, spear, skull, drum and rosary respectively.

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contd from page 1

80 reported dead as...

homeless, washed away bridges and swamped low-lying areas. The fiercest cyclone to hit West Bengal in 100 years destroyed mud houses and crops, and uprooted trees and electricity poles. It also wreaked havoc in Odisha, damaging power and telecom infrastructure in several coastal districts. Odisha Government officials estimated it had affected around 44.8 lakh people in the state.

"So far as per the reports we have received, 80 people have died in the state due to Cyclone Amphan. Two districts - North and South 24 Parganas - are completely devastated. We have to rebuild those districts from scratch. I would urge the Central Government to extend all help to the state," Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee told reporters after conducting a review meeting with officials.

"The restoration work will start soon. Large parts of North and South 24 Parganas and Kolkata are facing a massive power cut since last evening. Even telephone and mobile connections are down," she said, announcing a compensation of Rs 2 lakh to Rs 2.5 lakh for the next of kin of each of the deceased.

Besides North and South 24 Parganas and Kolkata, the districts of East Midnapore and Howrah were the worst hit as portions of several dilapidated buildings came crashing down in several places.

In Kolkata, hundreds of cars were overturned by the strong winds with speed up to 125 kmph. Large parts of Kolkata and other affected districts went without power as felled trees and electricity poles were blocking key arterial roads and intersections. Mobile and Internet services were also disrupted as the fierce cyclone had damaged several communication towers.

Residents recalled "living through hell" for six hours as the winds howled incessantly. Windows buckled from the pressure of the storm, cars floated on waterlogged roads, bumping against each other. Parts of air conditioners were flying around like missiles

Telecom in tatters

In Kolkata, hundreds of cars were overturned by strong winds with speeds up to 125 kmph. The fierce cyclone felled trees and electricity poles, blocking key roads. Mobile and Internet services were disrupted as 1,000 mobile towers across Bengal were destroyed.

Shah speaks to CMs

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday, May 21 spokewith Chief Ministers of Odisha and West Bengal - Naveen Patnaik and Mamata Banerjee - and assured them of all possible help.

Trump says he won't...

asked about a second wave during a tour of a Ford factory in Michigan.

"We are going to put out the fires. We're not going to close the country," Trump said. "We can put out the fires. Whether it is an ember or a flame, we are going to put it out. But we are not closing our country."

Trump has previously said there may be "embers" of the pandemic that persist in the U.S. past the summer, but he maintains that they will be stamped out. Health experts, including those in the Trump administration, have said that the virus will likely continue to spread through the fall and winter, and may become even more difficult to combat once flu season begins.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and a member of the White House coronavirus task force, told The

Washington Post this week that he has "no doubt" there will be new waves of cases.

"The virus is not going to disappear," he told Post. "It's a highly transmissible virus. At any given time, it's some place or another. As long as that's the case, there's a risk of resurgence."

State leaders, not the federal government, have imposed harsh restrictions on residents and businesses to try to slow the spread of the disease. But with the U.S. economy straining under the social distancing rules, Trump has loudly called on the country to begin the reopening process.

All 50 states have now begun some level of reopening - including New York, the epicenter of the crisis in the U.S. - even as cases continue to rise in some parts of the country.

Trump did not wear a mask while touring Ford Motor Co.'s Rawsonville Components Plant in Ypsilanti, despite a state law and company policy requiring facial coverings there. The plant is currently making ventilators in response to the Covid-19 pandemic in the United States.

The outbreak, which began near the Chinese city of Wuhan, has spread around the globe, with more than 5 million cases confirmed worldwide and over 328,471 deaths, according to data from Johns Hopkins University.

There are at least 1.5 million cases and at least 93,439 deaths from the disease in the United States, according to the latest tallies from Johns Hopkins.

Trump is determined to revive the economy as he tries to convince voters to give him four more years in the White House. More than 38 million U.S. workers have filed unemployment claims in the past nine weeks as businesses shuttered amid the pandemic.

But markets have experienced a booming rally this week, amid optimistic news about vaccine development and a growing sense from some public figures that the country has turned a corner in its fight against Covid-19. (Agencies)

Cuomo bars summer...

is now investigating 157 cases of kids developing inflammatory symptoms similar to Kawasaki disease after contracting COVID-19 - a two-fold increase since last week.

At least five children in New York have died from the terrifying symptoms, and Cuomo said there's too many unknowns about the coronavirus-linked illness for him to feel comfortable about allowing in-person summer school to proceed.

New York schools have been closed since mid-March, when the pandemic first thrust its fangs into the state, depriving millions of students of traditional classroom learning.

The governor didn't rule out keeping schools shuttered into the fall semester.

"It's still too early to make that determination," he said.

Cuomo said the state will issue guidelines to schools and colleges in mid-June so they can start developing plans for potentially reopening in the fall with social distancing in mind. Academic institutions will in turn have to submit those plans for approval at some point in July, Cuomo said.

Cuomo said he hasn't made up his mind on summer camps yet, though he appeared to lean toward at least keeping day camps closed, again referencing the coronavirus-caused inflammatory symptoms.

"Should I send my children to day camp? Is it safe? Until we have this answer on this pediatric syndrome; as a parent, until I know how widespread this is, as a

parent I would not send my children to day camp," he said. "And if I won't send my children to day camp, I wouldn't ask anybody to send their children to day camp. It's that simple."

Cuomo did not say whether sleepaway camps could be an option but promised to make a decision soon.

Though rare, the Kawasaki disease-like syndrome can be extremely dangerous, as it attacks blood vessels throughout the body and can cause lethal toxic shock in children, according to researchers.

Cuomo said scientists are still trying to figure out if some children are more prone to the symptoms.

"They are still exploring this," he said.

The summer school announcement came as New York saw some good news on the coronavirus front.

Cuomo reported that new cases, hospitalizations and intubations were all trending downward, confirming the state's coronavirus curve is continuing in the right direction.

"We got over the mountain," he said.

Still, another 105 New Yorkers died from coronavirus overnight, bringing the state's total death toll above 23,000. The tragic daily count has stayed effectively flat for nearly a week. (With inputs from Daily News)

contd from Page 7

Indian Woman Starts Business...

With a lot of the Foundation's projects shut down due to COVID, they weren't sure how they would keep their work in food pantries going with the shortage of PPE. But with support from Anandan, and now other Warren residents, they've been able to collect and give away more than 1,000 masks. "Rohini was the start to all of this," adds Gail.

Shortly after being connected with Pester, Anandan and her team of volunteers began donating masks to several local hospitals such as Atlantic Health System-Overlook Hospital, St. Barnabas Medical Center, Robert Wood Johnson Medical Center, Summit Medical Group Foundation, local assisted living & rehab facilities and to the NJ Warren Township Office of Emergency Management. By the day, Anandan was getting requests from individuals asking to buy face masks. That's when the CDC recommended that everyone wear masks to reduce the spread, and Anandan decided to launch and scale her company.

Jane Ash, Coordinator for the Office of Emergency Management for Warren Township said that Anandan rose to the occasion to help people. "I can't begin to thank Rohini for her generosity and spirit during this unpredicted time," said Ash. "She is an incredibly generous person, and she'll be very successful in her new business."

Today, Soft Cotton Face Masks employs a local team to provide affordable masks for all.

About Soft Cotton Face Masks:

Soft Cotton Face Masks is a labor of love born out of a spirit to serve the community. Former Technology executive Rohini Anandan offers 100% cotton, machine-washable masks to businesses, individuals, families of first responders, and community members. The masks are affordable and come in adult and kids sizes. For business professionals, there are plenty of design options for when we return to the workplace. For every mask purchased, Soft Cotton Face Masks is able to donate more masks to healthcare professionals who are working to keep our communities safe. More at www.softcottonfacemasks.com

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COORG: THE SCOTLAND OF INDIA

Located amidst imposing mountains in Karnataka with a perpetually misty landscape, Coorg is the place to be for all nature lovers. This popular coffee producing hill station is not only popular for its beautiful green hills and the streams cutting right through them. It also stands as a popular destination because of its culture and people. The Kodavas, a local clan specialising in martial arts, are especially notable for their keen hospitality.

Coorg, officially known as Kodagu, is the most affluent hill station in Karnataka. It is well known for its breathtakingly exotic scenery and lush greenery. Forest covered hills, spice and coffee plantations only add to the landscape. Madikeri is the region's centre point with all transportation for getting around starting from here. On a visit to Coorg, cover the beautiful towns like Virajpet, Kushalnagar, Gonikoppal, Pollibetta, and Somwarpet, and experience the beautiful concept of "homestays" to make your experience more memorable!

Abbey Falls

Abbey Falls, also known as Abbi Falls, is located around 10 kilometres away from the town of Madikeri and is one of the most popular tourist attractions in and around Coorg. The water cascade coming down from the cliff from a height of 70 feet provides a spectacular scene to behold. Nestled within the lush greenery which is typical to the sceneries of Western Ghats, the waterfalls attract hundreds and thousands of people throughout the year - especially nature lovers and photographers. The waterfall is located between private coffee plantations with stocky coffee bushes and spice estates with trees entwined with pepper vines. There is an over-bridge that hangs opposite of the falls, from where the most picturesque scene of white foams gushing down the ridge can be seen, captured and remembered. The flow of the falls leaves a significant amount of water spray on those who stand on the bridge for some time.

Some small mountains streams and brooks join together to form one of the most beautiful waterfalls of South India and falling off its cliff as the water flows to join the River Kaveri or Cauvery as one of its tributaries. The walk to the falls from the main entrance has around 200 steps downwards throughout and takes you through exotic coffee, cardamom, pepper and other spice plantations. It is a fantastic opportunity for shutterbugs to capture the real beauty and grace of the natural world. Even though bathing is prohibited in the falls now, the essence of the place itself is quite enough to draw tourists every day.

Talacauvery

Talakaveri is the source of the river Kaveri, located on the Brahmagiri hill (not to be confused with the Brahmagiri range further south) near Bhagamandala in Kodagu district, Karnataka. Kodavas erected a tank which is now considered as its origin. It is believed that the river originates as a spring feeding a tank or a Kundike and then flows underground to re-emerge as Kaveri some distance away. The place has a temple dedicated to the Goddess Kaveriamma is located next to the tank and bathing in it on special occasions is considered holy.

Brahmagiri Wildlife Sanctuary

The Brahmagiri Wildlife Sanctuary covers an area of 181 square km and has



got its name from the Brahmagiri Park which is the highest peak with a height of 1608 m. The primary vegetation of the sanctuary includes evergreen and semi-evergreen forests, shoal forest patches in grasslands and bamboos. The sanctuary was established in the year 1974 and is surrounded by plantations of coffee and cardamom.

Some interesting birds one can spot in the place include black bulbul, Malabar trogon, and emerald dove. Cobra, python and king cobra are some reptiles which can be easily spotted. Brahmagiri Wildlife Sanctuary is also home to many animals including macaques, gaurs, elephants, tigers, leopard, cats, wild pigs, Nilgiri langurs and sloth bears. It is a famous attraction visited by tourists almost throughout the year. It is also famous among the trekkers. It is said by the locals residing there that seven sages meditated on the top of the hill.

Golden Temple (Namdroling Monastery)

Namdroling Monastery, situated at a distance of 34 km from the Coorg, is the largest teaching centre of the school of

Tibetan Buddhism known as Nyingmapa. Popularly known as the 'Golden Temple', the Namdroling Monastery holds some excellent examples of Tibetan architecture and artwork, as seen with the elaborately decorated temple tower and ornate outer walls, intricately adorned with beautiful murals. It is spread over an area of 80 square feet and was built from Bamboo which was donated by the Indian Government to the Tibetans in exile. Today, it houses many auxiliary structures like educational institutions and a hospital, in addition to being home to about 5,000 members of the Sangha community.

Raja's Seat

Raja's Seat, a garden with beautiful flowering plants and skilfully designed artificial fountains, is located in Madikeri in the district of Coorg. The garden was a favorite venue to rejuvenate for the Kings of Kodagu, and they loved watching the sunsets sitting here as they spent some memorable time with their Queens. Even today, the breathtaking view of the Sun setting into the undulated

mountains is mesmerizing. The delightful garden here is adorned with a multitude of flowers and is a treat to nature lovers, and the proximity of the location also makes it a preferred picnic spot for the locals. Visiting Raja's Seat is an excellent way to get a glimpse into the lifestyle of royal indulgence in Coorg.

The Raja's Seat has been built on an elevated ground overseeing the valleys that lie to the west. Early mornings are usually misty and cold, but as the sun rises, the mist clears slowly offering a mind-stirring view of the lush green gardens adorned with colourful seasonal flowers beds. The sunsets are equally splendid as the day slowly ends with the Sun setting in the mountains. There is also a Toy Train available for your little ones to take a ride on and the fountains have been modified into musical fountains. Today, this place is managed by the Archaeological Survey of India and is considered of historical importance in the country. The Raja's Seat Garden is known for its beautiful seasonal bloom, panoramic view and picturesque location making it an apt attraction for Nature Lovers.

Australia confident of hosting Indian cricket team

MELBOURNE (TIP): Australia are a "nine out of 10" chance to host India for a Test series in the home summer and could also tour England for limited overs series beforehand, Cricket Australia boss Kevin Roberts said.

Cricket has been shut down since March due to the novel coronavirus outbreak and while travel curbs remain Australia has begun easing social distancing restrictions after infections slowed to a trickle.

"I guess there's no such thing as certainty in today's world so I can't say 10 (out of 10), but I'm going to say nine out of 10," Roberts told a roundtable held by Australia's News Corp when asked about the prospects of India touring.

"I'd be really surprised if we can't get the Indian tour away. But I wouldn't, hand on heart, suggest we'll have full crowds from the start."

"We'll just have to wait and see how that goes."

Australia had planned to tour England in July for ODI and T20 series before the COVID-19 pandemic plunged the international schedule into doubt.

England are looking at hosting the West Indies and Pakistan in July and August.

Roberts said he had spoken to the England and Wales Cricket Board on Wednesday and there was "some chance" Australia could tour England after the West Indies and Pakistan tours.

"Obviously we won't jeopardise the safety of the players, but the best test of that is that the West Indian and Pakistan tours ... go off without a hitch," he said.

Roberts was less optimistic about



Australia's chances of hosting the T20 World Cup, scheduled to start in October, given the logistical challenge of bringing in 15 teams.

"We don't have clarity on that one, yet. But as the situation continues to improve, you never know what might be possible," he said.

"It's ultimately a decision for the ICC (International Cricket Council)."

India may tour South Africa for T20 series

Talk that India could mark its return to international cricket with a short white-ball series in South Africa in August has been doing the rounds for more than a month now. On Thursday, Cricket South Africa (CSA) admitted it was discussing a three-T20I series with the BCCI.

"India wants to honour [a prior] agreement. If it's postponed, maybe a bit later," CSA acting CEO Jacques Faul said at a virtual

media interaction. However, everything hinges on government clearance from both sides.

The series is being planned to make up for the cancelled ODI series between the two teams in India in March, after a washed out first ODI.

That both Boards have the same broadcaster also augurs well for the conduct of the series in South Africa.

A BCCI executive confirmed that the Board hopes to get the government nod. With guidelines for resumption of sports training having been released, the BCCI's medical team, in consultation with the support staff, has started planning for a simulation camp starting early June.

Meanwhile, Indian Premier League (IPL) executives are understood to have sounded the franchises out on the likelihood of the postponed 2020 season being staged from late September to early November.



EUROPEAN SOCCER'S RETURN TO ACTION AFTER CORONAVIRUS

BERN (TIP): Professional soccer leagues around Europe are gearing up for a return to action following the novel coronavirus stoppage, but some are more advanced than others. Here is a roundup of the state of play:

GERMANY

The Bundesliga restarted on May 16 and games were played without fans and with a strict health protocol in place. The German Cup semifinals will be played on June 9 and 10, with the final scheduled for July 4.

ENGLAND

Premier League clubs returned to training on May 19 after agreeing to allow "small group" sessions to begin, with a possible return to normal 'contact' training the week after. Clubs have been informed that a resumption of matches would see them played only at neutral venues that have been approved by health and safety standards, but they remain hopeful they can still find a way to play games on the usual home and away basis. Secretary of state for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, Oliver Dowden, on May 14 said the government was "opening the door" for football to return in June.

SPAIN

Clubs in Spain's top two divisions returned to training in groups of up to 10 players on May 18. La Liga hopes to resume its season in June.

ITALY

Sports Minister Vincenzo Spadafora said the government would decide on May 28 if and when the Serie A season can resume. He also announced on May 19 that teams could start full group training immediately.

England bowlers to lead the way as cricketers resume training

LONDON (TIP): England bowlers are set to report for training on Thursday, leading the way as cricket chiefs step up plans to start a season heavily delayed by the coronavirus pandemic.

The global health crisis has put matches on hold in England until July 1 at the earliest while in other countries the season is already over.

Despite the pandemic, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) is still planning to stage a full home international programme, starting with a three-Test series against the West Indies, which was originally scheduled for June.

The ECB has announced that up to 18 bowlers will be involved from Thursday.

Edgbaston, Hove, Old Trafford, the Oval, the Riverside, Taunton and Trent Bridge will stage at least one session, before batsmen and wicketkeepers become involved from June 1.

The bowlers' identities have yet to be made public but the choice of venues indicates that James Anderson (Old Trafford) and Stuart Broad (Trent Bridge) will be among the leading England bowlers training at their home county grounds. Bowlers will have to bring their own kit, including designated cricket balls, wash their hands regularly, and clean any equipment used with disinfectant wipes.

England managing director Ashley Giles said last week he wanted the training sessions to be safer than a trip to a supermarket.

15-YEAR-OLD, WHO CYCLED 1,200 KM CARRYING FATHER, WILL BE CALLED FOR TRIAL BY CYCLING FEDERATION

NEW DELHI (TIP): The coronavirus lockdown in India has been severe on a lot of people, especially the ones residing in different states. The plight of migrant labourers has dominated social media and headlines for the past month. There was one story in the past few days that captured the imagination of Indians. 15-year-old Jyoti Kumari had to travel 1200 kilometers on a cycle with her ailing father to take him to his native place.

Kumari was residing in Gurugram before the lockdown but had to make the tough decision to peddle her way to Bihar along with her father due to nation-wide lockdown. She reached her destination in seven days and it now looks like her sheer doggedness has finally been rewarded.

In what could be a life-changing opportunity, the cycling federation will invite 15-year-old Jyoti to appear for a trial next month.

Cycling Federation of India Chairman Onkar Singh told PTI that if Kumari, a class eight student, passed the trial, she will be selected as a trainee at the state-of-the-art National Cycling Academy at the IGI Stadium complex here.

The academy, under the aegis of Sports Authority of India, is one of the most advanced facilities in Asia and has the recognition of UCI, the world body of the sport.



Jyoti Kumari cycled for 7 days, going almost hungry for two of those, before she reached Bihar.

"We spoke to the girl this morning and we have told her that she will be called to Delhi next month as soon as the lockdown is lifted. All the expenses of her travel, lodging and other will be borne by us," Singh said.

"If she needs to accompany somebody from home, we will also allow that. We will see in consultation with our Bihar state unit on how she can be brought to Delhi for a trial," he added.

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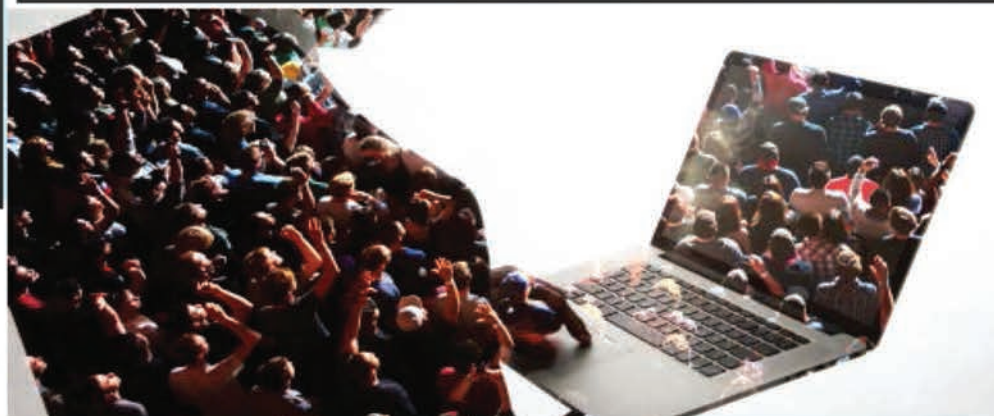
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STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19! LEARN HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF AND OTHERS AT HOME.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19?

- The most common symptoms are fever, cough, sore throat and shortness of breath. Other symptoms include feeling achy, loss of taste or smell, headache, and diarrhea.
- Most people with coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) will have mild or moderate symptoms and can get better on their own.

WHO IS MOST AT RISK FOR SERIOUS ILLNESS?

- People age 50 or older (people age 65 or older are at the highest risk)
- People who have other health conditions, such as:
 - Lung disease
 - Obesity
 - Liver disease
 - Asthma
 - Diabetes
 - Cancer
 - Heart disease
 - Kidney disease
 - A weakened immune system

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I GET SICK WITH COVID-19 SYMPTOMS?

If you are sick with COVID-19 symptoms, assume you have it.

When you are sick:

- If you have trouble breathing, pain or pressure in your chest, are confused or cannot stay awake, or have bluish lips or face, **call 911** immediately.
- Call your doctor if you are age 50 or older or have a health condition that puts you at increased risk, or if you do not feel better after three days.
- Always contact a doctor or go to the hospital if you have severe symptoms of COVID-19 or another serious health issue.
- Do not leave your home except to get necessary medical care or essential food or supplies (if someone cannot get them for you).
- If you must leave your home:
 - Avoid crowded places.
 - Stay at least 6 feet from others.
 - Cover your nose and mouth with a bandana, scarf or other face covering.
 - Wash your hands before you go out, and use alcohol-based hand sanitizer while outside.
- Household members can go out for essential work and needs but should monitor their health closely.

If you or someone in your home is sick:

- Create physical distance:
 - Do not have visitors.

- Stay at least 6 feet from others.
- Sleep head-to-toe if you share a bed with someone who is sick, or sleep on the couch.
- Keep people who are sick separate from those at risk for serious illness.
- Cover up:
 - Cover your nose and mouth with a bandana, scarf or other face covering when you are within 6 feet of others.
 - Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your inner elbow.
- Keep it clean:
 - Throw tissues into the garbage immediately after use.
 - Wash your hands often with soap for 20 seconds, especially after you cough or sneeze.
 - Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if you are unable to wash your hands.
 - Frequently clean surfaces you touch, such as doorknobs, light switches, faucets, phones, keys and remote controls.
 - Wash towels, sheets and clothes at the warmest possible setting with your usual detergent, and dry completely.
 - Do not share eating utensils with others, and wash them after every use.

WHEN CAN I LEAVE MY HOME AFTER BEING SICK?

- If you have been sick, stay home until:
 - You are fever-free for three days without Tylenol or other medication **and**
 - It has been at least seven days since your symptoms started **and**
 - Your symptoms have improved
- **Reminder:** New York is on PAUSE. This means that even if you have been sick, you should only leave your home for essential work or errands, or to exercise, while staying at least 6 feet from others.

NEED HELP?

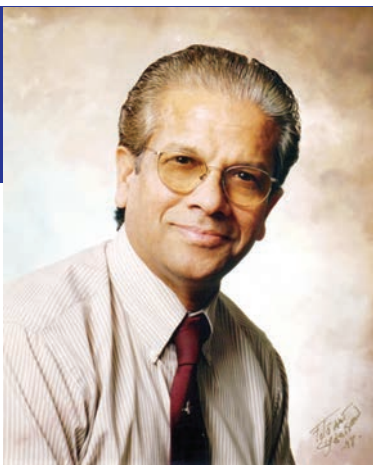
- If you are having a medical emergency, **call 911**.
- If you do not have a doctor but need one, **call 844-NYC-4NYC (844-692-4692)**. New York City provides care, regardless of immigration status, insurance status or ability to pay.
- For more information, **call 311** or visit [nyc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.nyc.gov/coronavirus).

The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves. 4.20

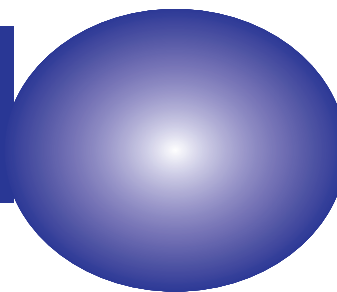


CORONAVIRUS HELPLINE

Dr. VK Raju and Dr. Leela Raju of the Eye Foundation of America will be glad to answer any eye related concerns of the readers of The Indian Panorama during this difficult period of Coronavirus onslaught



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