

# BANGALORE REPORTS

VOLUME-8 | ISSUE-6 | JUNE 10, 2020 | PAGES-12 | 3/- | RNI NO - KARENG/2013/52068 **SPEAK THE TRUTH**



**'I am going to set a new agenda'**

**'Veer Savarkar Flyover': K'taka opposition plays regional pride card**

**Kannada actor Chiranjeevi Sarja passes away**

**Shah Rukh Khan Foundation to adopt toddler, trying to wake up dead mom**



**BJP drops names given by BSY for RS polls, stuns state unit**

Placing its bets on two relatively unknown Karnataka leaders - Eranna Bhimappa Kadadi and Ashok Jasti - as its candidates for the upcoming Rajya Sabha election on June 19, the BJP central leadership has pulled a surprise, both on the opposition and within its party.



After hectic lobbying, the state unit, which had met under the leadership of CM BS Yediyurappa and Karnataka BJP unit president Nalin Kumar Kateel, had recommended the names of Ramesh Katti, Prakash Shetty and Prabhakar Kore. None of the names were considered by the party high command.



Eranna Kadadi is a former president of the Belgaum rural unit of the party, while Ashok Jasti is a party leader who hails from Raichur

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## 'New normal' sets in



**Bengaluru:** After over two months of being under lockdown, many sectors in Bengaluru reopened their shutters on Monday embracing the 'new normal'.

As places of worship opened, people were seen standing in queues to get the glimpse of deities in the temples. There were markers to keep safe distance, thermal checking and sanitisers at the entrance of the temples. But there was no rush. There was no distribution of theertha and prasada. People in temples were not allowed to sit and pray.

On the first day of reopening of malls, customers were allowed inside premises after thermal screening and measures were taken to maintain social distancing during shopping and billing. However, the number of visitors was less on the first day. Among the visitors most visited supermarkets located inside the malls to buy groceries and other household items. The staff were insisting people to maintain social distancing

during the time of purchase. At the malls, security staff was seen wearing face masks and shields. Sanitisers were provided at each shop.

As per the order of the government, cinema halls and children play areas remain closed.

Restaurants that are open have precautionary measures for both customers and employees. While customers have been asked to maintain social distancing and use sanitisers before entering the hotels, employees have been told to avoid travelling to other cities for the time being. Some restaurants have tweaked their infrastructure and have made compartments on tables so that physical contact is avoided. Many restaurants are now serving food only in disposable plates.

But business has been slow for some of them, with a few hotels not getting even a single customer since morning. There is a slow trickle of customers in some others.

Most hotels are serving food in disposables - paper cups, plates while some have taken the sustainable route serving food in areca plates and wooden spoons. Several hotels have hiked the prices of the food to make good the additional cost of disposables. A few hotels have also taken to serving food on banana plantain leaves, either directly or in a steel plate.

Meanwhile, the seating arrangement allows only for two people per table, reducing the capacity by half. Most hotels with seating arrangements have put up thermal scanners. Darshinis have also installed hand sanitisers. All the cooks and servers are mandated to wear hand gloves.

KR Market, one of the major markets in the city that reopened after a gap of 75 days received poor footfall in the morning hours. The shopkeepers were seen cleaning their shops on the first day of opening the market. There are hardly any customers in the market.

## Corporator Imran Pasha gets 'corona hero's' welcome, arrested

**Pasha's supporters showered him with flowers and burst fireworks after he was discharged from Victoria Hospital. The Padarayanapura ward corporator stood through his car's sunroof to wave at and greet as they tailed his white Mercedes on two-wheelers.**

On Sunday afternoon, Pasha's supporters organised a huge procession to welcome Imran Pasha after he was discharged from Victoria Hospital. Pasha acknowledged the supporters' welcome extravaganza standing through the car's sunroof waving and greeting them. The procession led to traffic jams in and around Mysuru road.

But the police were not amused at all.

They just rushed and arrested the JD(S) corporator for allegedly flouting lockdown guidelines in a containment zone after he participated in a welcome procession from a Covid-19 designated hospital till his residence in Padarayanapura. He was earlier booked for violating social distancing norms and refusing to get admitted to a hospital after testing positive for COVID19.

The Bengaluru police reached his house and arrested Pasha and booked him under the Disaster Management Act, 2005. Bengaluru City police Commissioner Bhaskar Rao also rushed to Padarayanapura and imposed prohibitory orders in the area, which comes under JJ Nagar police station limits, for five days and also



deployed two platoons of KSRP in the area.

Bhaskar Rao said, "We have arrested Imran Pasha for violating the Disaster Management Act and we are investigating the incident."

Chamarajpet MLA B Z Zameer Ahmed supported the police action. "I am happy to hear that Imran Pasha has recovered.

However I condemn the rally held by him. Action must be taken," he tweeted.

Earlier, police had registered an FIR against Pasha after a video of him waving and greeting his followers while being shifted into an ambulance on May 29 has gone viral on social media.

According to the FIR, the corporator's followers assembled in large numbers while he was being taken to the hospital after testing Covid-19 positive. The police have booked the corporator and his followers, under sections 269 (negligent act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life) and 270 (negligent act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life) 271 (disobedience of

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## Bengaluru police chief Bhaskar Rao

A Bengalurean and a 1990 batch IPS officer, Bhaskar Rao is one of the eminent police



officers of the state. Prior to his appointment as city police commissioner, Rao held the post of Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Karnataka State Reserve Police.

The police commissioner while taking the charge itself had said that he will prioritise community friendly policing and zero tolerance to drugs. "Increasing the trust of citizens in the police will be my motto," he said, adding that being a Bengalurean, he is honoured to be given the opportunity to serve the city as its police chief.

# Boy flunks class 6, dad dials police

**Bengaluru:** In early May, the police control room received an unusual distress call. A Kengeri resident called to say his son, whose class 6 annual exam wasn't held due to the Covid-19 lockdown, had been failed by his school. Following swift response from officials at the city police commissionerate, the boy's school promoted him to class 7.

The school's move to detain the child was in violation of a state government order mandating all students up to class 8 be promoted in view of the disruption in academic activities due to the lockdown and a Right to Education Act requirement, under which no child can be failed up to class 8.

The man reported that his son, who studied at a private school, had just received his annual report card and had been failed. Realising he'd have to continue another year

in the same class, the boy and his father were heartbroken. "The affected boy was in tears as he complained over phone to the police. When contacted by the police, the school principal claimed that they hadn't promoted the child as he was very poor in studies and had performed badly in earlier examinations during the academic year. The police then approached child helpline experts and ascertained that there was a Karnataka government order mandating schools promote children till class 8, mainly during the lockdown owing to the pandemic. As per the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, school authorities must promote children till class 8, irrespective of



their academic performance throughout the year. On being convinced by child helpline staff, the school authorities agreed to cancel the earlier report card and promote the boy to class 7.

## Restaurants reorganising setups to serve in new normal

**Bengaluru:** Restaurants are reorganising their setups to serve customers in a new normal where health safety will get priority on the table over almost every enjoyable moment of eating out. The troubled sector, whose business has been restricted to takeaways for the past two months, hopes that the state government will allow hotels and restaurants to resume full service.

Social distancing, repeated sanitation and hygiene checks, restricted access to resources and ingredients, and reduced manpower. These are some of the realities the businesses must accept. Diners, too, may have to get used to a new experience: temperature checks, limited seating, plexiglass partitions, and servers whose faces will be covered at all times. Considering the drastic changes required to resume full service, some restaurants are likely to continue offering only takeout food. But many other establishments, which have drawn up a plan to restart dine-in service, are confident of getting patrons back.



There are 81,000 restaurants and 13,500 hotels in Karnataka. The figures for Bengaluru are 3,500 and 21,000, respectively. The sector has been waiting for guidelines of the Union ministry of home affairs as they will provide more clarity about dos and don'ts. In the meantime, owners of hotels and restaurants of different categories, from five-stars to darshinis, have prepared their own strategies and protocols. The association has framed a

common standard operating procedure. Restaurants such as Vidyarthi Bhavan are experimenting with plexiglass partitions between seats and allowing only two guests per table. Limited seating will ensure a distance of 2.5 metres is maintain between tables.

To reduce waiting time, and thereby crowding, some restaurants plan to offer online booking of time slots and contactless orders.

Resuming full operations in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic will put businesses under pressure as they will have to balance demand and safety.

Tables and seats will be sanitised after every use. Number of tables will be reduced by 50% to ensure 2.5m gap. There will be contactless menu and cashless payment. Food and beverage service may be restricted to seating area initially.

## Hunt for BS Yediyurappa's successor is still on...

**Bengaluru:** The hunt for Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa's successor is still on and The BJP top brass is finding it hard to finalise the candidate. It has become a tough task on hand as there are too many aspirants but none capable of filling the boots of the 78-year-old Lingayat strongman and chief minister BS Yediyurappa whenever he decides to hang them up.

It's a challenge for the party leadership in New Delhi, with none of the second-rung leaders showing enough promise to fill the old warhorse's boots. Yediyurappa will complete one year in office this July in his fourth innings as the chief minister. But it has become imperative for the party to find an alternative leader before he fades into the political sunset. But whoever succeeds Yediyurappa should be a Lingayat to get instant acceptance. When the BJP government came to power in last July, the leadership appointed three second-rung



leaders — Laxman Savadi (Lingayat) Govind Karjol (SC) and CN Ashwath Narayan (Vokkaliga) as deputy chief ministers — overlooking several seniors purportedly to groom a successor to Yediyurappa. But the trio has struggled to come out of the septuagenarian's shadow.

There's dissatisfaction in the party

over Yediyurappa's style of functioning. The BJP leadership, though aware of the internal bickering, is treading cautiously as its attempt more than a decade ago ended in a disaster. It's also aware that it can ill afford to lose support of Lingayat community, its core vote bank. Sources privy to inside developments say the central leadership has now opened the forum on the succession plan, keeping the 2023 assembly polls in mind. Karnataka is also significant since it is BJP's gateway to the south.

Sources said the party has zeroed in on a few names and things will become clear after Rajya Sabha polls on June 21. Though the names of Lingayat leaders Jagadish Shettar, V Somanna, Basavaraj Bommai and Murgesh Nirani are doing the rounds, the party still doesn't seem convinced that they'll be able to take forward Yediyurappa's legacy. Two other names

which have been added to the list include Vijayapura MLA Basannagouda Patil Yatnal and Dharwad West MLA Aravind Bellad as they both belong to powerful sects of the Lingayat community.

Yatnal's strong RSS roots and his experience as Union minister may help him though his motormouth image may play spoilsport. Bellad, 50, is being perceived as the Devendra Fadnavis of Karnataka. Non-Lingayat names doing the rounds include Pralhad Joshi (Union minister) and S Suresh Kumar (both Brahmins), R Ashoka (Vokkaliga) and Aravind Limbavalli (SC), many of whom have the strong support of the RSS. Yediyurappa himself is said to be pitching for his younger son BY Vijayendra, who is facing opposition's allegations of being de-facto CM, but the question is whether he will have the backing of senior MLAs.

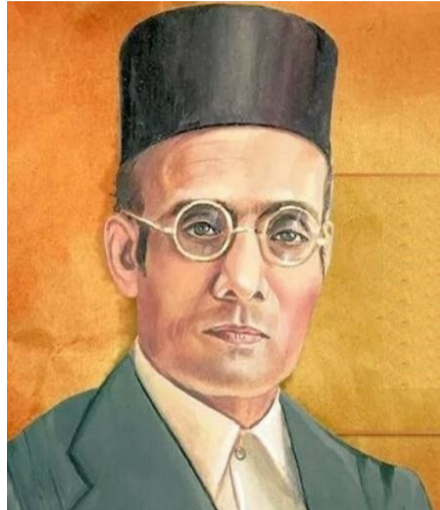
# 'Veer Savarkar Flyover': K'taka opposition plays regional pride card

The opposition led by the Congress' Siddaramaiah and JDS' Kumaraswamy accused the government of insulting freedom fighters from Karnataka with its decision to name the flyover after Savarkar

**Bengaluru:** Three months after the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike decided to name a flyover in Bengaluru after freedom fighter and Hindutva ideologue Veer Savarkar, opposition parties in Karnataka have turned it into a matter of regional pride.

The flyover in Yelahanka is all set to be inaugurated by Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa and the opposition led by the Congress' Siddaramaiah and JDS' HD Kumaraswamy accused the government of insulting freedom fighters from Karnataka with its decision to name the flyover after Savarkar.

Leaders of the BJP -- right from local MLA SR Vishwanath to Union Minister for



Parliamentary Affairs Pralhad Joshi -- slammed the two parties.

"The decision to name the Yelahanka flyover after VD Savarkar is an insult to the freedom fighters of this soil. I urge the Chief Minister to drop this decision immediately and name the flyover after a

freedom fighter from the state," said Siddaramaiah, Congress Legislature Party Chief. He added that the hasty decision to name the flyover after Savarkar is proof of how governance in Karnataka is being done by players behind the scene and not an elected government.

Bengaluru Mayor Gautam Kumar, however, has pointed out that the decision to name the flyover was taken in February. "When a proposal to name flyovers or roads etc under BBMP jurisdiction after personalities is made, it is brought to the BBMP council for discussion. People's opinions are sought through public advertisements and only after due process is the decision taken. In this case, too all protocols were followed," he has said. A BBMP council resolution dated 29 February 2020 shows that there was unanimous approval to take necessary measures to name the flyover at Yelahanka Upanagara Ward no 04 after Veer Savarkar.

The JDS led by HD Kumaraswamy has also taken the regional pride route to attack the BJP government asking if there were instances of other states naming infrastructure projects after personalities from Karnataka. "Have other states named things after freedom fighters from our state? I urge the state government on behalf of the people to withdraw this decision," he tweeted asking why the state government was not considering freedom fighters from Karnataka or other personalities who have contributed to the state.

"Opposing freedom fighter like Savarkar is an insult to the freedom fighters of this soil. Yediyurappa is a mature administrator and people are his masters. Naming circles, buildings, infrastructure after Nehru and fake Gandhis are the 'naamdar' party's honour to freedom fighters," Pralhad Joshi tweeted referring to the Congress in response to Siddaramaiah.

## BDA chief transferred in just 49 days

**Bengaluru:** Chief minister BS Yediyurappa has effected transfer of three IAS officers and nine IPS officers. GC Prakash, a 20-06-batch IAS officer, has been posted as the commissioner of the Bengaluru Development Authority. Prakash replaced N Manjula, who was posted on June 17. Prakash is the third BDA commissioner in a span of two years and second in 49 days. Manjula had replaced Rakesh Singh after the latter's fallout with the then BDA chairman ST Somashekhar and Congress MLAs in the city. The government also transferred Mandya deputy commissioner Manjusree who was at loggerheads with independent MP from Mandya Sumalatha Ambareesh during the Lok Sabha polls. Manjusree is replaced by MV Venkatesh of the 2009 batch. Senior IPS officer BR Ravikanthegowda has been posted as DIG & joint commissioner of police (traffic), Bengaluru city. Kuldeep Kumar Jain is the DCP (crime), Bengaluru. Also, A Parashiva Murthy, an ADGP, has been appointed as additional commissioner of police (crime), which sources appears to dilute the powers of city police commissioner Bhaskar Rao. Other transferred IPS officers: MA Saleem (ADGP, administration, Bengaluru), P Harishankaran (IGP, KSRP, Bengaluru), Ravi Channanavar (SP, Bengaluru Rural), B Dayanand (IGP, CID & economic offences), P Harsha, DIG, commissioner of police, Mangaluru), and Arunangshu Giri (DCP law and order, Mangaluru).



## Padarayanapura violence case: K'taka high court grants bail to 126 accused

**Bengaluru:** The high court has granted bail to 126 accused in the Padarayanapura violence case. Justice John Michael Cunha has directed the 126 to furnish a bail bond for Rs 1 lakh each with surety. They have to undergo prescribed tests as well as quarantine based on the results. The 126 were arrested on a complaint lodged by Raman Gowda, a police sub-inspector. The SI alleges that on the evening of April 19, when the lockdown was in place, the accused gathered at 10th



Cross, Arafath Nagar in Padarayanapura. Armed with logs and stones, they removed barricades and damaged public property. They even threatened police and BBMP

officials on duty. The petitioners, however, pointed out that the complaint does not say they physically attacked any official. Imran Pasha, BBMP corporator representing Padarayanapura, has tested positive and the news spread fear among BBMP officials, who had met the JD(S) corporator during the week on various occasions with regard to implementing surveillance measures in the ward. Padarayanapura has 65 positive cases.

## Three FIRs against ACP, inspectors on bribery charge

**Bengaluru:** The Anti-Corruption Bureau has registered three FIRs against CCB Assistant Commissioner of Police Prabhushankar M and inspectors Ajay R M and Niranjana Kumar, who have been suspended over corruption charges.

The officers are accused of receiving huge kickbacks from tobacco dealers to let them operate during the earlier period of the lockdown when it was illegal to sell all kinds of tobacco products. The incident came to light after two tobacco dealers complained to City Police Commissioner Bhaskar Rao.

Deputy Commissioners of Police Kuldeep Kumar R Jain (Crime 1) and

Ravikumar KP (Crime 2) were then tasked with conducting an internal inquiry, which established that the accusations were right. The police subsequently raided the officers and recovered about Rs 30 lakh from them before they went absconding.

The three officers are also accused of taking bribes from a shopkeeper named Suresh, whom they had raided for selling fake N95 masks. While a case was registered against Suresh at the Banaswadi police station after the raid, the officers allegedly promised to absolve him of the accusation in exchange for money. The cases in the tobacco extortion were



registered at the Cottonpet police station. Curiously, Prabhushankar has already obtained anticipatory bail in the extortion cases registered at the Cottonpet police station, which are being probed by Deputy Commissioner of Police (West) B Ramesh. The inspectors are yet to get bail.

← 1 district. Ashok Jasti belongs to Savitha Samaja and thus a ticket to him is recognition to the backward classes in the state.

However, a senior party functionary, who did not wish to be identified, sounded shocked at the choice of candidates. "I honestly don't know the reason why the

recommendations of the local unit were not considered. I myself barely remember Eranna and Ashok. I have never met them in spite of having been in the party for this long," the party leader said

The Congress on Friday nominated former Union minister and senior leader Mallikarjun Kharge, also a prominent Dalit face of the party, as its candidate for the June 19 polls.

Kharge, a former leader of the Congress party in Lok Sabha, had lost the 2019 general election from his Gulbarga parliamentary seat.

Adding to the mix, former Prime Minister and Janata Dal (Secular) leader HD Deve Gowda has decided to throw his hat in the ring and contest the polls, the party announced on Monday.

← 1

quarantine rule) of the IPC and the provisions of the National Disaster Management Authority Act.

Padarayanapura ward is one of the containment zones in Bengaluru with 67 cases as of Sunday evening. It was in the news recently after violence broke out on April 20 in the area when a mob vandalised barricades put up by the police when civic body officials and health workers arrived to take primary and secondary contacts of Covid-19 patients to quarantine centres.

At least 54 people were arrested by the police after the incident and out of them five were tested positive for Covid-19.

On June 2, Karnataka Minister for Health and Family Welfare B Sriramulu violated social distancing norms by holding a grand procession in Chitradurga district. Sriramulu was welcomed by his followers with a huge apple garland and flowers in a procession at Parashurampura in the district. In the video, the minister was seen waving at a large crowd and was not wearing a mask, which is compulsory in public places.

BJP MLA MP Renukacharya too ignored the social distancing norms on April 25 when he organised a meeting of ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activist) workers in Honnali, Davanagere District. Renukacharya was seen on stage while ASHA workers sat on the floor without following any social distancing norms.

Earlier, BJP MLA from Turuvekere constituency, Masale Jayaram, was spotted celebrating his birthday with 100 others in a government school in Tumakuru district amid the nationwide lockdown.

## Reverse migration & Centre's ARYA scheme

The massive reverse migration of people from urban areas to villages ever since lockdown was imposed due to COVID-19 has put focus on the Attracting and Retaining Youth in Agriculture (ARYA) scheme of the Centre with several experts suggesting that time is now ideal to go for full-fledged implementation of the ambitious scheme.

ARYA scheme is presently being implemented in 100 districts in the country on an experimental basis. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) took up this initiative several years ago following report by a committee of experts that looked into ways and means of wooing rural youth to agriculture and allied sectors by ensuring a dignified life for them in villages.

Such a scheme had been taken up particularly in the wake of a majority of rural youth shunning agriculture and migrating to cities in search of menial jobs. The main intention of the scheme was to turn agriculture and allied sectors into attractive and profit-making proposition for the rural youth. Of course, the benefits of the scheme are not confined to rural youth alone as the country's food and nutritional security would be taken care of if vibrancy of farming sector is ensured by attracting youth and pressure on urban areas is reduced by checking migration.

Karnataka had played a crucial part in drafting this report as agricultural extension expert and the then Vice-Chancellor of University of Agricultural Sciences-Bengaluru (UAS-B) K. Narayana Gowda headed the committee that prepared the report.

Experts say that time is now ideal for full-fledged implementation of the scheme. Pointing out that those who have migrated to villages may be left with no other choice, but to return to urban areas in search of jobs if

they do not find gainful employment in villages in the next one or two months. Immediate attention should be given to provide them the options of remunerative incomes in villages through the implementation of ARYA report.

The rural sector has immense potential for creating employment opportunities if proper infrastructure is created and training is provided to impart skills. Rural employment is not just about mainstream farm activity. For example, farm sector needs plenty of mechanics who can repair pumpsets and various agricultural



machineries. If agriculture gains vibrancy, then there will be demand for such jobs in rural areas.

Also, the agricultural season is just about to begin now and hence it is the right time to engage those who have returned to villages in farm operations so that they would get income.

The ARYA scheme provides for imparting skill training to identified youth in various farm operations besides the facility to handhold them through various organisations in the beginning of their operations. The basic idea is to turn rural youth into agri entrepreneurs. The committee which was formed in 2011, submitted its report in 2013 and the initial implementation of the scheme was taken up in 2015-16 in 25 districts. Presently, it is being implemented in 100 districts with a target of training 10,000 rural youth over three years in various aspects.

The scheme is being implemented

through Krishi Vigyan Kendras, which will in turn involve several scientific institutions as technology partners. The main intention is to instil confidence in youth that agriculture is still not only a profitable venture, but a respectable profession.

In this regard, the report had recommended measures to make farming an intellectually stimulating and economically rewarding activity. It had also recommended building social reputation of innovative farm youth through awards.

As a large number of people from various classes in urban areas have returned to

villages due to lockdown, experts warn of a social problem if measures are not taken to ensure some income for them by creating employment opportunities.

No doubt that the time is opportune to woo them into farm or allied sectors by imparting skills. But if no such measures are taken, then there is a strong possibility of some of such returnees taking to anti-social activities after they exhaust their resources. Time should not be lost in engaging them in gainful employment, agriculture can provide employment to all of them depending upon their qualification and skill sets.

Presently the country is witnessing post-harvest losses of crops to the extent of Rs 1 lakh crore a year. This is an indication of employment potential that the agri processing sector can offer for the youth. It hardly takes a week's training in imparting skills to help anyone to take to different aspects of agriculture. But if the process is delayed, then the trouble may start.

## Supreme Court's move on migrant workers: belated, but welcome

It is a matter of relief that the Supreme Court has at last taken cognisance of the plight of millions of inter-state workers looking for transport home and relief from the unrelenting misery unleashed on them by the lockdown. A three-judge Bench has initiated suo motu proceedings based on media reports and representations from senior advocates, observing that there have been inadequacies and lapses on the part of the Centre and States in dealing with the crisis faced by workers. It need not have come to this. This could have taken place seven or eight weeks earlier, when petitions were filed before the top court on behalf of those left in the lurch across India after the Centre announced a lockdown, with just four hours' notice. With a kind of self-effacement and self-abnegation not in keeping with its institutional history, the Court had then accepted the governments

sweeping claim that there were no migrants on the roads any more, and that the initial exodus of workers from cities to their home States had been set off by "fake news" to the effect that the lockdown would last for months. In an unfortunately limited intervention, the Court merely advised the police to treat the workers on the roads with kindness and directed the media to highlight the Centre's version of the developments.

The Court's reluctance to intervene may have stemmed from a belief in letting the executive handle the fallout of an unprecedented global crisis, but, in the process, it abandoned its primary responsibility of protecting fundamental rights, especially of those most vulnerable. Such was the resultant dismay that retired



judges called it out for apparent abdication of its duty. A former High Court judge even said the ghost of ADM Jabalpur was lingering, in an unflattering reference to an Emergency-era judgment, now mercifully overruled, that held that personal liberty was not absolute during a state of emergency. Whether it was shamed into taking cognisance of the issue or it felt that

the situation is ripe for intervention, one should now expect the Court to take a more critical look at the government's lapses, and emulate the stellar role that High Courts are playing in holding administrations accountable. The top court must now find out if the Centre, which imposed a stringent lockdown to buy time for preparing the health infrastructure, had discharged its responsibilities. It may even lay down guidelines for planning, coordination and establishment of a mechanism to address the economic and humanitarian consequences of such actions in future. The government should also do more than asking its law officers to fulminate against activists, denounce the media and question the patriotism of those critical of its actions. A national tragedy requires a more statesmanlike response.

# Elephant and dragon must dance together: China

Speaking about India-China ties, the Chinese foreign minister said, "If China and India are united, one plus one will become eleven instead of two."

**Beijing:** The Chinese dragon and Indian elephant must not fight but dance with each other, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi said today as he called on the two nations to shed mental inhibitions, manage differences and meet each other half way to enhance bilateral ties. Wang's remarks came during his annual press conference on the sidelines of the parliamentary session. Asked how China views relations with India this year after turbulence in ties in 2017 due to a number of issues including the Doklam standoff, Mr Wang said, "Despite some tests and difficulties, the China-India relationship continues to grow". Bilateral ties were affected by a number of issues last year, including the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor which passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, China blocking efforts at the United Nations to list terror group Jaish-e-Mohammed chief Masood Azhar as a global terrorist as well as India's entry

into the Nuclear Suppliers Group or NSG. Troops of India and China were locked in a 73-day-long standoff in Doklam in the Sikkim sector. The standoff ended on August 28 after the Chinese military stopped the illegal construction of a road close to India's strategic 'chicken's neck' corridor connecting the northeastern states to the rest of the country. Wang, however, said the two countries must shed mental inhibitions, manage differences and meet each other half way. "China is upholding its rights and legitimate interests and taking care to preserve the relationship with India," he said. "Chinese and Indian leaders have developed a strategic vision for the future of our relations. The Chinese dragon and Indian elephant must not fight each other but dance with each other," he said. "If China and India are united, one plus one will become eleven instead of two," he said.

Speaking for the first time on bilateral ties this year, Wang said the international situation is experiencing its biggest change in a century and China and India must do everything to emphasise this and support each other and avoid mutual suspicion and



attrition. He said mutual trust is the most precious commodity in the China-India relations.

"With political trust, not even the Himalayas can stop us from friendly exchanges," he said. "A shared understanding far outstrip our differences. Our common interests far outweigh our frictions. China is willing and ready to inherit and take forward our traditional friendship and be a friend and partner of the Indian people." "I hope the two sides will be free from mental inhibitions and meet each other halfway. Let us replace suspicion with trust, manage differences with dialogue and build a future with cooperation," he said. Wang reacted

strongly to a question whether the Indo-Pacific strategy being furthered by India, the US, Japan and Australia will affect China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). He said there was "no shortage of headline grabbing ideas" but they were "like the foam on the sea" that "gets attention but will soon dissipate". Contrary to claims made by some academics and media outlets that the strategy is aimed at containing China, the four countries have made it clear that it targets no one, Mr Wang said. "I hope they mean what they say," he said. "Let us not forget that the Belt and Road Initiative has received the support of over 100 countries. Nowadays stroking a new Cold War is out of sync with the times and inciting confrontation will find no market," he said. Touted as Chinese President Xi Jinping's ambitious project, the Belt and Road Initiative focuses on improving connectivity and cooperation among Asian countries, Africa, China and Europe. The Belt and Road Initiative also includes the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor or CPEC which India strongly opposes as it passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

## Shiv Sena mocks Sonu Sood for helping migrants

Mumbai: The biggest hero of migrant workers these days is film actor Sonu Sood. The actor sent millions of workers back home at his own expense during the lockdown. Sonu's example of humanity is being discussed not only in Mumbai but in every corner of the country. But the ruling Shiv Sena in Maharashtra does not seem to like Sonu Sood's work.

The party has mocked Sood in its front page 'Saamana' targeting him. It is learned that he will soon meet Prime Minister Modi and become Mumbai's celebrity manager. In the editorial, Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut writes that a new 'Mahatma' has emerged during the corona virus, which people call Sonu Sood.

Photo "It is being said that this actor sent millions of migrants to their states," Raut wrote. The Governor of Maharashtra has also praised 'Mahatma Sood'. It seems that the central and state governments are not doing anything to send migrants.

## Coronavirus cases: India overtakes Spain, 5th highest in world

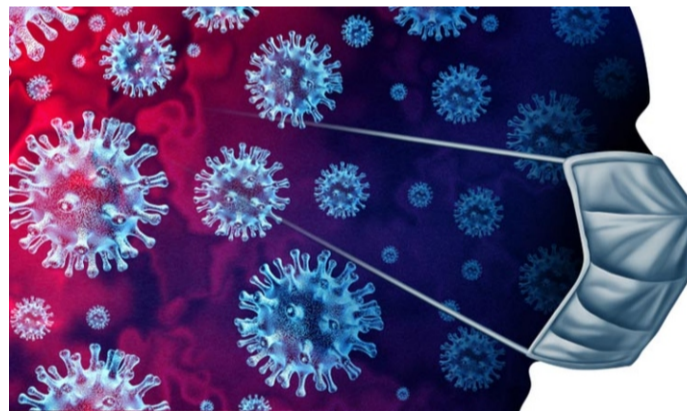
New Delhi: India's total Covid-19 caseload went past Spain's on Saturday to become the fifth largest in the world, on a day when fresh infections in the country crossed 10,000 for the first time. As many as 297 deaths were reported, the highest single-day toll from the virus so far.

India's tally of coronavirus cases stood at 2,46,549 late on Saturday night, having overtaken Spain's count of 2.41,310 during the course of the day. Now, only the US (19,06,060 cases), Brazil (6,14,941), Russia (4,58,102) and the UK (2,86,294) have recorded higher number of cases.

As cases continue to surge — 10,434 fresh infections were recorded on Saturday — India can take solace from the fact that the death toll is far lower than Brazil, Spain and the UK at the same stage of cases. Only Russia and the US had a lower toll at the same case stage (around 2.4 lakh) among the six worst-hit countries.

As cases continue to surge — 10,434 fresh infections were recorded on Saturday — India can take solace from the fact that the death toll is far lower than Brazil, Spain and the UK at the same stage of cases. Only Russia and the US had a lower toll at the same case stage (around 2.4 lakh) among the six worst-hit countries.

India's daily count of Covid-19 cases crossed the five-digit on



Saturday, going past the previous highest of 9,651 recorded on Thursday. Even the death toll was higher by two cases than the previous peak of 295, recorded just a day earlier, as per data collated from state governments. With this, India has reported 6,939 deaths from the virus, translating to a case fatality rate of 2.8%. While Maharashtra yet again reported by far the highest number of cases at 2,739, at least nine states recorded their biggest single-day surges till date. These were Tamil Nadu (1,458 new cases), Bengal (435), Haryana (355), Assam (244, going by the difference in total cases in 24 hours), Jharkhand (106), Andhra Pradesh (210), Telangana (206), Odisha (173) and Goa (71). New infections also continued to remain high particularly in Delhi, which reported 1,320 cases, Gujarat (498), Karnataka (378),

Uttar Pradesh (382), Bihar (233), Rajasthan (253), Madhya Pradesh (232) and Kerala (108).

Maharashtra recorded 120 Covid-19 deaths on Saturday, its second highest toll in a day so far. The highest deaths reported so far in a day were 139, on Friday. Of the 120 deaths, 58 were in Mumbai, the city's highest fatalities for a day; its toll so far is 1,577. The day's death toll was high in Delhi, where 53 fatalities were reported by the state government, Gujarat (29), Tamil Nadu (19), Bengal (17), Madhya Pradesh (15), Rajasthan (13), UP (11) and Telangana (10). Maharashtra's overall toll is now 2,969, inching close to the 3,000 mark. The state update said that of the total deaths reported on Saturday, 30 were from the last two days, while the other 90 were from May 3 to June 3. Since Monday, the state has reported 683 deaths. Of the 120

deaths, 90 were from the Mumbai Metropolitan Region. Mumbai recorded 1,274 fresh cases, taking the city's tally to 47,354 cases, with the case fatality rate at 3.33%. The Mumbai corporation's daily Covid update too spoke of 57 deaths. Gujarat recorded 498 Covid-19 positive cases in 24 hours ending 5 pm on Saturday, taking the tally to 19,617. The cases included 289 from Ahmedabad, 92 from Surat, 34 from Vadodara and 20 from Gandhinagar. The state recorded the death of 29 Covid-19 positive patients in 24 hours, taking the toll to 1,219. Ahmedabad continued to record a high number of 26 deaths. Gujarat has recorded a steady fall in daily testing since June 3, when 6,288 tests took place. In three subsequent days, the daily figures are 6,023, 5,990 and 5,695. Haryana on Saturday recorded 355 new Covid-19 cases, its biggest single-day jump in the number of new coronavirus patients so far, as the tally of infections inched close to the 4,000-mark.

A majority of the fresh cases are from the worst-hit districts of Gurgaon, Sonapat and Faridabad, which reported 129, 89 and 39 infections, respectively. UP's coronavirus tally crossed the 10,000-mark with 382 new cases. It took about 18 days for Covid cases to double from 5,000, which is almost the same time taken for cases to double from 2,500 to 5,000.

# 'I am going to set a new agenda'

Bengaluru: As soon as the All India Congress Committee's official communiqué was out announcing the appointment of former minister DK Shivakumar as the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee president, party workers outside his house in upscale Sadashivanagar in Bengaluru were ready with crackers and life-size cutouts of their leader. All of them had been awaiting D-Day for around three months.



But a calm Shivakumar, who had seen deadlines being missed on the announcement, chose to attend the ongoing legislature session. In the Assembly's lounge, as Congress legislators congratulated him, he offered a red rose to former chief minister Siddaramaiah and in return got a pat on his shoulder from him.

Siddaramaiah and outgoing KPCC president Dinesh Gundu Rao had put in their papers after the party won just two of the 15 Assembly constituencies in the bypolls — the result of Congress-JD(S) MLAs resigning and bringing down the 14-month-old HD Kumaraswamy government in July 2019.

DKS' appointment as KPCC president turned out to be a long

haul. His biggest challenge was keeping his confidence and the faith reposed in him by not only the party cadres, but also the common man on the street. Several surveys were conducted to find the ideal KPCC president and all surveys showed a preference for him. When observers were sent by the Congress to elicit opinion, 99 percent of them conveyed to the high command that they preferred him. It was shocking as even those who had opposed him earlier spoke in my favour. Now this challenge has turned into a responsibility and it's his duty to take everybody along together.

According to Shivakumar his USP has been simplicity and he goes by the party workers'

aspirations. He doesn't have a motive and try to be the voice of the workers, whether he has been in power or out of it. Even when he has been deprived of power, He did not voice his displeasure.

DKS refuses to comment on national politics. But he is all set to set a new agenda for the party in Karnataka, which he hasn't divulged so far. There will be a makeover of the Congress in Karnataka as many things have to change.

There are questions about the equations that may play out between former chief minister Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar as the former was not in favour of the latter becoming the KPCC president. But Shivakumar refutes

any differences with Siddaramaiah and says he has been a loyal worker at all times. When he was not given a minister's post, the party took care of him. He has not voiced any complaint.

As a former KPCC working president, which did not work out well both for him and the then president over sharing of power, he plans to manage the affairs as he knows what it was. Now he is definitely going to share power. He doesn't consider the president's post as a reward by the high command for whatever he has done.

Shivakumar has always advocated giving youth a role in politics, will this be seen in the constitution of his team?

He agrees that youth and women are the biggest strength in politics. He started his career in politics as a student leader. One should not forget the roots. The seniors in the party are the roots and one need their presence as well, Shivakumar makes it clear.

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# Saleem Ahmed: first Muslim KPCC WP



the youngest in the house of elder's and served as chief whip of the Karnataka Legislative Council from 2000–2007. Twice he was the member of Legislative Council during 1996–2002 and 2002–2008.

In the party he held the position as president, All India National Students' Union of India (NSUI) 1993–1997, general secretary of Indian Youth Congress 1997–1998, president of Karnataka State – NSUI 1987–1993, vice-president, Karnataka State – NSUI 1983–1987 and elected student union leader of Seshadripuram College, Bangalore 1982–1986.

Saleem Ahmed was a College NSUI Unit president, block

president, secretary in Bangalore city NSUI, state vice-president Karnataka NSUI, and state president Karnataka NSUI and was All India NSUI president and general secretary Indian Youth Congress. Saleem was the leader of the Indian delegation to South Korea for the Youth Exchange Program in the year 2012. He was appointed secretary, AICC in the year 2018.

The Karnataka Congress never had three working presidents in the past. There could be issues while sharing the responsibilities. But this isn't new to Saleem Ahmed. In Telangana, where he

was in charge, there were four working presidents. In Maharashtra, the Congress has five. Earlier, the party had two working presidents here in Karnataka too. It's as per what's most suitable for the party according to Saleem. It's a good thing to strengthen the organisation and empower the president. Responsibilities will be shared and all of the presidents will work in coordination.

The Congress is moving towards becoming a cadre-based unit. The party has before it an immense task of strengthening it at the booth level. A booth isn't meant for just elections in a cadre-based party. It's the primary unit where there will be a team. There are some 56,000 booths where the party already has committees, which need to be ensured that they work effectively. After the booth comes a block and then a district. So, strengthening the booth, automatically strengthens the entire organisation. Everyone, including top leaders, have to start working in the booths. This attempt happened in a big way ahead of the 2018 Assembly elections. But it didn't yield the desired result.

Now, at three years to go for the elections, an action plan has been prepared. KPCC president Shivakumar has started a system where booth committees are monitored by the KPCC. While a mass-based party, it should get into micromanagement now. For this to work, party workers need a sense of ownership and belonging. Some say the BJP has a stronger ideological plank that keeps its cadre together. But according to Saleem, Congress' ideology is that of secularism, oneness and taking everyone along. It's a 130-year-old party that wasn't born only

for power. The party isn't divisive. The BJP divides the society and the country's oneness. Communal harmony is being spoilt. At one point, Congress had stalwart leaders from minority communities.

Saleem doesn't think that there is a vacuum now. There were, and are, leaders whom the Congress groomed. Some good senior people are not seen. But there are leaders. The priority will also be to find a second line of leadership. Leaders from the NSUI will fill up the second line that can fight for the Congress' ideology. The last time a Muslim leader held a prominent party position was in 1963, when Muhammad Ali was president in the erstwhile Mysore state. It's Saleem Ahmed, now. That was over 50 years ago. This is the first time a Muslim has been made working president. Saleem is the first Muslim from Karnataka to be appointed the all-India NSUI president too. As KPCC working president Saleem Ahmed has already shown the path he will tread in his opposition against the ruling party. He has urged the state government to bring out a White Paper on the expenditure towards Covid-19 control in the state.

Accusing some Ministers of indulging in corrupt practices in the purchase of Personal Protection Equipment and other medical appliances for COVID-19 treatment, Saleem has said that Speaker Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri should have permitted the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Legislative Assembly to inquire into the issue. Ahmed has said clearly that there were allegations against some of the ministers for bagging the contract for the supply of PPEs and other medical equipment for the firms of their close associates. "We have secured the information on these transactions and have passed it on to the PAC," he has said.

The Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee has a new team and former MLC Saleem Ahmed is one of the three working presidents tasked with the job of building the party at the grassroots level. Ahmed, who rose from being a student leader is the minority face of the party. It's a huge responsibility. It's a challenging job, but does Saleem have the capability to be successful? Especially when the Congress is going through a rough patch.

Saleem Ahmed, born 1 January 1967, is from Bengaluru. He was former director general of Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India 2012–2014 and was

## Police Probe into Northeast Delhi Riots 'Targeted Towards One End'

**Additional sessions judge Dharmender Rana has urged the Special Cell DCP to monitor case and ensure 'fair investigation'.**

**New Delhi:** A Delhi court dealing with cases related to the northeast Delhi riots, being handled by the Special Cell of the Delhi police, observed on May 27 that "the investigation seems to be targeted only towards one end".

While most of the cases pertaining to the violence that took place in northeast Delhi in February this year have been registered by the area police and are being heard by the Karkardooma courts, those cases which were handed over to the Special Cell are being heard by special courts in the Patiala House Courts complex.

During the hearing of a plea filed against the 30-day custody of Jamia Millia Islamia student Asif Iqbal Tanha in a case,

registered under FIR No. 59 of 2020 of Special Cell, the Additional Sessions Judge Dharmender Rana made strong



observations regarding the investigation. "Perusal of the case diary reveals a disturbing fact. The investigation seems to be targeted only towards one end. Upon enquiry from Inspector Lokesh and Anil, they have failed to point out what investigation has been carried out so far regarding the involvement of the rival faction." ASJ Rana also called upon the

concerned Deputy Commissioner of police to also "monitor" the case and "ensure a fair investigation".

While Tanha was arrested by the Delhi police last week, sources said the first arrests in the case – in which the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act was invoked – were made in late March.

Lawyer and former Congress councillor Ishrat Jahan and activist Khalid Saifi, who is known for his work with non-

profit organisation United Against Hate, were among the first to be arrested in this case. The two were arrested when they were trying to prevent police from evacuating protesters from the anti-Citizenship Amendment Act sit-in at Khureji.

It has been claimed by the counsel of many of the accused, along with civil society members, academics, feminists and activists, that the Delhi police have not been acting fairly in dealing with the cases and that there has been bias against mainly Muslim anti-CAA protesters, who have been booked.

Questions have also been raised as to why BJP leaders Kapil Mishra, Parvish Verma and Anurag Thakur – the last of whom is Minister of State for Finance – whose speeches are believed to have stirred violence have not been investigated at all.

# India-Nepal border dispute: positions have hardened on both sides

India says new road to Lipulekh falls within Indian territory, but Nepal claims at least 17km of it lies on its land.

Kathmandu, Nepal - For several weeks, Indian soldiers have been engaged in a standoff with their Chinese counterparts along their disputed border, even as New Delhi is busy planning a strategy to resolve a land dispute with another neighbour, Nepal.

India's latest diplomatic row with Nepal erupted on May 8 when New Delhi announced the inauguration of a Himalayan road link that passes through the disputed area of Kalapani. Under pressure from the opposition, civil society and a vociferous Nepali press, the government of Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli issued a new political map of the country, showing Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura within its borders.

India objected, saying the new Nepal map "included parts of the Indian territory". The dispute's origins lay in the November 2019 release of India's new political map, which showed Kalapani within India. The announcement saw Nepal's capital Kathmandu rocked by protests, while Oli's government requested a high-level meeting to resolve the dispute. But India was not forthcoming.

The two neighbours entered a new paradigm of "cartographic war" as anger grew on both sides. An activist affiliated with Human Rights and Peace Society Nepal holds a sign during an anti-Indian-government protest at the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu

It began with an ill-placed remark by the Indian army chief, General Manoj Mukund Naravane, that suggested Kathmandu had acted at the behest of China. Nepal's Defence Minister Ishwor Pokhrel dubbed General Naravane's comments an insult to the Nepali soldiers working in the Indian Army. Nearly 40,000



Nepali Gurkha soldiers are part of 40 battalions.

Not to be outdone, Prime Minister Oli questioned India's commitment to its national motto of "Satyamev Jayate" (truth prevails) by suggesting New Delhi subscribed to "Singhamev Jayate" (the lion prevails). His remarks about the "Indian virus" spreading the coronavirus pandemic into Nepal added fuel to the fire.

Oli's nationalist position seemed to be directed at his domestic audience as he used the issue to deflect criticism from his government's handling of the pandemic, as well as consolidate his beleaguered position within his party.

But experts believe New Delhi risks damaging the relationship further through its hawkish commentators and nationalist media. India has argued that the road is completely in its territory but Nepal says at least 17km of the new road "passes through Nepali territory," arguing that the road crosses over to the east bank of the Mahakali River.

Nepal considers east of the river to be its territory based on the 1816 Sugauli Treaty signed with British colonial rulers. In a series of articles, Kantipur, Nepal's biggest-selling newspaper, presented the

historical evidence: Five British-Indian maps issued between 1819 and 1894 that show Limpiyadhura as the headwaters of the Mahakali; a 1904 letter written by then Prime Minister Rana Chandra Shamsher to village chiefs of the triangle; and evidence of a 1958 voter list and the 1961 census by Nepali authorities in the region.

Nepal also possesses land registration records and tax receipts from the disputed territory. The dispute is further muddled by the presence of Indian troops in Kalapani since before the 1962 war with China.

The Sugauli Treaty remains, for Nepal, the "mother of all documents", according to which the Mahakali is the boundary river between the two countries, and any future demarcations will be based on the treaty.

"The Nepal prime minister's earlier remarks on a solution, with possible road leasing to India, was a welcome step towards de-escalation, but since then, repeated moves from both sides that have raised the temperature, further politicised the issue and thus made dialogue more difficult.

The dispute has become more complicated after a hardening of stances

on both sides. Nepal's earlier demands were focused on the withdrawal of troops from Kalapani; its recent position now includes the insistence of Limpiyadhura as the headwaters. The dispute looks like it is heading towards a point of no return.

The presence of the Indian army in the trijunction that connects India, China and Nepal has further complicated the issue. Analysts say it is difficult to foresee a withdrawal of troops, as the official Nepali position demands.

The situation acquires a further hurdle against the background of a simmering India-China border dispute along their de facto border - the Line of Actual Control (LAC) - a border that remains undemarcated. Furthermore, Nepal's ruling Communist Party government has reached out to China for investment and better connectivity in recent years, which has troubled India.

But Beijing's ambiguous position that Kalapani is a bilateral issue between India and Nepal has been keenly watched by Nepali analysts since the current road is a result of its 2015 agreement with New Delhi. Despite the tensions - the second over Kalapani in six months and the most serious bilateral dispute since the 2015 unofficial blockade - analysts on both sides have begun to call for a political solution to Kalapani.

There are new complications because positions have hardened on both sides. Further, more than India, it may not be as easy for the Nepali side to come to a political solution because of the domestic backlash any leadership that negotiates on Kalapani will face.

Although the Nepali position has hardened over perceptions that New Delhi has not been forthcoming in Kathmandu's efforts to resolve the dispute, India sought to defuse the crisis by calling for "constructive and positive efforts", and said that it had taken the dispute's "seriousness" into account.

## UP teacher who worked at 25 schools, withdrew Rs 1 arrested

Agra/Lucknow: A full-time science teacher, named Anamika Shukla, found working at 25 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) schools throughout the state and having drawn over Rs 1 crore in salary in the past 13 months, at least one 'Anamika Shukla' has been arrested from Kasganj district. But she turned out to be one Priya from Farrukhabad, leading cops to believe that it could be possible that multiple candidates used credentials and 'eligibility' of Anamika Shukla, who remains elusive. It could be possible that it's a handiwork of a well-entrenched gang.

According to officials, after receiving an alert from the state capital about the fraud, they had detected one teacher, who went by the similar name, working at Faridpur KGBV in Kasganj district.

Kasganj Basic Siksha Adhikari Anjali Agrawal has said, "On June 4, we served her notice asking her to present all her documents for verification.

After forming an investigative committee, on Friday, we found that documents furnished by the teacher were forged. Her salary account was immediately frozen." "On Saturday, the accused teacher went to the bank to withdraw her salary. Once she found the bank account frozen, she went to the school to collect her belongings and later came to my office to submit her resignation. We had informed the police beforehand and she was handed over to them," the BSA said. She was booked for cheating and forgery under IPC's sections 420 (cheating and dishonestly inducing delivery of property), 467 (forgery of

valuable security, will etc) and 468 (forgery for purpose of cheating).

According to police, the woman claimed that she had paid Rs 2.5 lakh to a Mainpuri-based man to get this job. She used Anamika Shukla's credentials to get the job while her real name is Priya, daughter of Mahipal, who is resident of Lakhanpur village of Kayamganj police limits in Farrukhabad district. Soron station house officer Ripudaman Singh



said, "During interrogation, the accused initially claimed to be Anamika Singh, daughter of Subhas Singh. However, her documents are in the name of Anamika Shukla, daughter of Subhas Chandra Shukla. The accused claimed that she paid a hefty amount to a Mainpuri-based man for the job and was posted in Faridpur KGBV since August 2018." According to the UP government, five more Anamika Shuklas have been found working in KGBVs in Ambedkar Nagar, Baghpat, Aligarh, Saharanpur and Prayagraj districts.

Teachers in KGBV, a residential setup for girls from weaker sections of the society, are appointed on contract and are paid approximately Rs 30,000 per month. Each block in a district has one Kasturba Gandhi School.



# I'm ready, willing and able to mediate: Trump

United States President Donald Trump, who has in the past repeatedly offered to mediate between India and Pakistan on the issue of Kashmir and been rebuffed by New Delhi, said he had informed India and China of his offer.

India is likely to reject United States President Donald Trump's offer, as it has rejected all third-party mediation in any of its international disputes as a matter of policy, which has bipartisan endorsement from all political parties.

US President Donald Trump has waded into the tense border standoff between India and China, saying he was "ready, willing and able to mediate" between the two Asian neighbours, a statement that could irk Beijing more than New Delhi.

Shortly before Trump made his offer through a tweet, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said at a press conference in Beijing that the situation on the China-India border was "generally stable and controllable." The sides were communicating through both their front-line military units and their respective embassies to "properly resolve relevant issues through dialogue and consultation," Zhao said.

China is committed to abiding by agreements signed by the sides and to "maintaining peace and stability in the border area between China and India", he said.

There was no official reaction to both developments from Indian officials, but people familiar with developments acknowledged that the two sides were in contact through diplomatic channels in both New Delhi and Beijing to address the situation.

The Indian side has already made it clear that it won't allow any unilateral alteration of the status quo along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) even as it works towards a peaceful resolution of the worst stand-off since the 73-day face-off between border troops at Doklam in 2017.

Trump, who has in the past repeatedly offered to mediate between India and Pakistan on the issue of Kashmir and been



rebuffed by New Delhi, said he had informed India and China of his offer. However, this couldn't be independently confirmed.

"We have informed both India and China that the United States is ready, willing and able to mediate or arbitrate their now raging border dispute. Thank you!" he tweeted.

Chinese envoy Sun Weidong, while fielding questions during the webinar organised by the Confederation of Young Leaders (CYL), underscored the importance of developing bilateral relations and deepening understanding of the "important consensus reached" by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping.

Without any reference whatsoever to the standoff, Sun said: "We should adhere to the basic judgment that China and India are each other's opportunities and pose no threat to each other. We need to see each other's development in a correct way and enhance strategic mutual trust."

"We should correctly view our differences and never let the differences shadow the overall situation of bilateral cooperation. At the same time, we should gradually seek understanding through

communication and constantly resolve differences."

The "'Dragon and Elephant dancing together' is the only right choice for China and India" as it serves the fundamental interests of both countries, which should also strengthen cooperation in investment, production and other fields, Sun said.

Sun referred to the responses of both countries to the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic and said China "will continue to provide assistance to India within our capacity" to fight the pandemic. He also said the two sides will try to celebrate the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations in various ways despite the pandemic.

Meanwhile, the Indian Army's top brass discussed security issues, including the border row with China in eastern Ladakh, where thousands of Indian and Chinese soldiers are locked in a standoff at multiple points, officials said.

Soldiers from both sides are eyeball-to-eyeball at four locations along the LAC and several rounds of talks between local military commanders have failed to break the deadlock.

The situation in eastern Ladakh was

discussed in detail at the three-day army commanders' conference that began on Wednesday. "The apex level leadership of Indian Army will brainstorm on current emerging security and administrative challenges and chart the future course for the army," an army spokesperson said on Tuesday.

Trump's offer to mediate came against the backdrop of steadily rising hostility and antipathy towards China in the US over the Covid-19 outbreak, which followed months of differences over trade and mounting irritation over alleged theft of intellectual property.

People closely involved with India-US discussions said Trump's tweet conformed to continuing hardening of his antipathy for China, driven by powerful hawks in his administration.

"It's a move to poke the Chinese, surely, much like a class teacher calling two squabbling students," said a person familiar with these matters on condition of anonymity. "China believes it belongs to a more senior class, the argument goes, and will not take kindly to being monitored with India by a higher authority."

India is likely to reject Trump's offer, as it has rejected all third-party mediation in any of its international disputes as a matter of policy, which has bipartisan endorsement from all political parties.

Trump and his Republican allies have attacked China relentlessly over the Covid-19 outbreak in a bid to hold it responsible for its spread in the US. Trump has also called for an independent investigation into the origin of the outbreak and American officials have suggested the virus might have leaked from a virology lab in Wuhan.

About two-thirds of Americans — 66% — have an unfavourable view of China, according to a study conducted by Pew Research Center in March. "This is the most negative rating for the country since the Center began asking the question in 2005 and is up nearly 20 percentage points since the start of the Trump administration (January 2017)," the research body said.

## Bengaluru city school hosts unique drive-thru graduation

**Bengaluru:** The city's first drive-thru graduation ceremony was held for the 'Class of 2020' by the Canadian International on Saturday.

The unique 'Graduation on Wheels' had almost 40 students who completed their grade 12 drive in their cars in a spectacular cavalcade. They would halt only to be handed their diplomas by Dr Ted Mockrish, Head of School and Shweta Sastri, Managing Director, Canadian International School while staying safe inside their cars. Students donned their traditional caps and gowns, received their

Diplomas, and bid farewell to their teachers and the school while safely inside their cars and socially distanced.

The batch of 67 students, who are now in different parts of the globe, also had a digital Graduation ceremony a week earlier. Students, parents, teachers, and other CIS community members joined the virtual ceremony to watch and celebrate the digital event from all over the world. The school presented awards to talented students in recognition of their academic achievements and the students too shared their experiences and paid tribute to their mentors.



Several of the graduating students this year have been accepted in diverse programmes that include Psychology, Business Management, Liberal Arts, Medicine, Law, Economics, Neuroscience, Engineering (Biomedical, Mechanical, Computer Science), Music, Environmental Sciences, Early Childhood Studies,

Physics, Visual Arts and Natural Sciences etc.

They have been accepted in global universities like Penn State University, University of Toronto, University of British Columbia, University of Edinburgh, Kings College London, University of Illinois Urbana Champaign, Hong Kong University of Science & technology, University of Waterloo, University of Liverpool, Royal College of Surgeons Ireland among others.

This year, the overall scholarships received were worth USD 3.5 million. This is an additional USD 1 million from last year.

# 'Corona Expresses' behind West Bengal's Covid-19 spike: CM Mamata Banerjee

**Kolkata:** West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee has blamed the railways' "unhealthy and inhuman" manner of running "Corona Expresses" for the sudden rise in the state's Covid numbers, while laying out a detailed blueprint for a revival of the economy.

Banerjee accused the railways of flouting social distancing norms and criticised its practice of sending migrant workers home in "cramped train compartments, often without food or water", in the Shramik Specials. At the same time, she spelt out the post-lockdown roadmap for Bengal: public and private offices, places of worship and shops can all open with restrictions in a phased manner, but educational institutions will remain shut till June-end. She also eased the 20-passengers-only restriction on private buses. The maximum number of passengers, for each bus, is its seating capacity. No one would be allowed to stand, the CM specified.

The chief minister took particular exception to the manner in which, she felt, social distancing laws were being disregarded on the trains. "Two to three people are having to share a seat, when it is the state government which is paying for passengers on 235 trains," she said. "Tell me why the railways is not maintaining social distancing. The law should be the same for all — one nation, one system. These trains are spreading terror among citizens. Villagers are saying, 'Corona Express is coming, bhaag jao!'"

Banerjee drew from her experience as railway minister (she held the post twice) to lend weight to her criticism. "When I was the railway minister, I increased the number of bogies on each train to 25," she said. "I know that the railways has a huge number of bogies, which is why it can run special trains during festivals. The railways could have run more trains instead, allotting a berth per passenger. They could have given them food and water," she added, saying the "unhealthy and inhuman" conditions in which

migrants were being sent to the state had caused the Covid uptick.

In her attempt to balance life and livelihood, Banerjee said Bengal would allow shops to open, hawkers to set up stalls and tea gardens and jute mills to start operating in full swing from June 1. From June 8, government and private offices were free to reopen, but with restrictions. State government offices, she clarified later, would operate with 70% workforce (up from 50%), while in the private sector, she left it to the managements to "decide on workforce capacity and act accordingly". She urged everyone in the private sector to stay safe and "work indoors as much as possible".

"Employers with offices in containment zones have to work out an entry and exit plan with the police before opening offices," she said. Educational institutions — schools, colleges, universities — and ICDS centres will, however, remain closed all of June.

She also allowed religious places to open, with restrictions on the number of people that can congregate there. "Why should we shut the doors of the places of worship? I would thus appeal mandir, masjid, girja to open. We will allow 10 people to go there at a time. No namaz will be allowed on the streets outside mosques. Committees in charge of the places of worship should keep sanitisers for devotees' use. Religious gatherings, such as performing yajnas and festivals, will not be allowed. Committees should keep volunteers to keep tabs on devotees," the CM said.

She was, however, non-committal over the restoration of local train services, saying she "left it to the Centre" to



take the call. "I fear the railways can't enforce social distancing on local trains carrying thousands at a time," she reminded the public. "We have also started running public transport — public and private buses, cabs and autorickshaws, but with restrictions," Mamata said, easing restrictions on private buses. "But standing won't be allowed," she reminded.

Aware of the Covid-19 surge in the state, Banerjee urged people to wear masks outside their homes and maintain at least a six-to-eight-foot distance with others at public places. "We have contained the virus that had spread in a Belgachhia slum. Now, it is prevalent in buildings. I fear this is due to social mixing. I suggest residents ask delivery boys to keep food parcels at designated places on the ground floor. Flat inmates can do down and collect the parcel. Keep the parcel for six hours before you take the food. I believe this will help contain the virus," she said.

## Jayalalithaa's nephew, niece entitled to her assets: Madras HC

Ending the uncertainty over inheritance of vast properties left behind by former Chief Minister Jayalalithaa, the Madras High Court has declared her nephew J. Deepak and niece J. Deepa as Class II legal heirs entitled to all the properties left behind by their aunt.

The then AIADMK leader, who faced a disproportionate assets case, died intestate on December 5, 2016. The court made it clear that the State government could not acquire any of the properties without issuing notice to the legal heirs and paying them adequate compensation.

Justices N. Kirubakaran and Abdul Quddose allowed an application filed by Deepak and granted a Letter of Administration in favour of him and his sister. They also recorded the siblings' undertaking that a few properties, to be selected as per their discretion, would be allotted to create a public trust named after Jayalalithaa for welfare activities. Such a trust should be created within eight weeks of the date of receipt of the judgment, the judges ordered.

They rejected another case filed by AIADMK functionaries K. Pugazhenthii and P. Janakiraman for appointing them as administrators of the properties left behind by their departed leader. The Bench agreed with advocate SL Sudarsanam, representing Deepak, that rank



outsiders could not be given Letters of Administration.

Authoring the verdict, Justice Kirubakaran advised the government to give up its decision to acquire Veda Nilayam, Jayalalithaa's bungalow at Poes Garden in Chennai, and convert it into a memorial. Since the bungalow, spread over 10 grounds in the posh locality, was reported to be worth over Rs100 crore, the judge felt it to

be a waste of public money.

Recently the State promulgated an ordinance to take over the bungalow temporarily. "Instead of acquiring the said property and paying a heavy compensation, the said amount could be utilised for development purposes... When there are so many essential amenities which are yet to be provided by the welfare state, public money cannot be wasted on memorials," the court said.

It cautioned that if Jayalalithaa's residence was converted into a memorial, every other party that would come to power in the State might use public money to convert the residences of their leaders into memorials. On the other hand, if the government persisted with its plan to acquire the Poes Garden bungalow by burning a hole in the exchequer, either the entire property or at least a part of it could be used as the official residence-cum-home office of the Chief Minister and the rest could be converted into a memorial, the court said.

The judges directed the government to provide round-the-clock security to Deepak and Deepa. Ordering that the siblings bear the cost of the security, the Bench said any one of their aunt's properties could be liquidated to pay the cost.

## Kannada actor Chiranjeevi Sarja passes away

Well-known Sandalwood actor Chiranjeevi Sarja has passed away. The actor collapsed while speaking to his father on phone around 1.10 pm on Sunday. He was immediately rushed to Apollo Hospital in Jayanagar. Doctors declared him dead on arrival.



According to hospital sources, Chiranjeevi Sarja was talking to his father at 1.10 pm. He was sweating and collapsed. It is around the same time they left the house. At 2.20 pm he reached Apollo Hospital in Jayanagar but died on the way. The cause of death seems cardiac. But the family has not requested for an autopsy. We have handed over the body to the police.

His throat swabs have been sent to laboratory for a report, according to sources.

Last rites were conducted at the farmhouse of his grandfather Shakti Prasad at Jakkenahalli in Madhugiri taluk in Tumakuru district on Monday. Due to COVID-19 guidelines, only a few people, including his family members, artistes from the Kannada film industry and some Jakkenahalli residents will be permitted to be present, according to the family sources.

Shakti Prasad's family has a house and farmhouse at the village. The family constructed Ahobala Lakshminarasimha Swamy temple at Jakkenahalli. The family members attend the Brahma Rathotsava at the temple every year without fail.

Chief Minister has BS Yediyurappa condoled the actor's death saying that the Kannada film industry has lost a good actor. "He was a shining star in the galaxy of artistes. It's disappointing that he died at a young age," former chief minister HD Kumaraswamy tweeted.

The eldest son of Ammaji and Vijay Kumar, Chiranjeevi Sarja, was born on October 17, 1980. The nephew of multilingual South Indian actor, Arjun Sarja, he had married Meghana Raj, the daughter of Prameela Joshai and Sundar Raj on May 2, 2018.

He began his career in the Sandalwood with Vayuputra in 2009. Shivarjuna, released days before the lockdown was imposed, is his last film. He had signed for four films which are under shooting currently.

He acted in about 22 films, including Kempe Gowda, Gandedhe, Dandam Dashagunam, Chiru, Amma-I Love, Khaki, Aadyaa.

## Is Dulquer Salman still making money from crime based movie?

Dulquer Salman's films are a favourite of many. It is as if he is now making a large sum of money from his 'Kurup' cinema. How much is that money?

Dulquer Salman has already made a name for himself. He has acted in number of films and has produced quite a few. 'Kurup' is one of the most awaited films of the actor. The film is based on the biography of a famous man: Sukumar Kurup. Malayalam films have a special place in Indian cinema as they are very realistic. It is rumored that Rs 35 crore is being spent on 'Kurup'. This is a huge amount and the film is getting ready at Dulquer Salman Production House.

The shooting took place in Kerala, Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Dubai, Mangalore and Mysore for six months. All of the post



production work is over. The film would have been released on Eid if there wasn't Covid lock down.

## Shah Rukh Khan Foundation to adopt toddler trying to wake up dead mom

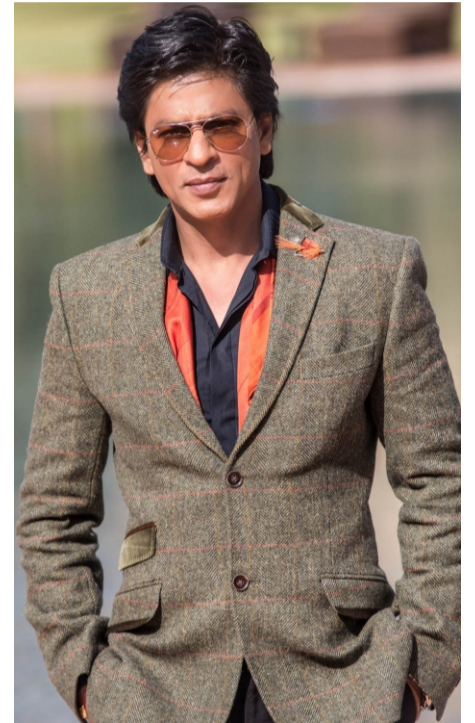
Bollywood star Shah Rukh Khan has announced that the baby whose video trying to wake up his dead mother at the Muzaffarpur railway station in Bihar had gone viral will adopted by his Meer Foundation. The child will be taken care of by the foundation hereafter.

The heart wrenching scene in the video that emerged on internet last week triggered a widespread shock and outrage. The government came under fire for its failure to handle migrant crisis arising from Coronavirus lockdown.

While the government has started special trains to get the stranded people home, people complain of lack of coordination forcing many to take other more daunting means to find their way to their destination.

In a message posted on Twitter, the King Khan said they pray the child finds strength to deal with "the most unfortunate loss of a parent". He said he knows how it feels and his support and love are with the child.

The 54-year-old actor said with the help of people at the Meer Foundation he will be able to trace the baby from the viral video. The foundation thanked the people for helping them trace the unfortunate child. "Meer Foundation is thankful to all those who helped us reach this child, whose heart wrenching video of trying to wake his mother disturbed



all. We are now supporting him, and he is under his grandfather's care."

In 2013, Khan had started the foundation with an aim to help empower and rehabilitate the women including acid attack survivors.

Amidst the Covid crisis, the foundation has been running initiatives to help the migrant labourers, low income people and frontline workers. They run a donation drive to provide PPE kits to the health workers.

The foundation also intervened to help the victims of Cyclone Amphan in West Bengal.

## Has 'KGF Chapter 2' climax story leaked?

The Rocking Star has been raging over the internet for a while. It is noteworthy that it is related to the climax of KGF Chapter 2.

The film 'Bahubali' in Telugu is similar to 'KGF' in Kannada. That is, both these films use half the story in part 1 and the other in the second. Those who have already watched 'KGF: Chapter 1' are awaiting 'Chapter 2'.

The audience has seen Raja Krishnappa Bhairaya alias 'Rocky Bhai' as don in the part one. But how will his end be? The heated debate has begun about what the 'KGF: Chapter 2' climax looks like. There has also



been talk of a climax story leak. The shocking news is that the Chapter 2 will end with the death of the hero.

However, rumors are rife about the climax. What could be the reason for that? Why do some people think that cinema will end with the death of the hero?



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