Day after Modi fulfils Trump’s ‘request’ for 2.9 crore doses of hydroxychloroquine

MUMBAI FIRM ALL SET TO MEET GLOBAL DEMAND FOR HCQ

IPCA Labs, India’s largest manufacturer of the drug, says it can easily meet the country’s - and the world’s - requirements but needs some time to step up production

Ajit Kumar Jain, joint managing director of IPCA Labs, which has a 60% share of the market for HCQ in India

The BMC on Wednesday allowed the dialysis centre attached to Millat Hospital at Jogeshwari to reopen following Mumbai Mirror's report on the plight of over 250 patients of renal failure registered with it.

The hospital, which was shut down on Monday after two of the patients who underwent regular dialysis sessions at the centre tested positive for Covid-19, will remain closed.

However, it was a case of too little too late for Najeer Shaikh, a 38-year-old vegetable vendor who died on Wednesday after missing his dialysis session scheduled for Monday.

His brother-in-law Adam Khan said the family tried to get his dialysis done at least half-a-dozen centres, but were turned away at every place. “At every centre we were told...

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 »

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 »
Hinduja, the younger daughter of industrialist Ashok Hinduja, lives in New York but is currently at her Mumbai home. Earlier this week, she hosted a digital session with global thought leader and wellness advocate Poonacha Machaiah. Better known as Warrior Monk, Poonacha has co-founded a wellbeing platform along with internationally renowned physician and author Deepak Chopra. On Tuesday, at the request of Satya, Poonacha engaged with her social media followers (pro bono, of course) and shared an all-immersive cosmic sound energy session. The Hindujas from across the world, including London, UAE, Switzerland and the US were logged in as were thousands of other solace seekers.
With three patients and a nurse getting infected by coronavirus, Mulund’s Spandan Hospital has become the latest hospital in the city to shut down temporarily.

The first case at a private hospital was that of a Ghatkopar woman who had been admitted there. Now, 65 doctors, nurses and other staff at the hospital have been put in quarantine and their samples have been sent for testing.

With almost the entire staff in quarantine, the 30-bed hospital has shut down its OPD and there are no new admissions, BMC officials said.

The BMC has already marked Wockhardt Hospital as a containment zone if there are more positive cases.

According to BMC officials, a senior citizen from Ghatkopar was detected to be Covid-19 positive at Spandan Hospital, from where she was moved to a private hospital in Powai, where she died. Days later, another 80-year-old Badlapur woman was infected by coronavirus at the hospital and she also succumbed. Meanwhile a nurse of the hospital tested positive too.

On Wednesday, another patient who was at Spandan Hospital but was moved to another private hospital in Mulund tested positive.

“We have taken samples of 65 doctors, nurses and staffers at Spandan Hospital. All of them are in quarantine and so the hospital is not taking any new patients. But the hospital is shut down at the moment,” said Kishore Gandhi, Assistant Municipal Commissioner, T Ward. Deputy Municipal Commissioner Vijay Balamwar said that the BMC will take a call on putting the hospital in a containment zone if there are more positive cases.

BMC officials said that the patient who tested positive on Wednesday was moved to another hospital when Spandan Hospital shut down. “Doctors and nurses at Spandan Hospital didn’t have PPEs and other protective gear while handing Covid-19 patients. They may have been exposed to the infection and one nurse tested positive. But the other hospital where this patient was moved was prepared to deal with Covid-19 patients. We are assessing the risk there too,” Gandhi said.

So far, 10 Covid-19 cases have been reported from Mulund, which has large residential pockets. Based on the index cases, 118 high-risk patients have been identified, said local BJP MLA Mihir Kotecha. “The last three positive cases were people who were already marked as high risk. The BMC is doing a good job and we are cooperating with them in contact tracing and tracking. We have asked people to maintain strict lockdown. If they do that, the spread of the virus in Mulund will not happen,” Spandan Hospital management said that no new staff members have tested positive. “Only 1 nurse had tested positive. All the other staff have tested negative. All the staff members were quarantined. Some of them have completed their quarantine. We have stopped new admissions and the hospital is shut for now,” said Dr Shashi Adul, head of hospital administration at Spandan Hospital.

Bhatia Hospital in Tardeo will not accept any new admissions after three patients tested positive for Covid-19. The OPD has also been shut.

Three doctors have tested positive, including a man who had earlier tested negative at Wockhardt.

Bhatia Hospital is one of the city’s designated Covid-19 treatment centres. On Wednesday, the BMC asked the hospital not to admit any new patients.

Hospital authorities said that at the time of admission, Covid-19 protocol was strictly adhered to. As a precautionary measure, the BMC officials have taken the swab of around 70 staff at Bhatia hospital. The test results of the staff are still awaited.

As a protocol, the hospital has informed the civic body. All the staff who came in touch with the patient will be tested. All 70 staff have been sent for quarantine. Their reports are awaited.

Healthcare workers are at high risk of contracting the novel coronavirus. Earlier 52 staff from Wockhardt and 15 from Jaslok hospital have tested positive and the BMC has declared both hospitals as containment zones. Both the hospitals are shut now.

As he had a negative report initially, the doctors, nurses and other para medics were treating this case as non-Covid patient, so they were not using PPE,” said a source from the hospital.

A protocol, the hospital has informed the civic body. All the staff who came in touch with the patient will be tested. All 70 staff have been sent for quarantine. Their reports are awaited.

Three patients have tested positive, including a man who had earlier tested negative at Wockhardt.

Admissions restricted at Kharjetaa after patient tests +ve

As a protocol, the hospital has informed the civic body. All the staff who came in touch with the patient will be tested. All 70 staff have been sent for quarantine. Their reports are awaited.

Healthcare workers are at high risk of contracting the novel coronavirus. Earlier 52 staff from Wockhardt and 15 from Jaslok hospital have tested positive and the BMC has declared both hospitals as containment zones. Both the hospitals are shut now.

“Healthcare workers are at high risk of contracting the novel coronavirus. Earlier 52 staff from Wockhardt and 15 from Jaslok hospital have tested positive and the BMC has declared both hospitals as containment zones. Both the hospitals are shut now.”
that only registered patients were allowed. He began experiencing difficulty in breathing on Wednesday morning and died on his way to Millat Hospital,” he said. Sheikh is survived by a wife and five children, including a two-month-old baby.

Khan welcomed the BMC’s decision to reopen the dialysis centre and said he hoped no more lives will be lost. “I understand Millat Hospital’s limitations. But the civic authorities must take into account how critical dialysis for a patient of renal failure is,” he said.

On Monday, BMC begun collecting swab samples of every patient arriving for dialysis at the centre. Sheikh too had undergone a Covid-19 test on Tuesday because several dialysis centres had begun turning away patients from Millat Hospital fearing they could be carrying the virus. He tested negative.

Assistant Municipal Commissioner, K-west ward, Vishwas Moto, said Millat Hospital’s dialysis facility has been allowed to resume operations on humanitarian grounds. “It would be catastrophic to deny such a large number of patients their regular dialysis. What happened was just unfortunate – the BMC had no option but to shut down the hospital after two patients tested positive,” said another official who did not wish to be identified.

The Millat Nagar Hospital dialysis centre is one of the biggest in the city with 48 machines and it caters mainly to patients from economically poor background. Moto said the hospital has been asked to comply with all precautionary measures. The hospital was sanitised after assistant health officer visited the site on Wednesday morning.

Broadcasters’ outfit warns against suspending govt TV advertisements

The Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF) on Wednesday issued a statement cautioning against the suspension of government television advertisements. The IBF’s statement follows Congress President Sonia Gandhi’s letter to the government recommending the suspension of all state government and PSU advertisements for two years. She had listed the suspension among suggestions to help the government reduce the economic impact of the lockdown.

The group warned that such a decision could lead to the end of the industry. “In these testing times, any decision by the government to curtail budgetary allocation to advertisements carried out by various channels in lieu of government advertising will sound the death knell for the sector,” the IBF statement said while adding that regional channels will be particularly affected. The IBF stressed the sector’s dependence on government advertisements. “With the closure of cinemas, the complete cessation of production of films and television shows, cancellations of live sporting events and scheduled advertisements, the Indian media and entertainment sector is already facing the brunt of the slowdown. Advertisement bookings have nosedived by 50%,” it said.

It said that many government advertisements relate to social messages concerning health, education, etc and that television still remains the primary mode of disseminating these messages to the citizens. “Stopping these ads is not in public interest,” the statement said.

BMC seals off Worli Naka and BBD Chawl

Three new cases reported from chawl; G-South Ward cases rise to 133

The BMC on Wednesday sealed off Worli Naka and Worli BBD Chawl after three Covid-19 cases were reported from the chawl and the total number of cases in the G-South Ward rose to 133.

Neighbouring areas like Worli Koliwada, Jijamata Nagar, Janata Colony, Adarsh Nagar have already been declared containment zones and completely sealed off. With the addition of Worli Naka and Worli BBD Chawl, the area is now one of the city’s biggest containment zones, home to around two lakh people.

The BMC also acquired the dome at NSCI in Worli where high-risk contacts will be put in quarantine. BMC officials said 500 beds will be set up at the dome and high-risk contacts of Covid-19 patients will be brought here.

The BMC has marked 17 locations as containment zones across the ward. A total of over 400 samples have been collected. Asymptomatic positive patients have been moved to institutional isolation centres set up by the BMC. Of the total samples tested, 133 have tested positive.

At Worli Koliwada, which emerged as a coronavirus hotspot, the BMC has surveyed 14,000 homes covering 40,000 individuals. The containment zones of Worli BBD Chawl, Worli Naka, Worli Koliwada, Janata Colony and Adarsh Nagar are all linked to one another.

“We are carrying out a detailed medical survey of all residents where we have index cases. The number of cases has risen because we are carrying out an exhaustive contact tracing exercise. From dense pockets like Worli Koliwada, we have shifted 135 high-risk contacts to institutional quarantine at Podar Hospital. We have also acquired Koli Bhavan where 70 people can be quarantined,” said Sharad Ughade, assistant municipal commissioner, G-South Ward. Ughade said that containment zones were working. “After sealing off the Worli Koliwada the number of cases there have dropped. We moved out all the high-risk contacts there. Even in Prabhadevi, ever since we sealed a chawl where we had found 18 cases, no new case has been reported for over a week. We urge people to follow the containment zone norms and not step out of their homes. We are providing them with all essential supplies,” Ughade said.

On Tuesday, 24 of the those put in quarantine at Podar Hospital tested positive. All of them were from Worli Koliwada and the neighbour Janata Colony. The total number of positive cases in Worli Koliwada is now 51.

Ughade said the BMC was not leaving out low-risk contacts. “We have served all low-risk contacts as well. We have sealed several buildings and set up containment zones,” he said.

“The state and BMC are working with the greatest of coordination. Micro planning and the resolve of our frontline warriors is the key,” Worli MLA and Environment Minister Aaditya Thackeray said “We have the highest number of cases, and that’s because we adopted the strategy to take this head on. We haven’t remained satisfied with index cases. Over the last three weeks, we’ve done multiple door-to-door surveys, contact tracing and tests. We’ve found people who would have never known they were infected. The idea is to get as many such cases as possible, test, isolate and contain the spread.”

The BMC has acquired the NSCI dome in Worli, where 500 beds will be set up

Jogeshwari’s shut dialysis centre reopens

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Jogeshwari’s shut dialysis centre reopens

Patients gather at the hospital for dialysis.

The BMC has acquired the NSCI dome in Worli, where 500 beds will be set up

BMC seals off Worli Naka and BBD Chawl

Three new cases reported from chawl; G-South Ward cases rise to 133

The BMC has marked 17 locations as containment zones across the ward neighbour Janata Colony. The total number of positive cases in Worli Koliwada is now 51.

Ughade said the BMC was not leaving out low-risk contacts. “We have served all low-risk contacts as well. We have sealed several buildings and set up containment zones.”

“The state and BMC are working with the greatest of coordination. Micro planning and the resolve of our frontline warriors is the key,” Worli MLA and Environment Minister Aaditya Thackeray said “We have the highest number of cases, and that’s because we adopted the strategy to take this head on. We haven’t remained satisfied with index cases. Over the last three weeks, we’ve done multiple door-to-door surveys, contact tracing and tests. We’ve found people who would have never known they were infected. The idea is to get as many such cases as possible, test, isolate and contain the spread.”

The BMC has acquired the NSCI dome in Worli, where 500 beds will be set up

BMC seals off Worli Naka and BBD Chawl

Three new cases reported from chawl; G-South Ward cases rise to 133

The BMC has marked 17 locations as containment zones across the ward neighbour Janata Colony. The total number of positive cases in Worli Koliwada is now 51.

Ughade said the BMC was not leaving out low-risk contacts. “We have served all low-risk contacts as well. We have sealed several buildings and set up containment zones.”

“The state and BMC are working with the greatest of coordination. Micro planning and the resolve of our frontline warriors is the key,” Worli MLA and Environment Minister Aaditya Thackeray said “We have the highest number of cases, and that’s because we adopted the strategy to take this head on. We haven’t remained satisfied with index cases. Over the last three weeks, we’ve done multiple door-to-door surveys, contact tracing and tests. We’ve found people who would have never known they were infected. The idea is to get as many such cases as possible, test, isolate and contain the spread.”

The BMC has acquired the NSCI dome in Worli, where 500 beds will be set up

BMC seals off Worli Naka and BBD Chawl

Three new cases reported from chawl; G-South Ward cases rise to 133

The BMC has marked 17 locations as containment zones across the ward neighbour Janata Colony. The total number of positive cases in Worli Koliwada is now 51.

Ughade said the BMC was not leaving out low-risk contacts. “We have served all low-risk contacts as well. We have sealed several buildings and set up containment zones.”

“The state and BMC are working with the greatest of coordination. Micro planning and the resolve of our frontline warriors is the key,” Worli MLA and Environment Minister Aaditya Thackeray said “We have the highest number of cases, and that’s because we adopted the strategy to take this head on. We haven’t remained satisfied with index cases. Over the last three weeks, we’ve done multiple door-to-door surveys, contact tracing and tests. We’ve found people who would have never known they were infected. The idea is to get as many such cases as possible, test, isolate and contain the spread.”
BMC makes masks mandatory in Mumbai

3-ply mask or cloth masks made at home are allowed; those flouting the rule will be booked for disobedience and may even face arrest

Chaitanya.Marpakwar
@timesgroup.com

With the city recording over 100 new cases per day for two consecutive days, the BMC on Wednesday made wearing masks compulsory for all who step outside their homes. The civic body clarified that handkerchiefs and scarfs would not be allowed.

Those not wearing masks can be booked under Section 188 (for disobedience) of the Indian Penal Code and may even be arrested. An order issued by Municipal Commissioner Praveen Pardeshi states that those stepping out of home must wear either a 3-ply mask or cloth mask made at home. The order also applies to those who are commuting to work in a personal or company vehicle.

Pardeshi said that such measures need to be strictly enforced as studies have revealed that wearing face masks can substantially reduce the spread of coronavirus.

“The masks can be the regular three-layer masks or cloth masks, available with pharmacies or home-made, which can be washed and disinfected for reuse,” the order signed by Pardeshi stated.

People wearing scarfs and handkerchiefs as masks tend to take them off once they reach their destination. There is also the risk of these strips of cloth falling off from the face since they are not properly fastened. So, BMC officials made wearing proper masks mandatory.

BMC officials said that the civic body had taken cues from Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray. Earlier in the day, CM Thackeray had asked people to start using masks if coming out to buy essentials and said that the people will have to use them for some period to be safe from infection. Soon after Pardeshi’s order, Thane Police Commissioner Vivek Phansalkar also issued similar orders in the city, which falls under the Mumbai Metropolitan Region.

Even CM Uddhav Thackeray, while regretting the inconvenience caused by the lockdown, said that people should wear masks when they venture out of homes. He also appealed to people to ensure that those in the high-risk category with ailments like heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes, to maintain dietary restrictions.

With 106 new cases being recorded on Wednesday, the total number of Covid-19 cases in the city went up to 696.

Thepeak will come in another 3 to 4 days

Is the BMC equipped to deal with a rise in cases?

We have requisitioned all the lodges so that they can be used for quarantine. We have around 10,000 people in quarantine. We expect this number to triple.

When are the cases expected to peak?

We are calculating 300 cases per million. Hopefully, because of the lockdown, the peak will come in another three to four days.

BMC officials claim they do not have enough personal protective equipment...

We initially had shortage of PPE. Now the Jindals and Reliance are starting production of PPE. They have promised us one lakh pieces per week. If that happens, we will cover the shortage. At present, we have just 20,000 PPE and we are rationing them.

People are complaining there are not enough food and essentials in the isolation facilities. That’s not true. We are focussing on giving individual toilets, independent linen and disposable cutlery so that infection does not spread.

Was the BMC caught off guard?

It is unfair to say that the BMC was caught napping. The laboratory at Kasturba Hospital is not funded by the central or state government. We have improved the testing capacity at Kasturba to 300 tests per day. The rest of Maharashtra is not testing as much as we are – that too in a municipal laboratory. All the people coming for testing from Thane, Kalyan, Panvel and MMR are being paid for by taxpayers of Mumbai for facilities in Kasturba and KEM Hospital.

You visited Dharavi. What was your impression of the situation there?

The people were very cooperative. They all agreed to stay in and not go out. We have attached a new hospital called Sai Hospital so that people who are positive can stay there. As long as we can confine the problem to Baliga Nagar, the larger area will remain unaffected.

Many people from MMR are coming to BMC-run facilities. Should municipal corporations in MMR and the state public health department have done something earlier?

We are trying to accommodate people from other corporations. Both the chief minister and chief secretary have given directions to corporations of Thane, Bhivandi and Navi Mumbai to start treatment facilities.

As the collector of Latur, you played a key role in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the district following the 1993 earthquake. What lessons has the Covid-19 crisis taught you?

In Latur, I was certain there wouldn’t be a second earthquake. In the case of Covid-19, people are getting affected in large numbers. Uncertainty is high. We don’t know how to live with uncertainty.

The Supreme Court on Wednesday directed activists Anil Teltumbde and Gautam Navlakha to surrender before jail authorities in Mumbai within a week, in connection with the Bhima-Koregaon case that was transferred to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) earlier this year.

The decision comes weeks after the apex court refused to grant them anticipatory bail on March 16 and asked them to surrender within three weeks, or April 6. Teltumbde and Navlakha had moved the SC for pre-arrest bail after a Pune sessions court and the Bombay High Court rejected their applications.

Teltumbde and Navlakha are both over 65 years of age and have pre-existing medical conditions, including cardiac problems. Their lawyers Kapil Sibal and Abhishek Manu Singhvi had submitted that going to jail during the pandemic was “virtually a death sentence” and sought further extension. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta had opposed the application stating the activists were attempting to “buy time” and they were facing serious charges.

The order, passed by justices Anuj Mihra and Indira Banerjee, stated that the activists were expected to surrender in accordance with the court’s previous order denying them anticipatory bail. “It would have been appropriate for the accused to surrender as the courts (in Mumbai) are not totally closed,” the court stated.

The apex court, however, granted them a week’s time to surrender, stating, “However, since the petitioners have enjoyed protection for long, by last opportunity, we extended the time granted to surrender. We make it clear that there shall not be any further extensions.”

A lawyer associated with the case expressed doubts over the activists getting any relief from Mumbai courts during the pandemic.

Though the state has begun releasing undertrials and convicts from prison amid the coronavirus scare, the courts have refused to act on petitions filed by Shoma Sen, 62, and Varavara Rao, 80, as they have been charged under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act.

Teltumbde and Navlakha too have been charged under the same act. — MMB
Lockdown extension seems inevitable: PM

In a video conference with 15 Opposition parties, Modi also termed the current situation a ‘social emergency’

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

s the country reported an unprecedented spike of 773 fresh Covid-19 cases on Wednesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called the situation akin to a ‘social emergency’ which necessitated tough decisions. Modi appeared trying to build consensus over an extension of the nationwide lockdown during his interaction withfloor leaders of Opposition parties. After video conferences with chiefs of ministers of non-NDA states and other stakeholders, Modi Wednesday also reached out to Opposition leaders from both Houses and explained to them that the extension of the lockdown seemed inevitable.

The prime minister said that the country ‘has been forced to take tough decisions’ as it is “the main villain.” He said that several state governments, district administrations and even Panchayats were working for an extension of the lockdown. As the government looks at a longer lockdown period and will recommend work from home options in its staggered exit from the lockdown, Modi maintained that ‘in these changing circumstances the country should not take a step back but instead think about a change in its work culture and working style.’

“The priority of the government is saving each and every life,” he added. Modi pointed out that the country is facing serious economic challenges as a result of the lockdown in the wake of Covid-19. During the video conference, top officials of the government gave detailed presentations on why they think it is necessary to take the emergent challenges in dealing with the containment of the virus, implementation of relief measures, status of distribution of benefits under PM Garib Kalyan Yojana among other things.

Over 15 Opposition parties with more than five members in both Houses of Parliament were invited for the online interaction. One member from each party was given an opportunity to raise their concerns and offer feedback. Ghulam Nabi Azad and Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury (Congress), Sharad Pawar (NCP), Ram Gopal Yadav (Samajwadi Party), Satish Mohta (Bahujan Samaj Party), Chirag Paswan (Lok Janshakti Party), T R Baalu (Dravidra Munnetra Kazhagam), Sushil Kumar Bhaudal (Shiromani Akali Dal), Rajiv Ranjan Singh (Janata Dal-United), Pinaki Mishra (Biju Janata Dal) and Sanjay Raut (Shiv Sena) were some of the attendees at the virtual meet.

In addition to reiterating the Congress party’s concerns on relief measures and assistance to daily wage workers, construction workers, healthcare professionals over which the party chief Sonia Gandhi had written to the PM, Azad suggested setting up of a working committee comprising members of Opposition leaders to help with feedback on Covid-19 related issues.

Trinamool Congress MP Sudip Banerjee, who took the floor on the suspension of Member of Parliament Local Area Development (MPLAD) funds, had said that it would make a statement if two centres don’t emerge. When contacted, Kishorilal’s office refused comment.

INPUTS BY MAKARAND GADGIL

28 more Tablighi Members test positive in State

Police crack down on those making hate speeches, spreading rumours online; 35 people arrested across the state; a few social media accounts disabled

Ahishhek Sharan

The 117 new coronavirus cases reported in the state on Wednesday, 28 are related to the Tablighi Jamaat event that took place in Delhi’s Nizamuddin last month, sources said.

According to government officials, out of the 28, six are foreigners. And with more and more cases emerging from the event, the state police have also ramped up efforts to crack down on those spreading hatred and discord among communities as well as misinformation on COVID-19.

Dr Babul Raut, Superintendent of Police (Cyber), Maharashtra Police, told Mirror that ever since the implementation of the 21-day lockdown, a total of 132 cases have been registered in Maharashtra and 35 persons have been arrested on charges of spreading fake news, rumours and making hate speech on social media and other online channels. Of these, 20 were registered in the last 24 hours alone.

“A few social media accounts have also been disabled to prevent them from sending frequently-forwarded messages to multiple users. The Maharashtra Cyber Cell has also issued an advisory to WhatsApp users and administrators regarding do’s and don’ts in the current scenario,” an official told Mirror.

Visited by thousands last month, the Tablighi Jamaat’s Nizamuddin centre has turned out to be a hotspot for spread of coronavirus not only in the capital but also across the country. The Maharashtra police, along with civic and health authorities, had begun a comprehensive drive to “identify, locate and quarantine” individuals who had supposedly taken part in the congregation.

Sources told Mirror that in all, around 3,000 people whose mobile phones were active at or around Nizamuddin Markaz are being verified. Of these, 1,270 have already been located, assessed and apprised of the necessary medical protocols. At least 420 of them have confirmed that they attended the markaz.

The police have also registered 15 cases against foreigners, who attended the markaz, for flouting visa conditions. They have been booked under the Passport Act.

PM Modi interacts with Opp leaders during the video conference

The 117 new coronavirus cases reported in the state on Wednesday, 28 are related to the Tablighi Jamaat event that took place in Delhi’s Nizamuddin last month, sources said.

According to government officials, out of the 28, six are foreigners. And with more and more cases emerging from the event, the state police have also ramped up efforts to crack down on those spreading hatred and discord among communities as well as misinformation on COVID-19.

Dr Babul Raut, Superintendent of Police (Cyber), Maharashtra Police, told Mirror that ever since the implementation of the 21-day lockdown, a total of 132 cases have been registered in Maharashtra and 35 persons have been arrested on charges of spreading fake news, rumours and making hate speech on social media and other online channels. Of these, 20 were registered in the last 24 hours alone.

“A few social media accounts have also been disabled to prevent them from sending frequently-forwarded messages to multiple users. The Maharashtra Cyber Cell has also issued an advisory to WhatsApp users and administrators regarding do’s and don’ts in the current scenario,” an official told Mirror.

Visited by thousands last month, the Tablighi Jamaat’s Nizamuddin centre has turned out to be a hotspot for spread of coronavirus not only in the capital but also across the country. The Maharashtra police, along with civic and health authorities, had begun a comprehensive drive to “identify, locate and quarantine” individuals who had supposedly taken part in the congregation.

Sources told Mirror that in all, around 3,000 people whose mobile phones were active at or around Nizamuddin Markaz are being verified. Of these, 1,270 have already been located, assessed and apprised of the necessary medical protocols. At least 420 of them have confirmed that they attended the markaz.

The police have also registered 15 cases against foreigners, who attended the markaz, for flouting visa conditions. They have been booked under the Passport Act.
Wuhan reopens after 76 days of lockdown

Thousands leave for their hometowns

After 76 days in lockdown, the Chinese city at the heart of the global pandemic reopened Wednesday and tens of thousands immediately hopped on trains and planes to leave.

Yet health experts stressed it is too early to loosen restrictions that could accelerate the spread of a disease that has infiltrated every layer of society.

In Wuhan, the Chinese city of 11 million where the pandemic began, residents waved flags and the city staged a light show with skyscrapers and bridges radiating images of health workers aiding patients.

Restrictions in the city where most of China’s more than 82,000 virus cases and over 3,300 deaths were reported have been gradually eased in recent weeks as new infections recorded globally. Besides, 3,01,385 people diagnosed with virus around the world have recovered so far.

Italy, Spain, UK and France continue to be the countries facing the most fatalities, while the US has the largest number of positive cases with more than 3,83,000.

Spain, Italy and France follow the US in the number of cases, with over 1,40,000, 1,35,000 and 1,10,000, respectively.

A bench, which heard the matter via video conferencing, said that tests relating to coronavirus must be carried out in labs accredited by the National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) or any agencies approved by WHO or the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

“We issue following interim directions: (a) The tests relating to Covid-19, whether in approved government laboratories or approved private laboratories, shall be free of cost. The respondents (Centre and other authorities) shall issue necessary direction in this regard immediately. (b) Tests relating to Covid-19 must be carried out in NABL accredited labs or any agencies approved by WHO or ICMR,” the bench said.

Global toll rises to 80,000

The novel coronavirus toll across the world crossed 80,000 on Wednesday, according to the data released by Johns Hopkins University's Coronavirus Resource Centre.

A total of 82,145 people have died so far, with 1,31,375 infections recorded globally. Besides, 82,145 people have died so far, with 1,31,375 infections recorded globally.

A bench, which heard the matter via video conferencing, said that tests relating to coronavirus must be carried out in labs accredited by the National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) or any agencies approved by WHO or the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

“We issue following interim directions: (a) The tests relating to Covid-19, whether in approved government laboratories or approved private laboratories, shall be free of cost. The respondents (Centre and other authorities) shall issue necessary direction in this regard immediately. (b) Tests relating to Covid-19 must be carried out in NABL accredited labs or any agencies approved by WHO or ICMR,” the bench said.

Covid-19 tests must be free of cost: SC

The Supreme Court asks the government to issue directions immediately

It seems fake news on social media is spreading faster than the virus itself. Answers are harder than ever to come by. Now we aren’t medical experts, but we know how to get to the truth. By thoroughly researching and verifying every word before it’s actually printed. So in these uncertain times, might we ask you to wait. Before you share something you have no way of confirming. Wait until the truth in print makes its way to your doorstep.

PRINT IS PROOF.
Lockdown leads to huge pile-up of cargo at Mumbai airport

Pile-up leads to space constraints; importers, customs brokers unable to clear goods

Tweets @SatishMirror

The lockdown in Mumbai has resulted in piling up of 4,500 tonnes of cargo at Mumbai airport as importers and customs brokers have not been able to clear their goods. India shut down international passenger traffic on March 23, and all domestic passenger flights on March 24, in an attempt to restrict the spread of Covid-19. However, scheduled cargo operations and any special flights for repatriation and rescue operations were allowed to continue.

Sources said on average four to five freighters were operating daily transporting export cargo of around 200 tonnes and import cargo of around 250 tonnes. “Initially exports were very less due to restrictions on non-essential commodities and stoppage of manufacturing activity, but now the volumes are picking up in terms of pharmaceuticals, perishable and a few engineering commodities. In imports, in addition to the essential pharma cargo, we are receiving all non-essential commodities like engineering goods and electronics, resulting in huge volumes,” said an official at the Sahar air cargo complex.

Though Mumbai International Airport Limited (MIAL), which handles logistics and customs, and which is the custodian of the goods as a regulator, deployed manpower 24x7 despite the lockdown constraints, the severe transport restrictions and clamping down on movement across Maharashtra has led to a huge cargo backlog as importers are clearing their consignments at a slower pace. MIAL officials also tried to facilitate road transport by obtaining approvals from the police authorities, but despite that freight forwarders and customs brokers are reporting in very less numbers. Despite the round-the-clock clearance facilities, the pile up of non-essential cargo has led to space constraints at the airport, which has the capacity to handle around 3,000 tonnes.

Sensing that the lockdown could lead to a backlog at air cargo terminals, the Ministry of Civil Aviation issued a circular on April 1 to waive 50 per cent demurrage charges on the export-import consignments. Demurrage charges are penalties that importers have to pay to the air cargo terminal operators for delays in clearing their shipments and are charged on per kilogram basis depending on the size of the shipment. However, the import trade associations wanted the government to waive the demurrage charges by 100 per cent.

Vijay Singh Chauhan, commissioner of customs, confirmed India’s back- log, but said the scenario had improved in the last two days with importers and customs brokers coming in to clear shipments. “Customs is working 24x7 and is committed to facilitating speedy clearance of all essential and non-essential imported cargo,” he said.

State manages to earn only Rs 17,000 cr in March

MVA govt wants to modify the Charitable and Religious Trusts Act to get donations as revenue shrinks from Rs 42,000 cr in March 2019

Tweets @timesmirror3

Makarand Gadgil & Aika Dhupkar
mirrorfeedback@timesgroup.com

Desperate times call for desperate measures. With its finances severely hit by the lockdown, the state government is considering amending the Charitable and Religious Trusts Act to allow institutions to make donations to the government. Such a proposal was tabled during Tuesday’s cabinet meeting but was postponed until next meeting due to technical issues with the plan.

Just for an idea how badly the state government’s finances are affected: In March 2019, finance minister Ajit Pawar (right) has sought the Centre’s help

Maharashtra’s total revenue, which includes its own taxes, share in central taxes, grants from the central government and other sources, was Rs 42,000 crore. In March this year, it has dropped to around Rs 17,000 crore.

Last week, deputy chief minister and finance minister Ajit Pawar wrote a letter to Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman asking her to immediately release the state government’s share in GST and other taxes and grants amounting to Rs 16,654 crore. He also sought a special package of Rs 25,000 to overcome the state’s revenue shortfall.

Phone calls and text messages to Union finance secretary Abhijit Pandey remained unanswered at the time of going to press.

The state has already announced staggered payments of March salary for its employees who will get only 50 per cent of their pay for the time being. The remaining part will be paid once the cash flow improves.

The government expects to save Rs 4,500 crore on non-essential import operations. It will also buy milk worth Rs 200 crore from dairy farmers as demand from hotels, restaurants and sweet shops has completely dropped.

Makarand Gadgil & Aika Dhupkar
mirrorfeedback@timesgroup.com

Tweets @MumbaiMirror

Spice trader at wholesale market contracts virus

Market associations panic; demand strict implementation of social distancing rules and other safety measures

A spice trader at the Mumbai Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) tested positive at Saifee Hospital on Wednesday. His son is also admitted to the same hospital and his test result is awaited.

The 50-year-old patient had a shop at the Vashi-based APMC, which has five wholesale markets selling vegetables, fruit, spices and dry fruits and potatoes, onions, pulses and grains.

The family, which has been asked to self-quarantine, live in a housing society in Chunabhatti, near the railway station; three other traders live in the same society.

The patient was running a fever and his physician asked him to undergo the test on Monday; on Wednesday the results came positive.

Dr Vernon Desa, medical director at Saifee, did not confirm the development, although Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMCC) officials did, and said they were in touch with the patient and his son.

According to an official, the patient attended the cremation of one of his acquaintances on March 22, and the family suspect he may have contracted the virus from someone there.

The officials also said the patient and his son had not visited the wholesale market since March 21. But other traders suspect the man visited the shop for some bank-related work or to collect cash and is involved in 24x7 activities.

“I have requested the Mumbai APMC secretary to take full precaution and thoroughly disinfect cash, and called for an investigation,” he said.

The patient has a shop at the Ambedkar market. It is a wholesale market selling vegetables, fruit, spices and dry fruits and potatoes, onions, pulses and grains.

The five markets at APMC have a minimum capacity of 50,000 people at any given time.

The five markets at APMC have a minimum capacity of 50,000 people at any given time.

The traders are still not satisfied with the safety measures taken by the APMC administration.

“Inside the APMC nobody wears masks. Social distancing norms cannot be properly followed inside the market,” he said.

“If the infection spreads, tracing the trail is going to be difficult. Not only traders, but mathadi workers, farmers, drivers – everyone is at risk.”

In the first week of April, the government had promised to disinfect vehicles arriving at the market and put some restrictions on their movement. Before that traders were unwilling to open the market.

The marketing and agriculture commissioner held a meeting with the associations and discussed plans to keep the market open.

“The traders are still not satisfied with the safety measures taken by the APMC administration. “Inside the APMC nobody wears masks. Social distancing is impossible when it comes to unloading and loading of goods,” mathadi workers’ leader Narendra Patil said.

The APMC has around 50,000 footfall at any given time.

4,500 tonnes of cargo is lying at the airport
117 new cases in state, with 106 in Mumbai alone
Eight people, including five in Mumbai, died in Maharashtra on Wednesday

Nearly 50 per cent of the total COVID-19 positive cases in Mumbai have emerged from just four wards – G-South, E, D, K-West. Three of these wards are in south central Mumbai, while K-West ward includes Andheri and Vivek Park. The infographic released by the BMC on Wednesday showed that 282 of the 590 positive cases were detected in these wards. The G-South ward includes Hadapsar, Malvani, Worli, Lower Parel, Currey Road, Elphinstone Road and Saat Rasta. Majority of Covid-19 cases in this ward have been found in Elphinstone Road and Worli Koliwada.

Ward-wise numbers till April 7

Taloja jail requests quarantine facility for new prisoners

Jail superintendent says unchecked imprisonment could be a health hazard for around 3,200 inmates; the facility has already overshot its capacity by 1,000 inmates

T he Bombay High Court on Wednesday asked legal service authorities at the district and taluka levels in the state to step up their efforts and facilitate aid to migrant workers stuck at different locations due to the lockdown.

Justice Amjad Sajied was hearing a petition filed by Savaara Jan Andolan and Ang Mohani Khaitkari Sangarsh Samiti. The two unorganised sector unions based in Raigad and Pune have claimed that migrant workers stuck across the state, including its borders with other states, are not receiving help from the government.

“We have judges and paralegal personnel who will co-coordinate with you, but implementation is your job,” Justice Sajied said while directing the state government to file an affidavit before April 15 detailing all the steps taken.

While the State Legal Services Authority gives effect to the policies and directions of the central authority, the District Legal Services Authority and the Taluka Legal Services Committee provide free legal services in the nature of counselling and legal advice as well as free legal services in the conduct of cases before smaller courts and tribunals. Among several other endeavours these bodies undertake, the most important is providing legal aid to the underprivileged.

In a note to the court on Wednesday, senior counsel Gayatri Singh, representing the unorganised sector unions, stated that in districts like Pune, Kolhapur and Sangli, rations were being denied to migrants. She said essentials were being given only to yellow card holders in many cases. While shelters have been provided in marriage halls, she said they are very unhygienic, especially in Nandurbar, Dhule and Jalgaon. She also pointed out that no free cooking cylinders were being given under the Ujjwala Scheme in any of the districts in Maharashtra.

Singh further claimed that people are only dependent on wells, hand pumps and rivers for water in rural areas. She also said a large number of daily wage workers like APMC cart-pullers, street vendors, autostickshaw drivers and transport workers are not being provided protective gear. The unions also said that a helpline number is being circulated but it’s not working efficiently.

Assistant government pleader Bhupesh Samant told the court that they were working with five per cent staff and yet 4,871 camps have been set up for over five lakh migrant workers. He said the helpline number is common for all districts and the court has directed the state to file an affidavit and said the other issues could be looked into later, but most important right now is to provide food, shelter and medicines to those stranded.

‘Provide food, shelter and medicines to migrant workers’

Hearing a PIL by workers’ unions, Bombay HC asks state to facilitate help at the earliest

T he Bombay High court on Wednesday asked legal service authorities at the district and taluka levels in the state to step up their efforts and facilitate aid to migrant workers stuck at different locations due to the lockdown.

Justice Amjad Sajied was hearing a petition filed by Savaara Jan Andolan and Ang Mohni Khaitkari Sangarsh Samiti. The two unorganised sector unions based in Raigad and Pune have claimed that migrant workers stuck across the state, including its borders with other states, are not receiving help from the government.

“We have judges and paralegal personnel who will co-coordinate with you, but implementation is your job,” Justice Sajied said while directing the state government to file an affidavit before April 15 detailing all the steps taken.

While the State Legal Services Authority gives effect to the policies and directions of the central authority, the District Legal Services Authority and the Taluka Legal Services Committee provide free legal services in the nature of counselling and legal advice as well as free legal services in the conduct of cases before smaller courts and tribunals. Among several other endeavours these bodies undertake, the most important is providing legal aid to the underprivileged.

In a note to the court on Wednesday, senior counsel Gayatri Singh, representing the unorganised sector unions, stated that in districts like Pune, Kolhapur and Sangli, rations were being denied to migrants. She said essentials were being given only to yellow card holders in many cases. While shelters have been provided in marriage halls, she said they are very unhygienic, especially in Nandurbar, Dhule and Jalgaon. She also pointed out that no free cooking cylinders were being given under the Ujjwala Scheme in any of the districts in Maharashtra.

Singh further claimed that people are only dependent on wells, hand pumps and rivers for water in rural areas. She also said a large number of daily wage workers like APMC cart-pullers, street vendors, autostickshaw drivers and transport workers are not being provided protective gear. The unions also said that a helpline number is being circulated but it’s not working efficiently.

Assistant government pleader Bhupesh Samant told the court that they were working with five per cent staff and yet 4,871 camps have been set up for over five lakh migrant workers. He said the helpline number is common for all districts and the court has directed the state to file an affidavit and said the other issues could be looked into later, but most important right now is to provide food, shelter and medicines to those stranded.

Safe transit for prisoners on bail

While hearing the suo motu PIL to decongest prisons, the Supreme Court on Tuesday ordered that all the states, through the Director General of Police, should provide safe transit to prisoners released on bail. The court further directed that prisoners be given the option of staying in temporary shelter homes during the lockdown. In its edition on Wednesday, Mirror had highlighted the problems they face in reaching home after being granted bail.

Recently, several undertrials were sent to Taloja Jail in a bid to decongest other over-crowded prisons.
Seva Kitchens run by him in several cities separately serve meals to 3,000 people daily.

More than 300 families of brick kiln workers near Nagpur are also being provided food packets during the lockdown by Khushroo Poacha (Inset).

At present, these are being distributed in the slum areas to daily wage labourers, who are struck in the lockdown, the homeless and other people who do not have a source of income. More than 300 families of brick kiln workers in Nagpur are also being provided food packets since the lockdown began. Five-hundred-and-fifty such kits were distributed in the village in Yavatmal district to the widows of the farmers who committed suicide.

“Luckily, I had the material ready. Depending on the situation, we shall send more aid if needed,” he said.

For the ongoing pandemic relief work, Poacha deploys help requests through a series of WhatsApp groups, and his websites, www.sevakitchen.org and www.indianblooddonors.com and apps, which in turn are supported by www.donatekart.com which assist him to source all his needs. “Requests go through www.donatekart.com and donors make their contributions which are routed to my supplier from where I pick up the stuff required. There is no monetary involvement at any stage,” he said.

“During lockdown, my volunteers reach people with food packets, cooked meals or relief kits for the Neki Ka Pitara (Fridge of Kindness) to help the poor. Under this initiative, a fridge is kept in a hospital and items such as fruits, milk, lassi bread and eggs are kept inside to be used by the patients. When the stock gets over, the group associated with that area refills the fridge from the pitara. Presently, there are 20 such pitaraas in several cities of the country, including one each in Signal Shala, Thane and Shree Satya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital, Navi Mumbai. Poacha gives credit of all this good work to the people who donate for the noble cause and who have faith in him. His family which supports him all the time is his strength.

“He is silent warrior in the fight against Co-vid-19. A real hero. A big salute to such heroes,” said Shivaji Sutar, chief public relations officer of Central Railway.

In other news
CBSE introduces 3 new subjects from new academic year

CBSE has made a decision to introduce 3 new subjects for students starting from the academic year 2020-21. These new subjects include Design Thinking, Physical Activity Trainer and Artificial Intelligence. This is done in response to the changing needs of the students and the industry.

The Central Board of Secondary (CBSE) on Wednesday announced the introduction of three new subjects, namely Design Thinking, Physical Activity Trainer and Artificial Intelligence (Al) at class XI from the next academic year 2020-21. With much of the school pedagogy now shifting away from textbook-based and rote learning format to skill-based courses, the board’s move is aimed at making the new generation more creative, innovative and physically fit. The New Education Policy 2019 has recommended “no hard separation” among curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular subjects.

“The Indian system is entrenched in ready-made or rote learning and that’s why we have less innovation. This is an initiative to introduce problem solving, foster innovativeness from the beginning. We won’t just teach 2+2 is 4 and the child will repeat it, but we will make him/her think why is it not three or five. It about changing the way you think about learning,” Deepshikha Srivastava, principal of Rajhans Vidyalaya, Andheri, told Mirror.
33-year-old woman loses Rs 60,000 to wine deliverer

Under treatment for cancer, she says she needed alcohol to get sound sleep; man persuaded her to pass on credit card details and OTPs

Gamdevi last weekend. She told the police that pain wracks her body for long stretches of the day and to have a restful sleep, she drinks some wine just before going to bed. With liquor retail stores shut during the lockdown, she reached out to some friends in the hope of getting some wine delivered at home.

A friend passed on the phone number of a man she claimed would be able to help her. “On the night of April 4, the 33-year-old called up the man, who refused to reveal his identity,” said a police officer. The man agreed to make a home delivery but demanded payment first.

He induced her to share details of her credit card and then an OTP that the bank sent to her phone to process the transaction. The police complaint did not elaborate on how he managed to convince her to part with her credit card details and how much payment amount they had agreed to.

“As soon as she shared the OTP with him, she got an SMS alert that Rs 19,000 was charged to her credit card,” said the officer.

When she confronted the man over another call, he blamed a glitch and asked her to share a second OTP in order to process a refund. After she complied, he received another alert that Rs 41,000 was charged to her credit card. He again blamed a glitch and asked her to share a third OTP. By this time she realised that she had been cheated and told her husband about it. The couple approached the police the next day.

The Gamdevi police registered an FIR under sections 420 (cheating), 406 (criminal breach of trust) and sections 66C (identity theft) and 66D (cheating by impersonation) of the IT Act. The officer said they are probing how the woman’s friend came upon the fraudster’s number.

A 33-year-old blood cancer patient was duped of Rs 60,000 after she unwittingly gave away her credit card details and one-time passwords (OTPs) to a caller who promised to deliver wine to her home in Gamdevi last weekend.

The woman has been undergoing cancer treatment for the last 18 months. She told the police that pain wracks her body for long stretches of the day and to have a restful sleep, she drinks some wine just before going to bed.

With liquor retail stores shut during the lockdown, she reached out to some friends in the hope of getting some wine delivered at home.

A friend passed on the phone number of a man she claimed would be able to help her. “On the night of April 4, the 33-year-old called up the man, who refused to reveal his identity,” said a police officer. The man agreed to make a home delivery but demanded payment first.

He induced her to share details of her credit card and then an OTP that the bank sent to her phone to process the transaction. The police complaint did not elaborate on how he managed to convince her to part with her credit card details and how much payment amount they had agreed to.

“As soon as she shared the OTP with him, she got an SMS alert that Rs 19,000 was charged to her credit card,” said the officer.

When she confronted the man over another call, he blamed a glitch and asked her to share a second OTP in order to process a refund. After she complied, he received another alert that Rs 41,000 was charged to her credit card. He again blamed a glitch and asked her to share a third OTP. By this time she realised that she had been cheated and told her husband about it. The couple approached the police the next day.

The Gamdevi police registered an FIR under sections 420 (cheating), 406 (criminal breach of trust) and sections 66C (identity theft) and 66D (cheating by impersonation) of the IT Act. The officer said they are probing how the woman’s friend came upon the fraudster’s number.

Bikers ‘kill’ aunt to get home, cops bring her to life

Yearning to get to their families in Ratnagiri district, the two set off from Bandra, tell police personnel at checkpoints that they are trying to make it to aunt’s funeral; cops find her alive at home

The two men were caught at Bharna Naka near Khed and placed under quarantine for 14 days

A south Mumbai-based senior citizen’s attempt to buy brandy during the lockdown led him to lose Rs 27,000 to a cyber-criminal. The 65-year-old nutrition consultant told the VPMarg police that he has a respiratory ailment and consumes the alcohol to get a good night’s sleep.

He told the police that he searched for the phone number of his neighbour’s liquor shop in Google, to find out if they could deliver the alcohol as liquor stores are shut during the lockdown. The man who received the call using the Listing of Sai Wine Shop told the victim that he could deliver the brandy order to his home.

When the victim offered to pay in cash, the man insisted on being paid online. He asked the victim to share his bank account details and a one-time password (OTP) he would receive. When the victim told him that he did not receive any OTP, the fraudster asked him to make the payment via a mobile wallet app. He convinced the senior citizen to scan the QR code three times by claiming that he had not received the payment.

When the victim realised how much was debited from the account, he called the fraudster and asked him to return the extra money and to deliver the brandy. He contacted the police when he realised he had been duped.

“We have registered an FIR under relevant sections of Indian Penal Code,” a police official said.

The police official added that the delivery of liquor is currently illegal in the state and urged citizens against falling prey to such scams.

SoBo resident’s quest for brandy costs him Rs 27,000

65-yr-old nutrition consultant says he has a respiratory ailment and relies on alcohol to get a good night’s sleep

A south Mumbai-based senior citizen’s attempt to buy brandy during the lockdown led him to lose Rs 27,000 to a cyber-criminal. The 65-year-old nutrition consultant told the VPMarg police that he has a respiratory ailment and consumes the alcohol to get a good night’s sleep.

He told the police that he searched for the phone number of his neighbour’s liquor shop in Google, to find out if they could deliver the alcohol as liquor stores are shut during the lockdown. The man who received the call using the Listing of Sai Wine Shop told the victim that he could deliver the brandy order to his home.

When the victim offered to pay in cash, the man insisted on being paid online. He asked the victim to share his bank account details and a one-time password (OTP) he would receive. When the victim told him that he did not receive any OTP, the fraudster asked him to make the payment via a mobile wallet app. He convinced the senior citizen to scan the QR code three times by claiming that he had not received the payment.

When the victim realised how much was debited from the account, he called the fraudster and asked him to return the extra money and to deliver the brandy. He contacted the police when he realised he had been duped.

“We have registered an FIR under relevant sections of Indian Penal Code,” a police official said.

The police official added that the delivery of liquor is currently illegal in the state and urged citizens against falling prey to such scams.

Thieves target pan shops for tobacco products

Cigarettes, gutkha pouches are fetching high rates in black market

A fter looting liquor shops and bars, thieves have started targeting stalls selling cigarette and chewing tobacco.

Over the past week, at least three such incidents have been reported in the city. The police said that thieves sell these products at exorbitant rates in the black market. A packet of cigarettes with a printed price of Rs 160 is now being sold for up to Rs 470. Similarly, the already banned gutkha is being sold for Rs 50-60 a packet.

Police said goods worth Rs 75,000 have been stolen from a shop on Ghatkopar-Andheri link road. The complaint to the police said that thieves sell these products at exorbitant rates in the black market. A packet of cigarettes with a printed price of Rs 160 is now being sold for up to Rs 470. Similarly, the already banned gutkha is being sold for Rs 50-60 a packet.

Police said goods worth Rs 65,100 have been stolen from a shop on Ghatkopar-Andheri link road. The complaint to the police said that thieves sell these products at exorbitant rates in the black market. A packet of cigarettes with a printed price of Rs 160 is now being sold for up to Rs 470. Similarly, the already banned gutkha is being sold for Rs 50-60 a packet.

Police said goods worth Rs 46,100 have been stolen from a shop on Ghatkopar-Andheri link road. The complaint to the police said that thieves sell these products at exorbitant rates in the black market. A packet of cigarettes with a printed price of Rs 160 is now being sold for up to Rs 470. Similarly, the already banned gutkha is being sold for Rs 50-60 a packet.

Police said goods worth Rs 45,100 have been stolen from a shop on Ghatkopar-Andheri link road. The complaint to the police said that thieves sell these products at exorbitant rates in the black market. A packet of cigarettes with a printed price of Rs 160 is now being sold for up to Rs 470. Similarly, the already banned gutkha is being sold for Rs 50-60 a packet.

Police said goods worth Rs 44,100 have been stolen from a shop on Ghatkopar-Andheri link road. The complaint to the police said that thieves sell these products at exorbitant rates in the black market. A packet of cigarettes with a printed price of Rs 160 is now being sold for up to Rs 470. Similarly, the already banned gutkha is being sold for Rs 50-60 a packet.

Police said goods worth Rs 43,100 have been stolen from a shop on Ghatkopar-Andheri link road. The complaint to the police said that thieves sell these products at exorbitant rates in the black market. A packet of cigarettes with a printed price of Rs 160 is now being sold for up to Rs 470. Similarly, the already banned gutkha is being sold for Rs 50-60 a packet.

Police said goods worth Rs 42,100 have been stolen from a shop on Ghatkopar-Andheri link road. The complaint to the police said that thieves sell these products at exorbitant rates in the black market. A packet of cigarettes with a printed price of Rs 160 is now being sold for up to Rs 470. Similarly, the already banned gutkha is being sold for Rs 50-60 a packet.
"I don’t have back, strong in the swing," Jaffer said in one instance. "Keep on giving the great work." To another, he added: "Be patient and be always on your toes. Never let a situation get away from you. Never allow someone to push you into a situation you can’t handle. Always keep your cool and never let your nerves take over." He also said: "Always be prepared for the unexpected. If something unexpected happens, don’t panic. Take a deep breath and think clearly before taking any action."
Internal displacements

How the Union of India rounded up and incarcerated one group of people in the name of national security

Joy Ma and Dilip D’Souza’s The Deoliwallahs is so timely that it seems fated. A book about how the Union of India rounded up and incarcerated one group of people in the name of national security, just as a nationwide National Register of Citizens began to create fear and suspicion amongst large numbers of Indians today? It feels uncanny. A story about racism against Indians of Chinese origin, in a time when migrants from north-eastern states are being assaulted, evicted and pat on in public as “Coro-na”-carriers?

There’s certainly something damaging about Ma and D’Souza’s book, which is rondi (untold, untold) idea of the thousands of Chinese-Indians who were detained, put in an internment camp, and discharged after the wake of the 1962 war. But it’s the times that produce books like these, not the other way around.

Some readers will tear through the book looking for parallels to be drawn between the tragedy of those citizens from fifty years ago, and the Assamese residents jailed in camps today thanks to a notoriously leaky NRC process. This connection is stark and tragic, but the authors step lightly around it; perhaps to avoid finding similarities behind the news, and to train our focus on the specific tragedy of what transpired after the brief and brutal war of 1962.

In Deoli, Rajasthan, Jawaharlal Nehru’s India rounded up and incarcerated people in internment facility to imprison thousands of Chinese-Indians, in a camp where Nehru himself had once been jailed. This was Joy Ma’s birthplace. Her parents, Joy and Iifa Ma, were detained there for four-and-a-half years, purely on the basis of an ordinance that authorized extraordinary powers in dealing with perceived threats to national security. The Deoliwallahs doesn’t dwell on whether any Chinese-Indians, who lived in small communities throughout West Bengal and Assam, ever actually spilled on India on behalf of Mao’s China. They were a varied group. Some were descended from Chinese workers who had arrived on India’s eastern coast centuries earlier; others from more recently migrated families. They worked on plantations, in factories, as shopkeepers and restaurateurs. They spoke Hindi, Bengali, Oraoni, and Nepali, among other languages. They suffered, celebrated and made ends meet much like their fellow Indians. They gave red envelopes to their children’s friends who came visiting them at Chinese New Year;

What happens when a government decides to see a segment of its population? Modern forgetfulness about the Deoli camp has its reasons. Indians never learnt about it at school, and the political and military establishment still thinks of this mass detention as an acceptable act of self-defence. China itself is presumably unininterested in casting an eye on other countries putting people in camps. And then, there aren’t many Chinese-Indians around to remind their countrymen of those days. India sent many of them away on deportations to other countries. Others, returning from Deoli to find that their lives and property were destroyed, had no resources to begin again in India, and migrated to other countries.

What struck me about The Deoliwallahs is how quickly these Chinese-Indians were erased from their own society. Ma presents the testimonies she collects from Deoli’s internees in restrained and unadorned language. But between the lines is a whole, bewildering sense of betrayal. An entire history of Chinese life in India is uprooted: suddenly their fellow citizens are bewildered by this community. One Deoliwallah tells Ma, years later, of the day an Indian soldier spots their family outside the camp and rushes up to know what they are doing in that place. “But the war was over five years ago,” the soldier says, bewildered, on learning of their plight. The soldier, who fought on the frontlines in November 1962, was a Chinese prisoner of war. They returned him to India in six months’ time. The Deoliwallahs is brief in length and subdued in its narrative, almost as a symptom of the plights of its subjects.

Most internees lost everything: not just homes, jobs and citizenships, but even the right to grieve for themselves, and seek justice. It was a small community; many sought to rebuild their lives quietly; and Deoli was not a site of ethnic cleansing or extermination, which many mass camps in the twentieth century were.

So why did India round up thousands of innocent and suspend their lives for years at all? The Deoliwallahs doesn’t get into the why of the affair. But it succinctly connects the dots between what happened then, and why India is the way it is now. For every shrine where governments openly threaten to make Indian citizenship an ethno-religious category; every ethnic slur; every crime being committed on the streets right now against people from the north-eastern states on the pretext of “Coro-na”, one historical era plays a key role. Modern forgetfulness is its own kind of epidemic.
How sportspersons are reworking their fitness routines to keep in top shape

Virdhawal and Rujuta Khade

Virdhawal Khade was training intensely for the Tokyo Olympics when the lockdown came into effect. “Before the lockdown, I used to train by swimming and exercising at the gym,” he says.

“Now, I do yoga in the mornings for 60 to 90 minutes and in the evening, I do either bodyweight exercises or high intensity workouts. Nowadays, I do squats with the spare tyre of my car.”

His wife and fellow swimmer, Rujuta, joins him in this routine. “The tyre weights 15 kg, so it is neither too light, nor too heavy,” she explains.

“Our goal is to stay fit and consume fewer calories so that when the lockdown ends, we don’t have to worry about losing weight and can just continue to push ourselves to swim.”

Achanta Sharath Kamal

Before the lockdown, the Padma Shri awardee would spend two hours in the morning at the gym and in the evening he would play sports for another 90 minutes. That had to stop when Sharath was told to self-isolate, after he returned from Oman on March 16.

“At the start of the quarantine, I was planning hard and pushing myself to go through the plan. But it was difficult to stay motivated,” he says.

Then he changed his outlook about the situation. “I accepted the fact that I cannot do much during this period and I found peace,” he says.

Now he does yoga and TheraBand exercises, and skips rope. He does high intensity exercises such as squats, lunges, push-ups and mountain climbers for 20 to 30 seconds each, before switching to the next exercise. He completes three to four such sets, two to three times a week.

Shashwat Shukla

Prior to the lockdown, Shashwat, who set a new world record in 15 km barefoot running last year, used to run for more than three hours in the morning and do core-focused workouts in the evening. These days, he still wakes up at 5 am but the rest of the day is different. “I play the flute as it improves my breathing ability,” he says.

“Take my cup of tea or black coffee, and then, walk on my terrace for 60 to 90 minutes. The sunlight helps with the Vitamin D production. Exercise also releases endorphins which reduce frustration levels and promote positive thoughts.”

In the evening, he walks on the terrace. He follows it up with a core workout that includes 200 push-ups, 100 crunches and 200 squats.

Sanjeev Rajput

Sanjeev Rajput, who represented India at the men’s 50 m rifle prone event at the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, had a strict fitness routine before the lockdown: yoga, meditation and then five hours of shooting practice, followed by two hours of physical exercises.

“I have relaxed my routine now, rather than changing it,” he says. “I wake up at 6:30 or 7 am, do my yoga and meditation. I do suryanamaskar, and asanas that focus on improving my balance. Then, in the evenings, I work out for one hour to focus on strengthening my core by doing planks, sit-ups, leg raises and other such exercises.”

Sanyogita Gharpade

Gharpade’s two-hour-long session on court would begin at 6:30 am and was followed by 2.5 hours at the gym. In the evenings, she would train again on court for another two hours. “After the lockdown, I have been running on the treadmill. I do a lot of stretching to warm up. I am also exploring yoga by looking at videos online,” she says. She is able to hold the vajrasana pose for one-and-a-half minutes now, which she considers an achievement since she has undergone surgery on both knees. She also uses a Theraband to do whole body exercises, squats and abdominal and shoulder exercises.
Hrehaan and Hridaan

CMYK

the complex. She shared the contact informed that they were sealing off turned up, enquiring about every-

"About a week ago, a lady tested positive for Covid-19. after one of its residents resides with his parents, Hrehaan and Hridaan. Like the entire country, the actor, too, is in lockdown with family at his Juhu apartment. “Hrithik has been reading a lot—from self-help books and daily news to fiction. Right now, he is reading The 4-Hour Workweek. He was always inclined towards learning the piano and is using this time to develop the hobby,” revealed a source close to the actor. Hrithik is also following a rigorous workout routine on a daily basis. “He works out twice a day, once early in the morning and again in the evening, with his kids. He is spending extra time in his house gym, stretching, doing yoga and cardio, along with regular weight-training,” the source added. Evenings are reserved for board games. Hrithik loves chess and plays with his sons. “Movie screenings with the kids and being with his dog, Zane, also form a part of his routine.”

The 46-year-old actor, who completed 20 years in the industry in January this year, was seen last year on the big screen with Super 30, the biopic of maths whiz Anand Kumar, and the action-thriller War. Ever since, all eyes are on his 25th film. “Hrithik is in the process of finalising his slate of releases. He has been reading a lot of scripts in the last six months and has liked some ideas. He is in constant touch with the directors and writers, who are developing them, over the phone,” the source shared.

Apart from his acting assignments, Hrithik also plans to get into film production and has been reading scripts for that, too. While interacting with Mirror earlier (December 26, 2019), he had said, “The idea is to produce content-driven films, triumph of life stories, something that can leave an impact on the audience.” He is also over-seeing the prep of his superhero franchise, Krrish 4, which is currently being scripted. “There has been a huge leap in technology since the release of Krrish 3 in 2013. And Rakeshji (his filmmaker-father Rakesh Roshan) and he are constantly discussing the scale, visuals and other aspects of film. It should hopefully take off next year,” the source added.

Hrithik had earlier reported that Hrithik Roshan’s tour to the US had got cancelled owing to the pandemic. It will be rescheduled for a future date once people get back to their normal lives. Meanwhile, Hrithik was one of the first Bollywood actors to come to the aid of the BMC in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak. He extended support to BMC staff working round the block to contain the virus spread on March 26. To ensure the safety of the most fundamental caretakers of the city and society, he also procured N95 and FF3 masks. Hrithik has also tied up with an NGO to facilitate 1.2 lakh nutritious cooked meals to old age homes, daily wage labourers, and low income groups across India. He continues to be in touch with government officials and NGOs, keeping a close eye on the needs of the ones suffering on ground.

On March 25, Hrithik Roshan shared a personal note about co-parenting on Instagram, announcing that his ex-wife, Susanne Khan, had temporarily moved in with him so that their children are not disconnected indefinitely from either of them during the lockdown brought on by the coronavirus pandemic. Even after their divorce, on November 1, 2014, that followed almost a year of separation, the former couple has remained close friends and co-parent sons Hrehaan and Hridaan.

Himesh.Mankad@timesgroup.com
TWEETS @HimeshMirror

On upscale residential complex behind a Malad mall, where Beyhadh 2 actor Shivin Narang resides with his parents, was recently sealed off after one of its residents tested positive for Covid-19. "About a week ago, a lady from the BMC (Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation) turned up, enquiring about everyone’s health and travel history, and informed that they were sealing off the complex. She shared the contact of a doctor for emergencies. There’s police security outside since and we can only go till the gate to pick up delivery of essentials like grocery and medicines. We aren’t allowed to go to even another wing of the complex,” he informs.

Incidentally, quite a few actors reside in the complex. Sakshi Tanwar and Ankita Lokhande live in the same wing as Shivin, though he doesn’t know them personally. The actor doesn’t know the patient but has heard that the person had travelled to Spain. He has been hospitalised and his family is in quarantine. Shivin had stocked up on supplies, including medicines for his parents. “A couple of medicines were not available at the local chemist. I ordered them online and it took two weeks to get delivery,” he informs, conceding that the situation is difficult, but there’s no option but to follow guidelines since a vaccine isn’t likely to be available till a year. He admits that though his apartment is a long walk from the main gate, he can manage. But he doesn’t let his parents venture out. “It’s tough for the elderly who don’t have younger family members to help out. Medical shops and stores running out of supplies and not delivering has hit them hard,” he sighs.

Ankita Lokhande, Sakshi Tanwar

live in the same wing as Shivin

Remains of actress Suchitra Sen were cremated Thursday

A fter pledging Rs 30 lakh to PM-CARES and Rs 25 lakh to the Maharashtra Chief Minister Relief Fund, Varun Dhawan has joined forces with Tata Trusts to provide meals to city’s healthcare professionals. The meals will be provided by the Taj Public Service Welfare Trust, and the support will also extend to the poor who have lost jobs and have been rendered homeless by the outbreak. “During a crisis like this, every step counts and I will continue to do the best for the society,” asserted the actor.

Meanwhile, after his daughter Shaza and actress Zoa, film producer Karim Morani has tested positive for Covid-19 as well. The family is currently hospitalised in the city. Karim has backed Hindi films like Ra.One, Chennai Express, Happy New Year and Dilwale, among others. —MMB

Varun extends help, Morani tests positive

Shivin Narang living in containment zone after a fellow resident tested positive for Covid-19

Apart from his acting assignments, Hrithik also plans to get into production and has been reading scripts for Happy New Year

Dilwale, Super 30, War, Krrish 4, movies, working out in the home gym and yes, learning to play the piano

‘My complex is sealed’

Here’s what the actor’s day looks like, with reading, playing indoor games, working out in the home gym and yes, learning to play the piano
A bout 40 shows, scheduled to be staged at the National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA) as well as all their teaching activities in the months of March and April, have been cancelled. The NCPA, like several other institutions across the world, has had to bear the cost of the lockdown. In light of the recent global pandemic, NCPA’s chairperson, Khushroo N Suntook, shares his views on the future of the arts.

Due to the lockdown, several shows at the NCPA has been cancelled. What has been the plan of refund of ticket sales?

For all the shows we had opened at the box office, we have ensured that patrons receive refund for tickets purchased at the box office soon after we resume operation. For tickets purchased online, the amount will be credited to their method of payment.

How has the lockdown impacted NCPA economically?

The thrust of NCPA’s programming is our own curation of events, which form a major part of the NCPA calendar and are staged at our venues. However, to further our objective to promote the performing arts, whenever feasible, depending on the facilities requested and at deferring costs, we make our venues available to the artist community, too. The cancellation or rescheduling of performances does come at a cost, but more than the economics, it is culture that has had to take a back seat. However, these are extraordinary times that call for extraordinary measures. We are concerned about our staff, our extended artistic community and the public at large. Our priority is their well-being and safety.

What’s the way forward for the performance arts centre in terms of the venue’s sanitation facilities and policies?

The NCPA has always maintained the highest standards of hygiene and sanitation in its office premises and venues. The process of deep cleaning of the venues is an integral part of our operations, something we will continue to adhere to by employing the best available technology and practices. The NCPA was among the first organisations in the city to cancel its shows and facilitate work-from-home arrangement for its employees in the wake of the current situation, prior to the general lockdown ordered by the government and other institutions. The larger interest of the community remains our concern, and at the same time, the NCPA is steadfastly committed to the cultural health of the city.

And how does NCPA plan to stay connected to its audience?

While we can’t bring you live performances at the moment, we are doing the next best thing — bringing you YouTube premieres of our well-received shows every evening through the NCPA@Home initiative. A glimpse of earlier performances, presentations, lecture-demonstrations are being updated on social media and all our curators are planning for the future.

Do you see the future of arts moving to online platforms, where local goes global?

The online platform has been there for a long time. The digital presence of NT Live, Bolshoi Theatre and The Met being a fine example, yet the theatres are full. The online medium is helpful as a tool of introduction to an art form, artist or a piece of music as well as a great facilitator of making local global, particularly in times like these. However, the joy of watching a live performance in a theatre is irreplaceable. For art lovers, the ultimate culmination of cultural knowledge acquired online or offline is to see it come alive on stage.

To view full-length concerts and performances, visit: www.youtube.com/user/TheNCPAMumbai

For tickets purchased online, the amount will be credited to their method of payment.

To feature an event on this page, send the details and photographs to Vijayeta Basu on mirrorfeatures@timesgroup.com
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 9.

LOOP

Rules
- Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A).
- Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B).
- Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines.
- You can’t draw lines around zeros.
- Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

How to begin:
Example: (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now, there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continuing the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn’t possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B).

Quick

Across
1 A18-rinder ____ Jadeja (8)
2 5 Con (4)
3 Rain heavily (4)
4 Rockers Led ____ (8)
5 American Indian tribe (6)
6 Smaller dome on roof (6)
7 Opposite of “chaos” (5)
8 River mouth (7)
9 Music director of Aradhana (11)
10 You too in Latin (2,2)
11 Observed (4)
12 You too in Latin (2,2)
13 Former kiwi batsman (8)
14 Able to be heard (7)
15 Minor error (5)
16 Paler (5)
17 Picture frame is ____ (6)
18 Giver (7)
19 Bahts (5)
20 Corsses or branches are not allowed (9)
21 Australian birds (4)

Down
1 Exact copy (7)
2 Secure room for keeping valuables (6)
3 Snoozed (5)
4 Nile snakes? (4)
5 Theatre attendant (5)
6 Theatre attendant (5)
7 Squire’s demesne (5)
8 A18-rinder ____ Jadeja (8)
9 Crosses or branches are not allowed (9)
10 Picture frame is ____ (6)
11 Minor error (5)
12 Crosses or branches are not allowed (9)
13 Australian birds (4)

Strikeout

This crossword has no clues and answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Across
1 Corps
2 Paler
3 Lento
4 Car PH
5 Irate
6 Paler
7 Squire’s demesne (5)
8 A18-rinder ____ Jadeja (8)
9 Bahts
10 Mr Cub
11 Me inc
12 Giver
13 Only the digits 1 through 9
14 Through the puzzle
15 Struggle
16 Medium
17 Conjunction
18 Fisherman’s boat
19 Chair is missing.
20 Line (6)
21 Mirror
22 Letter stands for another
23 Paper is longer.
24 10 marks, get set…
25 Failing

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the correct order? You have already been entered directly into the grid in the correct order to get you started. On your marks, get set…

Quote

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals G, it will equal G throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Mensa puzzle

Which number replaces the question mark and completes the wheel?

Bull’s eye

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

TODAY’S CLUE: K EQUALS T.

Alpha triangle

Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given. Universal gas constant in physics 2 Conjunction 3 Fishing implement 4 Way in $G$ over $E$ large 5. American vulture 7 Separates with a line of police

Riddler

In a house party at night, suddenly the light goes off. A scream is heard and when the lights come back, a guy is dead on the floor.
His five friends namely Aman, Anurag, Ajay, Alex and Aditya are shocked to find his dead body in front of them.

The victim before dying managed to write four numbers on the floor with his blood smeared fingers. The numbers are 4, 8, 3, and 7.

Can you tell who killed him?
COMICS | Ferd’nand

Frank and earnest by Bob Thaves

Bizarro by Dan Piraro

Jumpstart

Pearls before swine by Stephan Pastis

Redeye by Mel Casson

SIGN POST | Shirley Bose

If it’s your birthday today

There is a strong need for security and responsibility in life and decisions and actions are in tandem with these thoughts. Business/career is heading in the right direction, though this may be a slightly slow phase that lasts a two months. New work/business comes in regularly after sometime and daily stress levels are less eventually. Relationships are good and bring so much happiness. Health is good.

Capricorn
One or two delayed projects begin to move ahead finally. Do regularly get enough sleep. Karmic tip: Being there for family and friends is something so essential for survival. Colours: orange/grey.

Taurus
Consider all options if wanting a job change. Taurus likes to be sure before taking action. Karmic tip: Think about what is missing from a friendship. Resolve it if possible. Colours: green/peach.

Virgo
Work may be slow, but it is regular. Good news is received after some initial negotiations. Karmic tip: This karmic cycle is auspicious for clearing any misunderstandings or doubts. Colours: blue/white.

Aquarius
Following a safe set of rules is what keeps you sane and peaceful in life. Karmic tip: Consider what is workable and what is unrealistic before making a decision. Colours: salmon/grey.

Gemini
A strong reaction reveals the truth finally. Deal with it in a mature manner. Karmic tip: Problems and issues are worked out as help arrives from an unexpected quarter. Colours: brown/cream.

Libra
There is an improvement in most areas of life. Working through past karmic bring desired changes. Do follow a nutritious diet. Karmic tip: A strained relationship/friendship improves gradually. Colours: maroon/bronze.

Scorpio
Trust might be an issue with some people. Think about it, asking yourself why this is so. Karmic tip: Be careful when driving, even if there is less traffic. Colours: blue/tau.

Aries
Students need to give more time to studies and revisions. Relocation requires living with a relative (temporarily). Karmic tip: Following intuition about a financial situation works to your advantage. Colours: yellow/white.

Leo
The mindset is one of happiness which is compounded due to excellent understanding in a relationship. Karmic tip: Dog eat enough sleep and rest, especially if working long hours. Colours: pink/mustard.

Sagittarius
Many immediate deadlines appear but there is so much left to complete. Health is good. Karmic tip: Being emotionally open with loved ones keeps communication at a great level. Colours:柠檬/or.

Virgo
The mindset is one of happiness which is compounded due to excellent understanding in a relationship. Karmic tip: Dog eat enough sleep and rest, especially if working long hours. Colours: pink/mustard.

Taurus
Consider all options if wanting a job change. Taurus likes to be sure before taking action. Karmic tip: Think about what is missing from a friendship. Resolve it if possible. Colours: green/peach.

Libra
There is an improvement in most areas of life. Working through past karmic bring desired changes. Do follow a nutritious diet. Karmic tip: A strained relationship/friendship improves gradually. Colours: maroon/bronze.

Aquarius
Following a safe set of rules is what keeps you sane and peaceful in life. Karmic tip: Consider what is workable and what is unrealistic before making a decision. Colours: salmon/grey.

Gemini
A strong reaction reveals the truth finally. Deal with it in a mature manner. Karmic tip: Problems and issues are worked out as help arrives from an unexpected quarter. Colours: brown/cream.

Libra
There is an improvement in most areas of life. Working through past karmic bring desired changes. Do follow a nutritious diet. Karmic tip: A strained relationship/friendship improves gradually. Colours: maroon/bronze.

Scorpio
Trust might be an issue with some people. Think about it, asking yourself why this is so. Karmic tip: Be careful when driving, even if there is less traffic. Colours: blue/tau.

Aries
Students need to give more time to studies and revisions. Relocation requires living with a relative (temporarily). Karmic tip: Following intuition about a financial situation works to your advantage. Colours: yellow/white.

Leo
The mindset is one of happiness which is compounded due to excellent understanding in a relationship. Karmic tip: Dog eat enough sleep and rest, especially if working long hours. Colours: pink/mustard.

Sagittarius
Many immediate deadlines appear but there is so much left to complete. Health is good. Karmic tip: Being emotionally open with loved ones keeps communication at a great level. Colours: lemon/or.

Virgo
The mindset is one of happiness which is compounded due to excellent understanding in a relationship. Karmic tip: Dog eat enough sleep and rest, especially if working long hours. Colours: pink/mustard.

Taurus
Consider all options if wanting a job change. Taurus likes to be sure before taking action. Karmic tip: Think about what is missing from a friendship. Resolve it if possible. Colours: green/peach.

Libra
There is an improvement in most areas of life. Working through past karmic bring desired changes. Do follow a nutritious diet. Karmic tip: A strained relationship/friendship improves gradually. Colours: maroon/bronze.

Aquarius
Following a safe set of rules is what keeps you sane and peaceful in life. Karmic tip: Consider what is workable and what is unrealistic before making a decision. Colours: salmon/grey.

Gemini
A strong reaction reveals the truth finally. Deal with it in a mature manner. Karmic tip: Problems and issues are worked out as help arrives from an unexpected quarter. Colours: brown/cream.

Libra
There is an improvement in most areas of life. Working through past karmic bring desired changes. Do follow a nutritious diet. Karmic tip: A strained relationship/friendship improves gradually. Colours: maroon/bronze.

Scorpio
Trust might be an issue with some people. Think about it, asking yourself why this is so. Karmic tip: Be careful when driving, even if there is less traffic. Colours: blue/tau.

Aries
Students need to give more time to studies and revisions. Relocation requires living with a relative (temporarily). Karmic tip: Following intuition about a financial situation works to your advantage. Colours: yellow/white.

Leo
The mindset is one of happiness which is compounded due to excellent understanding in a relationship. Karmic tip: Dog eat enough sleep and rest, especially if working long hours. Colours: pink/mustard.

Sagittarius
Many immediate deadlines appear but there is so much left to complete. Health is good. Karmic tip: Being emotionally open with loved ones keeps communication at a great level. Colours: lemon/or.

Virgo
The mindset is one of happiness which is compounded due to excellent understanding in a relationship. Karmic tip: Dog eat enough sleep and rest, especially if working long hours. Colours: pink/mustard.

Taurus
Consider all options if wanting a job change. Taurus likes to be sure before taking action. Karmic tip: Think about what is missing from a friendship. Resolve it if possible. Colours: green/peach.

Libra
There is an improvement in most areas of life. Working through past karmic bring desired changes. Do follow a nutritious diet. Karmic tip: A strained relationship/friendship improves gradually. Colours: maroon/bronze.

Aquarius
Following a safe set of rules is what keeps you sane and peaceful in life. Karmic tip: Consider what is workable and what is unrealistic before making a decision. Colours: salmon/grey.

Gemini
A strong reaction reveals the truth finally. Deal with it in a mature manner. Karmic tip: Problems and issues are worked out as help arrives from an unexpected quarter. Colours: brown/cream.

Libra
There is an improvement in most areas of life. Working through past karmic bring desired changes. Do follow a nutritious diet. Karmic tip: A strained relationship/friendship improves gradually. Colours: maroon/bronze.

Scorpio
Trust might be an issue with some people. Think about it, asking yourself why this is so. Karmic tip: Be careful when driving, even if there is less traffic. Colours: blue/tau.

Aries
Students need to give more time to studies and revisions. Relocation requires living with a relative (temporarily). Karmic tip: Following intuition about a financial situation works to your advantage. Colours: yellow/white.

Leo
The mindset is one of happiness which is compounded due to excellent understanding in a relationship. Karmic tip: Dog eat enough sleep and rest, especially if working long hours. Colours: pink/mustard.

Sagittarius
Many immediate deadlines appear but there is so much left to complete. Health is good. Karmic tip: Being emotionally open with loved ones keeps communication at a great level. Colours: lemon/or.

Virgo
The mindset is one of happiness which is compounded due to excellent understanding in a relationship. Karmic tip: Dog eat enough sleep and rest, especially if working long hours. Colours: pink/mustard.

Taurus
Consider all options if wanting a job change. Taurus likes to be sure before taking action. Karmic tip: Think about what is missing from a friendship. Resolve it if possible. Colours: green/peach.

Libra
There is an improvement in most areas of life. Working through past karmic bring desired changes. Do follow a nutritious diet. Karmic tip: A strained relationship/friendship improves gradually. Colours: maroon/bronze.

Aquarius
Following a safe set of rules is what keeps you sane and peaceful in life. Karmic tip: Consider what is workable and what is unrealistic before making a decision. Colours: salmon/grey.

Gemini
A strong reaction reveals the truth finally. Deal with it in a mature manner. Karmic tip: Problems and issues are worked out as help arrives from an unexpected quarter. Colours: brown/cream.

Libra
There is an improvement in most areas of life. Working through past karmic bring desired changes. Do follow a nutritious diet. Karmic tip: A strained relationship/friendship improves gradually. Colours: maroon/bronze.

Scorpio
Trust might be an issue with some people. Think about it, asking yourself why this is so. Karmic tip: Be careful when driving, even if there is less traffic. Colours: blue/tau.

Aries
Students need to give more time to studies and revisions. Relocation requires living with a relative (temporarily). Karmic tip: Following intuition about a financial situation works to your advantage. Colours: yellow/white.

Leo
The mindset is one of happiness which is compounded due to excellent understanding in a relationship. Karmic tip: Dog eat enough sleep and rest, especially if working long hours. Colours: pink/mustard.

Sagittarius
Many immediate deadlines appear but there is so much left to complete. Health is good. Karmic tip: Being emotionally open with loved ones keeps communication at a great level. Colours: lemon/or.

Virgo
The mindset is one of happiness which is compounded due to excellent understanding in a relationship. Karmic tip: Dog eat enough sleep and rest, especially if working long hours. Colours: pink/mustard.
Driving Mrs Sen the Dharam way

I was just a schoolgirl when I saw Bimal Roy’s 1955 tragic love story, Devdas, for the first time on Doordarshan. And like so many others, was mesmerised by his Parvati. Even in black and white, Suchitra Sen’s luminous beauty shone through, lighting up the frame when Dilip Kumar as Devdas, lived at being rejected by his Paro for a letter he’s long since regretted writing, says through gritted teeth, “Yeh roop tumhara…tna pogni de na hanah hai.” Then, to put a chandelier on her chiseled features to dent her hauteur… he lashes out with his stick, “Aao tumhare chheere pe aisa hi daag bana de.” As it catches her on the forehead, spilling her face reflects not just his anger, but also his pain and torment.

This scene has stayed with me for decades and it didn’t come as a surprise to learn that Tollywood’s Mrs Sen had landed the role on the rebound, after Meena Kumari had reluctantly turned it down. She gave her nod because it was the first Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay story offered to her and for its director. It is said that when they were shooting in Mumbai, visitors crowded into Mohan Studio to catch a glimpse of the famous beauty and Bengal’s rising star. No one went away disappointed even though the lady herself stayed aloof and untouched by the adoration.

On Suchitra Sen’s 89th birth anniversary (she entered the world on April 6, 1931), I reached out to Dharmendra, who is at his farm, following the coronavirus outbreak. The duo had worked together in Aait Sen’s 1966 film Manto. A Hindi remake of his 1963 Bengali film, Uttar Falguni, it featured her in a double role, as the beautiful man who, after a hellish marriage, becomes the dancing girl Panna Bai, and her lookalike daughter Suparna, whom she is ready to protect with her life. Ashok Kumar played Monish Rai, the man the mother has always loved even after she lost him, while Dharmaji was cast as the barrister, Indranee, who woos the daughter.

“Suchitra was a picture of beauty and after seeing her in Devdas, I had been dreaming of working with her. It is said that when you want something dil se, the universe conspires to give it to you,” Dharmaji informs over the wire, and one can almost picture him smile.

They shot the film in New Theatres, a Kolkata studio, and in Darjeeling. Dharmaji shares that when they were in the hill station, after ‘pack-up’ they would sometimes go for a drive with his leading lady and her sister. “In the darkness, I couldn’t see the ravines flanking the narrow mountain roads on either side. But the next morning, she would point them out to me, saying, ‘Look Dharam, you were zooming down this road like a racing car driver last night,’ and we would laugh. We had some good times together on that film. Manto, for all its intensity on screen, was so much fun, like a picnic,” he laughs, recalling that his heroine had always told him that she loved his smile.

Dharmaji’s recollections of the desi Garbo are very different from public perception of Suchitra Sen, as a lady who always stood apart in the studios, and after she stepped out of the spotlight, was consciously never seen in public again. “She was a lovely lady and a very mature actress,” he avers.

“It (kiss pictured above) wasn’t in the script, but everyone agreed that my spontaneous gesture added a lot to the scene” – Dharmendra

Dr John Prine dies

John Prine, the country-folk singer and songwriter behind classics such as “Angel from Montgomery,” died Tuesday. The 73-year-old musician died as a result of complications from coronavirus at the Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville. John was hospitalised on March 26 with a ‘sudden onset’ of Covid-19 symptoms. His wife of 23 years, Fiona Whelan Prine, was also diagnosed with Covid-19 earlier in March and had been keeping fans updated about John’s condition while he was in the hospital.

On April 2, Fiona shared on the gram that she was unable to be by his side, but collaborator Brooklyn Johnny said it was premature and talked about John’s condition:

Cardi B: Never been so alone

Cardi B is feeling the heat of social distancing in Los Angeles. The rapper-Astronaut, the isolated singer-rapper is now in her 23rd day of self-isolation, and shared her anguish with a cleaner and dishwasher all break in a hazzard suit.

R Kelly to stay behind bars

R Kelly will have to stay in the lockup while he awaits trials on charges of racketeering, sex-trafficking and child pornography, a judge ruled Tuesday. The 53-year-old R&B singer filed requests with federal judges to spring him from Chicago’s Metropolitan Correctional Center, arguing that both his age and his recent hernia surgery put him at high risk for catching the coronavirus. However, Brooklyn federal judge Ann Donnelly disagreed in a ruling issued Tuesday, stating, “While I am sympathetic to the defendant’s understandable anxiety about COVID-19, he has not established compelling reasons warranting his release.”

Musician John Prine dies

John Prine, the country-folk singer and songwriter behind classics such as “Angel from Montgomery,” died Tuesday. The 73-year-old musician died as a result of complications from coronavirus at the Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville. John was hospitalised on March 26 with a ‘sudden onset’ of Covid-19 symptoms. His wife of 23 years, Fiona Whelan Prine, was also diagnosed with Covid-19 earlier in March and had been keeping fans updated about John’s condition while he was in the hospital.

On April 2, Fiona shared on the gram that she was unable to be by his husband’s side in the hospital to remain safe herself, which she said, “makes this nightmare all the more distressing for me.” With songs that spanned from poignant to political to rollickingly humorous, John earned the admiration of musical icons such as Bob Dylan and Johnny Cash. He was honoured at January’s Grammys with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Naomi suffers meltdown

Naomi Watts is one of the many Hollywood celebrities adjusting to life without housekeeping staff in the wake of the outbreak. The actress reached breaking point on Tuesday after her printer, vacuum cleaner and dishwasher all broke down. The King Kong star, who has been self-isolating inside her Los Angeles mansion since three weeks, shared her anguish with a slow-motion video of herself screaming hysterically and flinging her head as the sound of a lion’s roar played in the background.

”Naomi Day #756: When your printer, vacuum cleaner and dishwasher all break in the same day…. #ffs,” she wrote with the social media post. Julienne Moore commented, “Bad news”, while Marsha Stephanie Blake said, “I’m feeling this pain with you (and a few in Paris).”

— Agencies