



AMERICA UNITED AGAINST COVID-19

KEEP SAFE

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

KEEP AMERICA SAFE

US unemployment applications reach over 26m as many States struggle to deal with the Pandemic

STORY ON PAGE 32

Trump Suspends Immigration into U.S. for 60 Days

No new Green Cards; some categories of workers stand exempted

I.S. SALUJA

WASHINGTON (TIP): U.S. President Donald Trump, April 22, signed an executive order pausing immigration for 60 days to protect the jobs of Americans laid off due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The temporary suspension of immigration will affect those who are legally seeking entry into the United States for employment purposes but not the ones who are already living in the country, the order said. The order is effectively a restriction on entry that applies to people outside the U.S. seeking lawful permanent residency, which grants people the right to live and work in the U.S. and is a mandatory steppingstone to citizenship for all types of immigrants.

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President Donald Trump announced at the briefing about the coronavirus at the White House, Wednesday, April 22 that he had signed an order suspending immigration for 60 days to protect the jobs of Americans laid off due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

NBC Screen shot



No exponential rise in Covid-19 cases in India

22,000 Cases, 700 Deaths, as of April 23

Maharashtra, Gujarat, Delhi and Rajasthan are the worst affected States

I.S. SALUJA

NEW DELHI / NEW YORK(TIP): Government of India said, Thursday, April 23 that the rise in coronavirus cases in the country has been more or less linear, not exponential.

The country is experiencing 4.5 per cent positive cases among the tested people, which is similar to the situation a month ago before the lockdown was imposed, added the Centre.

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Cuomo says 21% of NYC found infected with coronavirus in random tests



More than one in five New York City residents tested positive for coronavirus in a new random study, Gov. Cuomo said Thursday, April 23

Photo / Courtesy Mike Groll/Office of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo

ALBANY, NY (TIP): New York State Governor Cuomo said a shocking 21% of people from the five boroughs of New York City who were tested outside supermarkets were found inflicted with COVID-19. Men slightly outnumbered women.

contd on Page 32



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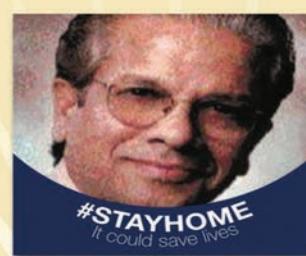
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Happy Doctors' Day
March 30th



V.K. Raju, MD, FRCS, FACS

Hats off to the Doctors who can't stay home and are saving lives

*There are two kinds of fools in this world:
Those who give advice and those who do not take it.*

*I propose to belong to the first category,
in the hope that you will not belong to the second.*



eyefoundationofamerica.org



India Center Foundation Launches Grant Program for South Asian Artists

NEW YORK (TIP): Non-profit arts organization India Center Foundation (ICF), in partnership with MELA Arts Connect (MAC), announces the formation of The South Asian Arts Resiliency Fund, a grant program for South Asian artists and arts workers in the U.S. in the fields of performing arts, film, visual arts or literature who have been impacted by the economic fallout of COVID-19 due to postponed or canceled performances, events or exhibitions.

ICF will provide launch funding of \$20,000 towards this important initiative. The fund will be co-managed by MAC and supported by a crowdfunding campaign and multiple live streaming experiences and more. With the community's support to reach the targeted goal of \$500,000, the fund will be able to provide grants to hundreds of arts workers around the country. The expectation is that this milestone will be outmatched because of generous support from arts patrons and philanthropic communities, who can donate funds through this Go Fund Me Page.

In an ongoing survey about the economic impact of the coronavirus on the arts sector, Americans for the Arts has captured a crippling loss of more than \$114 million as of April 4, 2020. "And the situation is only going to get worse, before it gets better," said Raoul Bhavnani, ICF Co-Founder. "Communities count on the arts to rally around, to gather and to find connection, especially in times of crisis, and the



Outside India Performance at David Rubenstein Atrium at Lincoln Center

South Asian community is no different. With necessary physical distancing in place for the foreseeable future, the arts community -- artists, producers, agents, managers, administrators, technicians -- are unable to perform or produce their work for audiences and are losing their livelihoods. Losses will only continue to mount unless we choose to support artists NOW, and we hope individuals, corporations and other arts organizations will join us in this critical endeavor."

"We want to encourage South Asian voices in the arts at all levels and make sure that our growing representation in all sectors of creative fields does not diminish because of this pandemic," said ICF Co-Founder Priya Giri Desai. "The

Resiliency Fund can ensure that our South Asian voices continue to be heard and that South Asian artists can feel secure in their choice to pursue a life in the arts."

WHAT THE FUND WILL SUPPORT:

The development, creation and presentation of work requires the time and expertise of a multitude of people, not just the artist. As such, the fund will provide support for artists and arts personnel in the U.S. through project grants on a rolling basis for the development of work, particularly during the ongoing pandemic.

Examples of Projects:

- Creation of music, dance, theater,

film, visual arts or literature projects (ongoing or new)

- Research for development of music, dance, theater, film or visual arts projects (ongoing or new)
- Strategic planning by a manager or agent for an artist
- Content creation for project deployment
- Creation of resources for artists to support careers in the arts

WHO IS ELIGIBLE:

Eligible applicants are United States-based, South Asian arts workers in the performing arts, film, visual arts or literature who can demonstrate loss of income because of canceled or postponed engagements due to COVID-19.

Arts Workers are defined as:

- Artists such as: dancers, choreographers, musicians, poets, actors, comedians, playwrights, directors, filmmakers, writers, composers, visual artists, etc.
- Arts personnel such as: technicians (lighting, sound, costume, stage management, production, editor), independent curators / presenters, producers, agents, managers, etc.
- Grants will be targeted to at least \$1,000, depending on eligibility and financial need. The arts community can apply starting April 9th at the organization's website, www.theindiacenter.us.

Indian American Congressional Candidate Suraj Patel donates Food to Queens Hospital, Food Pantry

NEW YORK (TIP): in Manhattan, North Brooklyn, and Western Queens, announced a partnership with Amrapali Soni, co-president of House of Spices, to provide \$10,000 worth of food to healthcare heroes on the front lines and most vulnerable communities.

Suraj and the House of Spices team delivered the thousands of dollars worth of food donations on Tuesday, April 21st to Elmhurst Hospital and Center of Hope International - Bread of Life Food Pantry in Long Island City which serves vulnerable residents hit particularly hard by the economic shut down. Center of Hope is run by longtime community leader Bishop Mitchell G. Taylor.

"The Center of Hope International Bread of Life Food Pantry went into relief mode 4 weeks ago. Our mission was simple; provide food for families, and help stabilize them through this pandemic," said Bishop Mitchell G. Taylor, senior Pastor of Center of Hope Int'l and Co-founder &CEO of Urban Upbound.

Elmhurst Hospital has been among the hardest hit in the nation and serves much of the city's South Asian population. House of Spices, located in



Patel is challenging Carolyn Maloney for the NY-12 Congressional seat, which includes Astoria and Long Island City

Flushing, aims to spread Indian food culture through quality products, family recipes, and other outreach. The New York City region is home to the largest Indian American population in the country. New York State has never sent an Indian-American Representative in Congress. If elected, Suraj Patel would be the first.

"It breaks my heart that Queens has

been hurt so badly by coronavirus, because these communities are our caretakers. It's the folks that work in hospitality, in healthcare, in our restaurants and in our taxicabs. It's big, loving families getting punished for living so closely together; immigrant families like my own that once slept 13 to a one-bedroom apartment. Queens is all about grit, Queens will rebuild, and I

want folks to know that we never left their side during any of this. We showed up again and again and we didn't leave anyone alone," said Suraj Patel, candidate for Congress in Astoria and Long Island City.

Throughout this crisis, the Suraj Patel for Congress campaign has been there for community every step of the way: Suraj has been on the streets personally delivering hundreds of meals to Seniors and raising money for Citymeals on Wheels. The campaign has made over 80,000 wellness check-in calls to neighbors, delivering food, water, and toilet paper at a moment's notice to those in need, creating greeting cards for seniors, and advocating for urgent, immediate relief for Tipped Workers, Hospitality Workers, Small Businesses, Renters, Artists, and our Healthcare Heroes. Suraj was the first candidate in the country to release a plan for Coordinated, National COVID-19 testing. Having had COVID himself, Suraj is consistently donating his blood plasma to Mount Sinai Hospital.

Patel is challenging incumbent Carolyn Maloney for the congressional seat in New York's 12th District.

Indian-American Physicians are bearing the brunt of pandemic in the US



AAPI recently organized a candlelight vigil and inter-faith prayer for the speedy recovery of Drs. Ajay Lodha, Anjana Samaddar, Dr. Sunil Mehrra and thousands of other healthcare professionals who are in the front line and are admitted to hospital and receiving treatment

NEW YORK (TIP): Known around the world for their compassion, expertise, brilliance and intellect, Indian American physicians are reputed for the quality healthcare they provide to millions of their patients in the United States. In patient care, administration, leadership or academics, they have excelled in their respective fields, holding important positions across the United States and the world.

Indian Americans constitute less than one percent of the country's population, but they account for nine percent of the American doctors and physicians. One out of every seven doctors serving in the US is of Indian heritage, providing medical care to over 40 million of US population.

Dr. Seema Arora, Chairwoman of AAPI's Board of Trustees pointed to the fact that "The deadly Corona Covid-19 virus has claimed more than 171,000 deaths around the world with the US leading the chart with nearly 43,000 deaths. The pandemic has placed the entire healthcare sector, and in particular the Indian American medical fraternity at the frontlines of the fight against the pandemic."

There are about 80,000 practicing Indian American physicians who are at the forefront of fighting COVID-19 pandemic in the United States. In addition, there are around 40,000 medical students, residents, and fellows of Indian origin in this country who are supporting many of the hospitals affected by the pandemic.

"We have a proud moment, it is (also) a scary moment; it is a mixed feeling, but this virus is a deadly virus" Dr. Suresh Reddy, President of the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI), describing the situation under which the physicians of Indian Origin serving people infected with the virus. "They tend to work disproportionately in areas that are medically underserved like rural and inner city areas taking on a heavier workload with patients who are more ill. We are definitely in the frontline fighting this deadly battle," against the

coronavirus, Reddy said.



Dr. Priya Khanna, 43, an Indian - American nephrologist died while treating patients in a New Jersey Hospital

Dr. Priya Khanna, 43, an Indian American nephrologist died in a New Jersey Hospital. Her father Satyendra Khanna (78), a general surgeon, has tested positive and is said to be in a critical condition in the intensive care unit in the same hospital.

During a recent candle light vigil and inter-faith prayer organized by AAPI, with one minute of silence with folded hands and heads bowed, the AAPI members and spiritual leaders prayed for the speedy recovery of Drs. Ajay Lodha, Anjana Samaddar, Dr. Sunil Mehrra and thousands of other healthcare professionals who are in the front line and are admitted to hospital and receiving treatment.

"Even in the midst of scare and fear, healthcare workers including physicians report to work with or without adequate protective equipment to save the lives of others knowing that they could be the next victim," Dr. Narendra R. Kumar, Past President of AAPI & AKMG, from Michigan, pointed out. "Hundreds of healthcare workers are under quarantine or under active treatment at home and in hospitals. Many of them are on ventilators including few of our senior AAPI leaders struggling for their lives. One thing is clear, this is a deadly disease and doesn't discriminate anyone,

anywhere."

"While it's more common among elderly and with multiple comorbidities, COVID 19 infection is also common in health care workers as they get exposed during their line of duty. We have reports of several thousands of health care workers who have got COVID 19 infection and many of them are critically ill in intensive care unit. Several Indian American Healthcare professionals have been admitted in hospitals and we have already lost one young physician to this pandemic. We want to make sure that all health care workers have proper PPE while taking care of these patients," said Dr. Jayesh Shah, President, South Texas Wound Associates, PA and President, American College of Hyperbaric Medicine.

Dr. Sudhakar Jonnalagadda, President-Elect of AAPI, said, "The American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (APPI) the largest ethnic medical organization in the country has taken several proactive steps in educating their members and the general public about the disease, the preventive steps that needs to be taken at this time and most importantly, they are using all their contacts and resources at the hospital administrative and government level to facilitate treatment protocols to be in place at the various hospitals around the country."

Describing Indian American physicians as "the real heroes" Dr. Anupama Gotimukula, Vice President of AAPI said, "Several immigrant physicians work in the New York and New Jersey regions, the epic center of the pandemic. They are struggling with Green Card Backlog and on temporary Visa plans. Due to their vulnerability, they are forced to work and often they have no choice. Not having adequate PPEs while caring for the Covid patients, many have become positive in the process, some have died, some are in ICU now and some are recuperating at home. These are the true saviors and unsung heroes saving the lives of so many Americans. We are proud of the services of Indian American physicians in this country."

Ravi Koli, Secretary of AAPI and a Psychiatrist by profession, said, "AAPI members as a group are overrepresented in all the hot spot areas as well as caring for underserved populations. They are bravely leading the enormous challenge of fighting COVID 19 pandemic at their own personal risk without a second thought which speaks volumes for their compassion, commitment and sense of duty.

"Our Indian American Physicians are down in the trenches in the frontline bravely taking care of the sick," Dr. Amit Chakrabarty, Regional Director of AAPI pointed out. "Unfortunately, we have had multiple heart-breaking incidents about our physicians that have contracted the disease while performing their duties, several who are on ventilator and in critical condition and some who have

succumbed to the disease. However, undaunted, they continue to perform their duties in this time of national crisis."

"Indian American Physicians are bearing the brunt of this pandemic in the US," said Dr. Joseph M. Chalil, a cardiologist and professor at several Universities in the United States. "Not a day goes by without hearing about many of them getting infected with Coronavirus, and several of them fighting for their life, because of their disproportionate share of the population in the Healthcare field. This pandemic is hitting close to home for me and my colleagues," Dr. Chalil said.

Expressing his anguish that "There is no standardized treatment protocols available at this time but multiple trial therapies are being conducted at several institutions around the world," Dr. Kumar is "Very optimistic that Convalescent plasma therapy, anti-viral drug Remdesivir and other medications will be made available with significant promising results in the coming days and weeks. We are also working on a national level to make new treatment protocols easily available to the needy patients by eliminating the unnecessary policy and procedural delays which is costing many valuable lives."



Indian-American Dr. Uma Madhusudhana has been recognized as one of South Windsor's "Unsung Heroes".

relatives and police passed through in front of her house to express their gratitude for her services. It was indeed a great experience.

Expressing hope, Dr. Amit Chakrabarty says, "AAPI members continue to donate money for AAPI to provide essential personal protective equipment to areas that are in short supply. Finally, AAPI has provided through various channels, spiritual and motivational guidance to our members and their families. We are in this together and we will emerge victorious. That is our belief and are working hard towards it."

(Contributed by Ajay Ghosh/ AAPI Media Advisor)

Indian Origin Clemson University Student Wins Truman Scholarship



Ashni Bhojwani from South Carolina is a criminal justice and psychology dual-degree student

NEW YORK (TIP): Ashni Bhojwani from South Carolina, a student of Clemson University has been selected as 2020 Truman Scholar among 62 exceptional college students from 55 U.S. colleges and universities.

Ashni is of Belizean and Indian origins and was born in Belize before immigrating to the United States as a child. Her determination to serve underrepresented groups stems from her experience as an immigrant and biracial woman living in South Carolina and is her constant motivation to work and volunteer with vulnerable groups in her community. In the summer of 2019, she interned with the Campaign for Youth Justice (CFYJ), a nonprofit that tirelessly works to end the prosecution, sentencing, and incarceration of youth in the United States, and in doing so, found her career inspiration.

Ashni is a criminal justice and psychology dual-degree student. Ashni has been heavily involved with the Clemson Undergraduate Student Government for six semesters and was the first woman and person of color appointed to serve as the Chief Justice on the Supreme Court. She is also a Title IX officer for cases of sexual assault, and a member of the Judicial Branch to hear cases of misconduct. Ashni plans on pursuing a JD with an emphasis on public interest law so that she can challenge institutionalized racism on a systemic level and continue her work with social justice issues and criminal justice reform.

The Truman Foundation was created by Congress in 1975 as the living memorial to President Truman and the presidential monument to public service. The Foundation's mission is premised on the belief that a better future relies on attracting to public service the commitment and sound judgment of bright, outstanding Americans. In fact, it was this belief that led President Truman, when approached by a bipartisan group of admirers near the end of his life, to encourage Congress to create a living memorial devoted to this purpose, rather than a traditional brick-and-mortar monument. (*Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news*)

Indian American Computer Science Professor donates paintings for COVID assistance



Niranjan Balasubramanian

NEW YORK (TIP): Seeking to inspire donations for COVID-related charities, Stony Brook University assistant professor of computer science Niranjan Balasubramanian is offering one of his original paintings to anyone who donates \$50 or more to a related charity of their choice. He creates about three paintings a week and intends to keep offering them until at least the end of summer.

Encouraged by Computer Science professor Anita Wasilewska and friends to keep painting and potentially sell his creations, he came upon this donation



Two of Balasubramanian's paintings

idea, which has so far raised \$3,200 (including matching contributions) for various charities across the U.S.

"I just want to do little things I can, to stay positive and connected with those on the frontlines and bearing the brunt of this crisis," said Balasubramanian. "Many are actively helping through various charities and I thought some might like to keep a painting as a token to remember by. I didn't think people would take me up on it. Some who contributed said this helped them feel that they are pitching in."

One donor gave \$600 for three



paintings, which Balasubramanian donated to Stony Brook Medicine for their PPE shortage effort. Balasubramanian has been dabbling in painting for a little more than a year and is largely self-taught. "I have taken two hour-long online lessons so far," he said. "I don't think that counts as getting taught [and] I have no pretense of my paintings being 'art.'"

To receive one of his paintings, Balasubramanian asks for a donation of \$50 or more to any COVID-related charity effort of the donor's choosing.

(Source - Stony Brook University)

Indian American Stanford Student named Truman Scholar



Nik Marda is a junior studying political science with a minor in mathematics

NEW YORK (TIP): Stanford junior Nik Marda is the recipient of the 2020 Truman Scholarship. He is among the 62 American college students to receive the award, which provides support for graduate school in preparation for careers in public service.

The award provides \$30,000 for students to pursue graduate study in a field of their choice at any college or university. The selection process is highly competitive, drawing over 750 nominees from over 300 academic institutions.

Marda is a junior studying political science with a minor in mathematics. He is simultaneously pursuing a master's in computer science with a specialization in artificial intelligence. With support from the Truman Scholarship, he hopes to blend his studies to pursue a career in public service. Marda, who is from Rochester, Minnesota, began his public service career when he was just a teenager.

(*Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news*)

Indian American Penn Bioengineering Junior Shreya Parchure Named Goldwater Scholar



Parchure is one of four juniors at the University of Pennsylvania who have been selected as Goldwater Scholars

NEW YORK (TIP): Shreya Parchure is one of four juniors at the University of Pennsylvania who have been selected as Goldwater Scholars by the Barry Goldwater Scholarship & Excellence in Education Foundation, which provides scholarships of as much as \$7,500 to undergraduate students interested in pursuing research careers in the natural sciences, mathematics, or engineering. Each year Penn's Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships (CURF) nominates four students for the award and provides advising. Shreya Parchure, from Fremont, California, is a bioengineering major who has been working with Roy Hamilton, the director of the Laboratory for Cognition and Neural Stimulation in the Perelman School of Medicine, characterizing a form of non-invasive brain stimulation for use in neurorehabilitation after stroke.

(*Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news*)

Indian American Appointed by Trump to Key Administration Post



Dr. Sudarsanam Suresh Babu, of Tennessee, has been chosen to be a Member of the National Science Board for a six-year term

Dr. Suresh Babu is currently director of the Bredesen Center for Interdisciplinary Research and Graduate Education, as well as UT/ORNL Governor's Chair of Advanced Manufacturing. In this role, he bridges ORNL expertise, including DOE's Manufacturing Demonstration Facility, to develop a collaborative research ecosystem locally and employ engineering solutions to manufacturing industries. Dr. Babu has 21 years of experience in advanced manufacturing, additive manufacturing, physical metallurgy, and computational materials modeling.

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A World Without Childhood Blindness

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Mayor de Blasio announces New York City COVID-19 Immigrant Emergency Relief Program



\$20 million fund will reach 20,000 immigrant workers and their families with direct, one-time emergency relief

NEW YORK (TIP): Mayor de Blasio, April 16, announced a partnership with Open Society Foundations to establish the New York City COVID-19 Immigrant Emergency Relief program, reaffirming the City's commitment to ensure all New Yorkers, regardless of immigration status, are included in citywide COVID-19 response and relief efforts. This \$20 million donation marks an essential step to provide emergency monetary relief to immigrant workers and their families, who have largely been excluded from federal COVID-19 relief programs.

"Immigrants are the heart of this City - they are our friends, neighbors and colleagues," said Mayor Bill de Blasio. "This crisis has shown it is now more important than ever for New Yorkers to look out for each other. I want to thank the Open Society Foundations for partnering

with us to ensure that all New Yorkers, regardless of their documentation status, can get the support they need."

"COVID-19 does not discriminate, but for immigrants, often working on the frontline of this crisis, it is a hardship multiplier for them and their families. We must make sure that everyone in our city, regardless of immigration status, has access to the support they need," said First Lady Chirlane McCray. "Immigrant New Yorkers are our neighbors, loved ones, and community members. We value and depend on them, and we want them to know that their City will not leave them behind."

"New York City is the epicenter of the COVID-19, with more cases and casualties than most whole countries. This crisis has laid bare just how much we depend on low-wage workers who stock our grocery shelves, harvest and deliver our food, staff society's essential services. These essential workers are also the people with the least access to services and benefits, many of them beyond the reach of the government's stimulus package. The Open Society Foundations is proud to support NYC and its partner organizations, including National Domestic Workers Alliance, to provide direct relief to these workers, who are literally holding up our society right now, and hope that policymakers going forward will address the structural inequalities they live with every day," said Patrick Gaspard, President

of the Open Society Foundations.

The NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs and the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City will create a citywide network of community based organizations that will provide direct, one-time emergency relief payments to immigrant families - including undocumented workers - who play a vital role in the City's workforce and economy.

This initial funding will reach up to 20,000 undocumented workers and their families affected by COVID-19 related job loss and facing financial distress. The citywide network of community-based organizations and worker centers will disseminate one-time emergency relief payments to eligible New Yorkers in the following amounts:

\$400/individual

\$800 for couple or single parent with children

\$1,000 for family with multiple adults and children

And/or where identified increased additional supports.

This network of community partners will also connect and assist individuals with information or enrollment for other forms of relief and resources such as unemployment, SNAP, cash assistance, or emergency food delivery programs they may be eligible for on a case by case basis and more.

New York City is home to 3.1 million immigrants who comprise about 37

percent of the City's population and 44 percent of its workforce- including approximately 360,000 undocumented workers and 48,000 undocumented business owners. In 2019, foreign-born New Yorkers, including the undocumented population, contributed about \$232 billion to the City's GDP. Among the one million essential workers who are on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic-delivery workers, EMS staff, drivers, health care personnel, and more-half are immigrants.

Undocumented workers and their families-approximately 738,000 New Yorkers, including 218,000 children-remain particularly vulnerable at this time. Over a third of NYC's undocumented workforce are low income, are ineligible for most safety net assistance, and have been left behind by federal stimulus packages because of their documentation status.

The Open Society Foundations will also provide a \$15 million donation to the Fund for Public Schools' (The Fund) NYC Schools COVID-19 Response Effort to support New York City Department of Education's (DOE) school communities during this challenging time. This is the largest gift The Fund and DOE have received to date in response to COVID-19 and will support emergency childcare and the remote learning of young and school-age children of essential workers on the frontlines, ranging from medical and emergency personnel to transit workers.

Price Gouging cost 3 men a criminal case

Defendants allegedly offered medical masks for 10 times the price



*Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz identified the defendants as Yuriy Borukhov, 33, Maisey Khovasov, 23, and Michael Borukhov, 23, residents of Queens County
Photo / courtesy Queens County DA office*

QUEENS (TIP): Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, along with the New York City Police Department, Homeland Security Investigations and the United States Postal Inspections Service, announced the arrest of 3 individuals who allegedly sold 1,000 3M medical masks for 10 times the regular price.

Queens District Attorney Katz said, "We are in the midst of a global pandemic. Thousands of people have died and medical workers do not have enough personal protection equipment to do their jobs safely. The governor and mayor have mandated that all people wear masks in public. Sadly, these 3 men allegedly thought about pocketing a profit as a result of the coronavirus outbreak by price gouging. This is unconscionable and will not stand in Queens County."

NYPD Commissioner Dermot Shea said, "Exploiting people's need to protect themselves for personal gain is always wrong. It is unconscionable in an ongoing pandemic, when everyone from healthcare providers to police officers to everyday New Yorkers needs this lifesaving equipment, and I commend our detectives and law enforcement partners for working together to discover and end this scam."

The District Attorney identified the defendants as Yuriy Borukhov, 33, Maisey Khovasov, 23, and Michael Borukhov, 23, all residents of Queens County. The 3 defendants were issued

desk appearance tickets and ordered to appear in court on August 15, 2020. At that time, the defendants will be formally charged with a New York City Administrative Code violation. Last month, the New York City Department of Affairs enacted an emergency rule declaring price gouging unconscionable for a merchant to sell or offer goods or services with an excessive price increase during an imminent threat to public health.

According to the charges, an undercover detective with the NYPD Financial Crimes Task Force posing as a buyer responded to an online advertisement offering face masks, 1,000 masks for \$10 each. After about 2 weeks of trading text messages, a meet was set up for the morning of Friday, April 17, 2020. The buyer met Yuriy Borukhov and Khovasov at a designated spot in Queens County shortly after 10 a.m. One of the men asked the undercover detective if he was there to buy masks. And when the buyer confirmed, a third man, Michael Borukhov approached and they all walked toward a waiting Chrysler automobile.

Continuing, according to the charges, defendant Michael Borukhov allegedly opened the car's trunk and produced 2 boxes containing 240 R95 face masks

made by 3M. Moments later, the undercover detective gave the 3 men \$10,000 in cash. The 3 men were promptly arrested for price gouging. Law enforcement allegedly recovered another 820 R95 masks in the same Chrysler. Face masks of this kind normally sell for up to \$1 each.

The joint investigation was conducted by members of the Queens District Attorney's Office, Homeland Security Investigations, the United States Postal Inspection Service, Customs and Border Patrol, the New York City Police Department, Port Authority Police Department, the Drug Enforcement Agency and the Internal Revenue Service.

Assistant District Attorney Rachel B. Stein, of the District Attorney's Economic and Environmental Crimes Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Christina Hanophy, Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

It should be noted that a criminal complaint is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

(Source: Office of Queens DA)

NEETA BHASIN SHOW

An endeavor to uplift spirits of the Desi Community amidst the Pandemic



NEW YORK (TIP): The USA is among the hardest hit nations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although as opposed to what many believe, it is not just the physical health of the population that is at risk. Statistics show how mental illness is an epidemic within the Corona Virus Pandemic. As self-isolation spikes the feelings of loneliness, it can lead to a range of problems from depression to heart diseases. It is now, more than ever that people need to stay connected to keep the positivity alive. With an intent to serve the Desi Community in this hour of need with the best possible information be it, precautions or myth busters along with uplifting interactions, Neeta Bhasin, the President of ASB Communications and a well-known community leader for

over 30 years, launches the 'Neeta Bhasin Show - Indian at Heart - Universal in Spirit.'

The Show, dedicated to uplift the spirit and keep each one connected with humanity and love, goes live on Facebook and Instagram on Monday, 20th April. ASB Communications, a New York-based Multicultural Marketing and Event Management Company is coming together with MOH Global Entertainment, a Mumbai based Creative Agency, Merlyn Dsouza Music Composer - Producer, NY Dreams Productions and The Eagle, Talent Management company, for the cause. With an aim to educate the community members about the prevailing pandemic in their very own language - Hinglish; it also brings support and cheer from the community's Homeland

with Indian celebrity performances and interactions. Tune in to the 'Neeta Bhasin Show' to watch interviews with Doctors, Psychologists, Dieticians and other Health professionals, as they offer recommendations and expert advice to deal with the Pandemic. The Show also brings to you Spiritual Guidance, Meditation and Yoga Support to uplift, heal and survive stronger.

Dean Skelos unlikely to be released from Prison



Former New York State Majority Leader Dean Skelos

File photo

The photo sentenced to 51 months in prison in 2018 on corruption charges after accepting hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of bribes while he was in office.

Skelos tested positive for COVID-19 earlier this month and was to be released from the minimum-security Otisville federal prison in Orange County, though those plans are now "unlikely," according to multiple reports.

Federal prosecutors reportedly wrote in a letter that "The BOP has not made a final determination regarding whether Skelos will be furloughed, and that it now appears unlikely that he will be granted home confinement in addition to any furlough."

Skelos has been quarantined in prison since testing positive for COVID-19 on Wednesday, April 8.

AIA Distributes Meals to Hospital Workers in the forefront of Fight against the Pandemic

HICKSVILLE, NY (TIP): At this time when our Health professionals are working day and night to take care of COVID patients, Association of Indians in America (AIA) is trying to provide nutritious food through Raj Bhog to some of the Hospital workers . So far, AIA provided meals at Glen Cove, Plainview, Elmhurst, and LIJ Hospitals.

AIA President Dr. Urmilesh Arya told The Indian Panorama that are providing 60 to 70 meals at a time to these hospitals.

"We are very thankful to Sheetal at Raj Bhog , who has been delivering the meals. It was funded by Mr. Animesh Goenka, Asmita Bhatia, Dr. Deepak Nandi , Mr. Gobind Munjal , Dr. Vijay Arya and Dr.Yash pal Arya, Dr.Urmilesh Arya said. "We are very thankful to the people who supported the cause, and the NEC members who came out and joined in this lockdown period". she added .



AIA President Dr. Urmilesh Arya and her colleagues distributed free meals to hospital staff, April 12.

Mayor de Blasio Unveils Budget Plan Amid unprecedented Crisis

**Health, Safety, Shelter, and
Access to Food are the top
priorities**



Mayor Bill de Blasio said that his administration even in the present most adverse circumstances is committed to doing whatever it takes to keep New Yorkers protected. Photo / YouTube

NEW YORK (TIP): Mayor Bill de Blasio, April 16, introduced a preliminary budget for the coming fiscal year, nearly \$1 billion more than the current year's funds, even as officials expected tax revenues to grow at a slower pace and a state budget shortfall imperils the city's health-care programs.

"In these most adverse circumstances, the City must take significant action to preserve our ability to continue to fund life-saving measures. This Administration is committed to doing whatever it takes to keep New Yorkers protected", Mayor said.

— said.
The budget, which addresses serious revenue shortfalls, prioritizes protecting health, safety, shelter and access to food for all New Yorkers.

"Our top priorities are simple: we will keep people safe, protect their health, make sure there is a roof over their head and that food is on their table," said Mayor Bill de Blasio. "There is no cost too great to keeping New Yorkers protected, but Washington must also step up. New Yorkers deserve nothing less than the full support of our federal government in this time of crisis."

The FY21 Executive Budget

The \$89.3 billion Executive Budget is balanced and was crafted in light of immense fiscal hardship. Facing a \$7.4 billion tax revenue hit across FY20 and FY21, the Administration achieved an unprecedented level of savings and took down reserves. These actions reduced the budget by \$3.4 billion, or 3.7%, compared to the FY20 Budget that was adopted in June 2019.

*Read the full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news*



By Narendra Modi

"Today, the world is in pursuit of new business models. India, a youthful nation known for its innovative zeal can take the lead in providing a new work culture. I envision this new business and work culture being redefined on the following vowels. I call them- vowels of the new normal- because like vowels in the English language, these would become essential ingredients of any business model in the post-COVID world".

It has been a topsy-turvy start to the third decade of this century. COVID-19 has brought with it many disruptions. Coronavirus has significantly changed the contours of professional life. These days, home is the new office. The Internet is the new meeting room.

For the time being, office breaks with colleagues are history. I have also been adapting to these changes. Most meetings, be it with minister colleagues, officials and world leaders, are now via video conferencing.

In order to get ground level feedback from various stakeholders, there have been videoconference meetings with several sections of society. There were extensive interactions with NGOs, civil society groups and community organizations. There was an interaction with Radio Jockeys too. Besides that, I have been making numerous phone calls daily, taking feedback from different sections of society.

One is seeing the ways through which people are continuing their work in these times. There are a few creative videos by our film stars conveying a relevant message of staying home. Our singers did an online concert. Chess players played chess digitally and through that contributed to the fight against COVID-19. Quite innovative!

The workplace is getting Digital First. And, why not? After all, the most transformational impact of Technology often happens in the lives of the poor. It is technology that demolishes bureaucratic hierarchies, eliminates middlemen and accelerates welfare measures.

Let me give you an example. When we got the opportunity to serve in 2014, we started connecting Indians, especially the poor with their Jan Dhan Account, Aadhar & Mobile number. This seemingly simple connection has not only stopped corruption and rent seeking that was going on for decades, but has also enabled the Government to transfer money at the click of a button. This click of a button has replaced multiple levels of hierarchies on the file and also weeks of delay.

India has perhaps the largest such infrastructure in the world. This infrastructure has helped us tremendously in transferring money directly and immediately to the poor and needy, benefiting crores of families, during the COVID-19 situation.

GUEST COMMENT

The Rs 43,574-crore investment by Facebook in Jio Platforms Limited is an indication of the shape of the post-Covid world. Making Facebook Jio's largest minority shareholder, it is the joining of hands of two digital behemoths. Jio had shaken up the telecom sector with its low-cost access to data over the Internet, among other things, and now it has the power of the company that has transformed how the world interacts. Naturally, this gives it a commanding position.

Facebook owns WhatsApp, and India is the largest market of the ubiquitous messaging app. Facebook's statement flags its interest in leveraging this

Digital synergy: Facebook and Reliance team up

usage for e-commerce, by tying up with Jio's small business initiative, JioMart. The goal is a 'super-app' for e-commerce, communication and advertising, perhaps like the enormously successful WeChat in China. The sale of the stake is a shot in the arm for Reliance. It can use the money to pay off its debts and also weather the storm raised by sinking oil prices. On the other hand, for Facebook, this is another attempt to widen its reach, something that the Free Basics programme failed in earlier, and to boost WhatsApp Pay, which competes with entrenched

players like Paytm, Google Pay, and PhonePe.

Facebook and Reliance both stand to gain from the investment. It remains to be seen if the Indian consumers too will be winners. How the two companies work will be watched closely. The post-lockdown business environment will be one in which existing small businesses will face a tremendous strain. However, what may seem to be ripe for disruption may not turn out to be so easy. It was the small grocery stores that showed initiative and leveraged the granular knowledge of their neighborhoods to serve the

AS I SEE IT

Life in the era of COVID-19



Most meetings, be it with minister colleagues, officials and world leaders, are now via video conferencing

Twitter picture / @narendramodi

Another case in point is the education sector. There are many outstanding professionals already innovating in this sector. Invigorating technology in this sector has its benefits. The Government of India has also undertaken efforts such as the DIKSHA Portal, to help teachers and boost e-learning. There is SWAYAM, aimed at improving access, equity and quality of education. E-Pathshala, which is available in many languages, enables access to various e-books and such learning material.

Today, the world is in pursuit of new business models. India, a youthful nation known for its innovative zeal can take the lead in providing a new work culture. I envision this new business and work culture being redefined on the following vowels. I call them- vowels of the new normal- because like vowels in the English language, these would become essential ingredients of any business model in the post-COVID world.

ADAPTABILITY:The need of the hour is to think of business and lifestyle models that are easily adaptable. Doing so would mean that even in a time of crisis, our offices, businesses and commerce could get moving faster, ensuring loss of life does not occur.

Embracing digital payments is a prime example of adaptability. Shop owners big and small should invest in digital tools that keep commerce connected, especially in times of crisis. India is already witnessing an encouraging surge in digital transactions.

Another example is telemedicine. We are already seeing several consultations without actually going to the clinic or hospital. Again, this is a positive sign. Can we think of business models to help further telemedicine across the world?

EFFICIENCY:Perhaps, this is the time to think of reimaging what we refer to as being efficient. Efficiency cannot only be about- how much time was spent in the office. We should perhaps think of models where productivity and efficiency matter more than appearance of effort. The emphasis should be on completing a task in the specified time frame.

INCLUSIVITY:Let us develop business models that attach primacy to care for the poor, the most vulnerable as well as our planet. We have made major progress in

combating climate change. Mother Nature has demonstrated to us her magnificence, showing us how quickly it can flourish when human activity is slower. There is a significant future in developing technologies and practices that reduce our impact on the planet. Do more with less.

COVID-19 has made us realize the need to work on health solutions at low cost and large scale. We can become a guiding light for global efforts to ensure the health and wellbeing of humanity.

We should invest in innovations to make sure our farmers have access to information, machinery, and markets no matter what the situation, that our citizens have access to essential goods.

OPPORTUNITY:Every crisis brings with it an opportunity. COVID-19 is no different. Let us evaluate what might be the new opportunities/growth areas that would emerge now.

Rather than playing catch up, India must be ahead of the curve in the post-COVID world. Let us think about how our people, our skills sets, our core capabilities can be used in doing so.

UNIVERSALISM:COVID-19 does not see race, religion, color, caste, creed, language or border before striking. Our response and conduct thereafter should attach primacy to unity and brotherhood.

We are in this together. Unlike previous moments in history, when countries or societies faced off against each other, today we are together facing a common challenge. The future will be about togetherness and resilience.

The next big ideas from India should find global relevance and application. They should have the ability to drive a positive change not merely for India but for the entire humankind.

Logistics was previously only seen through the prism of physical infrastructure - roads, warehouses, ports. But logistical experts these days can control global supply chains through the comfort of their own homes.

India, with the right blend of the physical and the virtual can emerge as the global nerve center of complex modern multinational supply chains in the post COVID-19 world. Let us rise to that occasion and seize this opportunity.

I urge you all to think about this and contribute to the discourse. The shift from BYOD to WFH brings new challenges to balance the official and personal. Whatever be the case, devote time to fitness and exercising. Try Yoga as a means to improve physical and mental wellbeing.

Traditional medicine systems of India are known to help keep the body fit. The Ayush Ministry has come out with a protocol that would help in staying healthy. Have a look at these as well.

Lastly, and importantly, please download Aarogya Setu Mobile App. This is a futuristic App that leverages technology to help contain the possible spread of COVID-19.

(The author is the Prime Minister of India)

customers during a period when the well-funded e-commerce giants were bogged down by logistic and other issues. They will not give in so easily. Close collaboration between two top content purveyors also raises the prospect of feeding tunnel visions by presenting a narrow, personalized curation of content and the creation of echo-chambers. The alliance of the powerful will have to be sensitive to the needs and perceptions of the masses, even as it forges a closer relationship.

(Tribune, India)

A TIME FOR PLANETARY SOLIDARITY



By Sujatha Byravan and
Sudhir Chella Rajan

"As in any crisis, the poorest - daily-wage workers, the homeless, migrants and operators of micro-enterprises - are the worst affected. Even so, in the present instance, their fate is especially dire. Any person whose livelihood is directly connected with their physical labor has been left with zero options unless they are somehow connected with health care, food or sanitation. It is the old privileging of mental over manual labor, but the inequities and disparities are starker now in and in more brutal circumstances than ever before."

Self-help gurus say it takes 21 days to develop a new habit. However, in a crisis, we may learn quite a few overnight. The microscopic SARS-CoV-2, by causing a global pandemic, has forced much of humanity to cease everyday practices and jump-start new ones. It has also reminded us of certain tenets that we have always known. For instance, it is possible for individuals, communities, and nations to respond to a planetary crisis within days. The nature of the response in different settings, however, depends on leadership, the quality and strength of local institutions, resources deployed and the ability to deliver straightforward and meaningful messages regarding behavioral change.

More reassuringly, empathy for fellow travelers around the world turns out to be at least as widespread as avarice and insularity. Compassion and structured forms of support by different kinds of non-state actors have been amply demonstrated across the world, with people enduring personal threats to life to assist the most vulnerable.

As in any crisis, the poorest - daily-wage workers, the homeless, migrants and operators of micro-enterprises - are the worst affected. Even so, in the present instance, their fate is especially dire. Any person whose livelihood is directly connected with their physical labor has been left with zero options unless they are somehow connected with health care, food or sanitation. It is the old privileging of mental over manual labor, but the inequities and disparities are starker now in and in more brutal circumstances than ever before.

Learning lessons

For knowledge workers, one of the new social norms being created is extensive Internet use for learning and work. While some of this was happening earlier, the scale of international video meetings and virtual classes taking place now is unprecedented. In certain sectors such as accounting, desk-based research and software development, working remotely turns out to be profitable to companies.

There are some guidelines to infer from this. The drastic reduction in flights, for instance, has affected the airline industry adversely but also highlighted the fact that many flight trips during 'normal' times are in fact unnecessary. Before the pandemic, business meetings, including international conferences and climate change meetings, were responsible for a bulk of flight travel. For example, a return flight, economy class, from Delhi to New York releases about 0.9 tons of carbon dioxide (it is twice as much in premium economy). This is half of India's per capita annual emissions.

The same can be said of many vehicle trips. The lockdown has shown that up to half of these trips are dispensable, especially if commuting and education trips can be cut down severely.

For a sizeable fraction of the workforce, conducting tasks from home ought to be encouraged, better organized and provide more freedom for people, not less. It should be the norm in many sectors and people could work from home at least half the time, thus reducing travel needs, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and simplifying childcare and other domestic services.

An even more revolutionary approach to education and learning is conceivable. Online schooling and college education without paywalls is already available, but if it were expanded to develop open access schools and universities, the scam of high admissions fees can be altogether eliminated.

Industrial production and electricity generation also do not have to go back to pre-COVID-19 levels. Life under lockdown has already demonstrated that there are essentials, superfluous items and luxuries. Responsible consumer action and new social norms to limit the last two can make a dent on greenhouse gas emissions while promoting simpler and potentially happier ways of life.

Fundamental change

There are many encouraging signs of truly 'green' alternatives to the current economic system and the beliefs that govern it. Becoming sustainable is vital for ensuring that



Rather than fortress worlds, nations need to focus on building shared programs of knowledge and collective welfare

the worst effects of climate change - another planetary crisis lurking just over the horizon of the present one - also do not fall on the already underprivileged.

Unfortunately, the popular version of 'green growth' is flawed because it assumes that normal business activity can be made more sustainable merely by adding renewable technology and trees to it, for instance. But such spiritless measures often harm economic or social welfare even if they improve environmental outcomes. Sustainability will need not just decoupling economic growth from pollution but ultimately decoupling planetary welfare from economic growth while fostering social progress.

U.S. President Donald Trump's \$2-trillion stimulus plan turns out to be mostly another corporate bailout. India cannot afford to do the same. The true losers are low wage and daily wage earners, who need assistance along with the farming community. Vehicle manufacturers, fossil-fuel companies, airlines and large businesses and even banks should not even be on the bailout queue.

For the vast majority of the working class, the provision of universal basic income would be the first step towards reducing their precarity. Such change requires bold measures to reduce financial speculation and the hoarding of wealth by the rentier class by reintroducing the estate tax and putting brakes on high-speed trading, for instance.

A transformation of work is also needed for the entrepreneurial class, where greater flexibility, coordination and access to markets are made easier. In addition, social measures must be strengthened to protect the health and safety of the poorest. Public hospitals need to be improved and have the capacity to respond to pandemics and related crises. Access to care in the emergency and beyond should be equally available to all. By focusing on the delivery of basic services, we will discover new opportunities for equitable action.

What is also quite clear, and shared with the climate change crisis, is that if you ignore science, it will come back to bite you. Mixed and confusing messages from the government add fuel to a flaming pandemic. Ignoring or denying the science of climate change does the same. United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres said: "This is, above all, a crisis that calls for solidarity." That implies building shared programs of knowledge and action for collective welfare, not fortress worlds.

(Sujatha Byravan is a scientist based in Chennai. Sudhir Chella Rajan is Professor, Indian Institute of Technology-Madras)

Pakistan prunes terror watch list, Lakhvi off it

NEW DELHI / ISLAMABAD (TIP): India is looking carefully at a revelation that Pakistan has removed thousands of names, including that of 2008 Mumbai attack mastermind Zakir-Rehman Lakhvi, from a terrorist watch list claiming that many of them had died and several others were "not associated" with any terror organisation. India has reasons to be skeptical because the revelation that the list has been halved from 7,600 to 3,800 did not come from Pakistan or the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) but from data collected by Castellum.AI, a New York-based regulatory technology company. Reports quoted a Pakistani official as saying the list was riddled with inaccuracies and update was needed to fulfill FATF's direction to clean up its database ahead of its June assessment. India may not comment specifically till it has ascertained from either the FATF or an independent perusal of the list. Sources suggested that by keeping the revision of the list a secret, Pakistan may have violated FATF standards. Pakistan has been under close FATF scrutiny for almost three years.

Singapore extends curbs

SINGAPORE (TIP): Singapore will extend a partial lockdown until June 1 to curb a sharp rise in coronavirus infections in the city-state, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said on Tuesday. The measures, which include the closures of most workplaces and schools and are called a "circuit breaker" by authorities, were initially set to run until May 4. The city-state reported 1,111 new coronavirus cases on Tuesday, bringing total infections to 9,125.

Sri Lanka postpones poll

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lanka has postponed the parliamentary elections by nearly two months to June 20 due to the virus outbreak that has killed seven people and infected 295. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa on March 2 dissolved the Parliament, six months ahead of schedule and called a snap election on April 25. A notice signed by three members of the National Election Commission announced June 20 date of the election.

Driver killed in attack on UN vehicle in Myanmar

YEMEN (TIP): A Myanmar government health worker was injured and his driver killed when their United Nations-marked vehicle was ambushed as they were carrying COVID-19 test samples in conflict-ridden Rakhine state. The country's northwest has been embroiled in an increasingly brutal civil war between Myanmar's military and Arakan Army rebels demanding more autonomy for the state's ethnic Rakhine population. Both the military and insurgents blamed each other for the attack. AFP

Pakistan PM Imran tests negative for COVID-19; total cases cross 10,000 mark

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan was tested negative for the novel coronavirus on Wednesday, his aide said, as the number of the COVID-29 cases crossed 10,000 in the country.

Khan, 67, agreed for the test after Faisal Edhi, the son of late philanthropist Abdul Sattar Edhi and chairman of the Edhi Foundation, who met him last week tested positive for the coronavirus.

"I am happy to report that his test is NEGATIVE," government's chief spokesperson Firdous Ashiq Awan tweeted.

She said the premier was tested for SARS-CoV-2, the virus strain that causes COVID-19.

Awan said the family of the Prime Minister had already tested negative.

Earlier in the day, a team of doctors from the Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital collected samples from the Prime Minister.

Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital CEO Dr Faisal Sultan said that Khan agreed for the test as a responsible prime minister and a responsible citizen.

Sultan, who is also Khan's personal physician and focal person on COVID-19, on Tuesday told the media, that Khan would undergo the test.

Saad, the son of Faisal Edhi, told the Dawn newspaper on Tuesday that his father started showing symptoms last week, soon after meeting Khan in Islamabad on April 15.

"The symptoms lasted for four days before subsiding," Saad said.

Faisal Edhi had met Prime Minister Khan to hand over a Rs 10 million cheque for the premier's coronavirus relief fund.

The Edhi Foundation was founded by



the late Abdul Sattar Edhi and is the leading charity organisation in Pakistan.

Khan will participate in an event on Thursday organised to collect donations to fight the COVID-19 pandemic in the country.

A total of 17 more people have died in Pakistan from the COVID-19 in the last 24 hours, taking the death toll to 209.

The number of coronavirus cases has risen to 10,072, according to officials.

Pakistan's Punjab province has reported 4,331 cases, Sindh has 3,373, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa 1,345, Balochistan 495, Gilgit-Baltistan 283, Islamabad 194 and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir 51 patients.

So far, 118,020 tests have been done nationwide, including 5,647 in the last 24 hours. A total of 2,156 patients have recovered.

Army chief Qamar Javed Bajwa visited the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) on Wednesday and was briefed about the joint efforts by civil administration and Army to tackle

the threat of the virus.

Bajwa emphasised on the need for continued stratified risk assessment and "managing trinity of health crisis, economic slide and psycho-social impact," according to Army.

"The Pakistan Army in collaboration with other national institutions should take all possible measures to bring comfort to the nation in these challenging times," the Army quoted him as saying.

Advisor on Health Dr Zafar Mirza in his daily media briefing said that all the institutions were working together like never before to defeat the pandemic.

He also said that a new committee was set up under his leadership to develop a consensus on the technical aspects of the response to the coronavirus.

Mirza said that the next three or four weeks would be "absolutely critical" for Pakistan and asked the people to follow the guidelines and standard operating procedures (SOPs) to help control the spread.

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said that peak of the virus could be reached by end of May or start of June.

He said this after meeting with the Chairman of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Lieutenant General Muhammad Afzal.

Meanwhile, at least 492 Pakistanis, including 92 women, stranded in Afghanistan due to coronavirus pandemic have returned to their country from the Torkham border.

Officials said another 111 children, not registered with them as stranded persons but travelling with their parents, mostly mothers, were also allowed to enter Pakistan, the Dawn newspaper reported. — PTI

Myanmar ships 800 freed Rohingya prisoners back to Rakhine

SITTWE (MYANMAR) (TIP): Myanmar shipped hundreds of recently released Rohingya inmates back to the country's restive western borderlands on Monday, after fears that its overcrowded prisons could become hotbeds for runaway coronavirus outbreaks.

Men, women and children belonging to the stateless and long-persecuted Muslim minority were among nearly 25,000 prisoners freed last week by a presidential pardon to mark the country's April New Year celebrations.

A Navy vessel transported the group from Yangon to western Rakhine state, where most Rohingya live under tight movement restrictions and in conditions Amnesty International has condemned as "apartheid".

More than 600 disembarked near state capital Sittwe, while another 200

were taken further north to townships on the border with Bangladesh, state immigration department chief Soe Lwin told AFP.

"They will be quarantined," he added, without giving further details.

Myanmar's biggest prisoner release in years came as coronavirus fears gripped the country, with calls for low-risk inmates to be released from what Human Rights Watch describes as Myanmar's "horribly overcrowded and unsanitary" jails.

The World Health Organisation has also warned that prison populations are particularly vulnerable to the spread of the disease.

Myanmar has only 111 confirmed COVID-19 cases but experts fear the real number is many times higher because of the low numbers tested and the country's chronically underfunded

healthcare system.

Pressure is also on Myanmar to improve its treatment of the Rohingya, after a bloody military crackdown in 2017 sent around 750,000 civilians fleeing into Bangladesh and prompted genocide charges at the UN's top court.

The country must report back to the International Court of Justice next month, to outline the efforts it was taking to protect the minority.

Hundreds of Rohingya have been arrested and charged with immigration offences in recent years after trying to flee Rakhine state and seek refuge in other countries.

But the Rohingya garner little sympathy within Myanmar, where they are widely viewed as illegal immigrants even though many trace their roots in the country back generations. --- AFP

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COVID-19 Delays in Extension/Change of Status Filings



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

WASHINGTON (TIP): The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recognizes that there are immigration-related challenges as a direct result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. We continue to carefully analyze these issues and to leverage our resources to effectively address these challenges within our existing authorities. DHS also continues to take action to protect the American people and our communities and is considering a number of policies and procedures to improve the employment opportunities of U.S. workers during this pandemic.

Generally, nonimmigrants must depart the United States before their authorized period of admission expires. However, we recognize that nonimmigrants may unexpectedly remain in the United States beyond their authorized period of stay due to

COVID-19. Should this occur, the following options are available for nonimmigrants:

Apply for an Extension. Most nonimmigrants can mitigate the immigration consequences of COVID-19 by timely filing an application for extension of stay (EOS) or change in status (COS). U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services continues to accept and process applications and petitions, and many of our forms are available for online filing.

If You File in a Timely Manner. Nonimmigrants generally do not accrue unlawful presence while the timely-filed, non-frivolous EOS/COS application is pending. Where applicable, employment authorization with the same employer, subject to the same terms and conditions of the prior approval, is automatically extended for up to 240 days after I-94 expiration when an extension of stay request is filed on time.

Flexibility for Late Applications. USCIS reminds petitioners and applicants that it can consider delays

caused by the COVID-19 pandemic when deciding whether to excuse delays in filing documents based on extraordinary circumstances.

Under current regulations and as noted on our Special Situations page, if a petitioner or applicant files an extension of stay or change of status request (on Forms I-129 or I-539) after the authorized period of admission expires, USCIS, in its discretion, may excuse the failure to file on time if it was due to extraordinary circumstances beyond their control, such as those that may be caused by COVID-19. The length of delay must be commensurate with the circumstances. The petitioner or applicant must submit credible evidence to support their request, which USCIS will evaluate on a case-by-case basis. These special situations have been used at various times in the past, including for natural disasters and similar crises.

Please see 8 CFR 214.1(c)(4) and 8 CFR 248.1(c) for additional information on late requests to extend or change status. In addition, please see our Form I-129

and Form I-539 pages for specific filing and eligibility requirements for extensions of stay and changes of status.

Flexibility for Visa Waiver Entrants. Visa Waiver Program (VWP) entrants are not eligible to extend their stay or change status. However, under current regulations, if an emergency (such as COVID-19) prevents the departure of a VWP entrant, USCIS in its discretion may grant a period of satisfactory departure for up to 30 days. Please see 8 CFR 217.3(a). For those VWP entrants already granted satisfactory departure and unable to depart within this 30-day period because of COVID-19 related issues, USCIS has the authority to temporarily provide an additional 30-day period of satisfactory departure. To request satisfactory departure from USCIS, a VWP entrant should call the USCIS Contact Center.

For other policy updates, operational changes, and other COVID-19 information, please visit uscis.gov/coronavirus.

AAPi's Donate a Mask Program Provides Masks to Several Hospitals across the Nation



CHICAGO (TIP): Responding to the national/world-wide shortage of masks and other personal protective equipment, American Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPi), the largest ethnic medical organization in the United States, has raised funds, donated money, purchased and donated Masks to several Medical Institutions across the United States.

Recognizing the importance of personal protective equipment (PPE), and that millions of healthcare professionals, including physicians and nurses, who are in the forefront diagnosing and treating patients diagnosed with COVID-19, are experiencing shortages of much needed Masks and PPEs. AAPi under the leadership of Dr. Suresh Reddy launched a Fund Raising to support their fellow professionals, providing them with Masks that are so vital to prevent them from getting transmitted with this deadly virus.

Dr. Suresh Reddy, President of AAPi, said, "As we are not prepared well, our frontline soldiers (physicians) are working under suboptimal conditions with severe shortage of masks and other protective gear. As a result, some of the foot soldiers have succumbed to this deadly virus. To protect our fraternity, we have established a donation box on AAPi website under the banner "DONATE A MASK."

A Task Force consisting of Dr. Jayesh Shah, Chair; Dr. Sudhakar Jonnalagadda, Co-Chair; Dr. Suresh Reddy, President of

AAPi; Dr. Anupama Gotimukula, Vice President; Dr. Seema Arora, Chair, BOT; Dr. Sajani Shah, Chair, BOT-Elect; Dr. Chander Kapasi, Chair, AAPi Charitable Foundation; and Dr. Surendra Purohit, Vice Chair of AAPi Charitable Foundation, has been constituted to identify the hospitals and sending the supply of Masks/PPE directly.

In our efforts to contain and prevent this pandemic, we are recommending that the Authorities across the nation "Implement and enforce a total lockdown of the nation, social distancing, and enforce self-quarantine of the total population, as has been practiced in other countries in order to flatten the infection curve," Dr. Jayesh Shah, Past President of AAPi, said.

While thinking generous donors who provided cash and, masks to AAPi Task Force, Dr. Sudhakar Jonnalagadda, President-Elect of AAPi and Chairman of the AAPi's Task Force on Donate a Mask initiative, announced: "Last week, Dr. Suresh Reddy, Dr. Sreenivas Reddy and Member of Illinois Medical Board donated Masks on behalf of AAPi to Deb Carey, CEO of Cook County Health Care Systems. ISCOPI donated masks to 3 local hospitals last week. And Flushing Hospital in Queens was another beneficiary from AAPi's Mask Drive. In addition, funds raised locally by several AAPi Chapters and masks were bought by AAPi, and were donated to dozens of smaller health care institutes and private practices as per the local needs."

Dr. Seema Arora, Chairwoman of AAPi BOT, said, "We are experiencing an extraordinary and unprecedented time. Never before in the modern history have we experienced this kind of health-related calamity. Covid-19 is playing havoc on our streets and isolating family members at home. The results are catastrophic. As the disease is new, we are not able to treat it properly. We don't have vaccines or anti-viral

agents to effectively treat the patients with this strange disease. As of now, we are only providing supportive treatment."

Dr. Anupama Gotimukula, Vice President, AAPi, said, "AAPi is urging the Government to expand testing on a wholesale level and make freely available across the United States; Quarantine and Isolation: Enact quarantine and isolation rules like we have seen in other countries to prevent the spread of the virus; and, Off Site Treatment Areas: Create treatment areas outside of hospitals and healthcare facilities to test and treat patients who are potentially exhibiting symptoms and need additional guidance."

"While applauding our fellow healthcare workers, including physicians, nurses, EMS, paramedics, medical assistants, and healthcare professionals, we are saddened that many of these heroes are being infected with COVID-19 while treating patients and often without Personal protection Equipment, endangering their safety and that of their families," Dr. Ravi Kolli, Secretary of AAPi, said.

Dr. Kolli also cautioned of significant mental health impact of the pandemic due to disruption of social and economic life from isolation and job loss. He encouraged everyone to stay socially connected with their loved ones via smart technology and avoiding over consumption negative media and alternative news sources.

Dr. Raj Bhayani, Treasurer of AAPi, while acknowledging the significant impact and the cost of these policies on our fellow citizens and our society as a whole, said, "We have witnessed rapid growth in the spread of the virus that have led us to believe that further action is needed."

"To protect our medical fraternity, AAPi has established a donation box on AAPi website under the banner "DONATE a MASK". We request all the members to donate generously to fight this ferocious

virus, which has put the basic existence of entire human race at stake," Dr. Chander Kapasi, announced here.

"Our special thanks to all the AAPi members who are already working at "ground zero" risking their own lives. We are extremely grateful for these "foot soldiers" working under suboptimal conditions. Let's kill this "rakshas" virus together and let's our next Diwali be a really special one," Dr. Reddy said.

As concerned physicians witnessing the growing COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on our society, healthcare system and economy, we are writing to you, our local, state, and federal policy leaders to advocate more immediate and severe action to prevent the crisis from becoming unmanageable.

In view of the rising number of positive cases of COVID-19 in USA, Dr. Lokesh Edara, Chair of AAPi International Medical Education, AAPi has urged the President of USA and all State Governors to mandate people that:

EVERYONE SHOULD WEAR A MASK when going outside in public and interacting with any person similar to the mandatory rule made by Czech Republic

Along with hand washing and 6 feet social distance, the sick should be **ISOLATED**

Every patient must wear a mask when seen by a Physician and a Healthcare worker Quoting evidence from Japan and Czech Republic that this could be an effective measure to flatten the COVID-19 spread curve, AAPi has pointed out that Japan has very low COVID-19 spread: 13 cases per million vs USA 374 per million; Japanese have a cultural habit of wearing a mask for several reasons, and the mask is mutually beneficial for the person wearing it and to the people adjacent to them.

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)

India's New Consul General in Chicago given warm welcome



The Consulate General of India in Chicago extended a warm welcome to the new Consul General Amit Kumar

CHICAGO (TIP): The Consulate General of India in Chicago extended a warm welcome to the new Consul General Amit Kumar upon assumption of charge earlier this month. He succeeds Sudhakar Dalela, who took over as Political Counsellor at Embassy of India, Washington DC.

Amit Kumar is a career diplomat and

joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1995. He has wide ranging experience having served in Headquarters and in several Indian Missions abroad. He has dealt with both bilateral and multilateral work in diverse areas such as political, strategic and economic spheres. Prior to taking up his current assignment as the Consul General of

India in Chicago, he was the Deputy Chief of Mission in the Embassy of India, Washington DC with Ambassador rank. His recent assignments included stints as Joint Secretary for Development Partnership Administration and as Joint Secretary for Human Resources Management in the Ministry of External Affairs, New

Delhi. He was also Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of India in Tokyo. He has previously served as Under Secretary (China) and Director in the Foreign Secretary's Office in New Delhi.

His overseas assignments include stints in a number of key capitals as Third Secretary in the Embassy of India, Beijing; First Secretary dealing with political work in the Embassy of India, Berlin; First Secretary / Counsellor dealing with political, information, cultural and education work at the Embassy of India, Ankara; Counsellor and Head of the Economic & Commercial Wing in the Embassy of India, Beijing; and Counsellor / Minister dealing with Third Committee and UNSC matters in the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations, New York.

Ambassador Kumar holds a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur. He is married to Ms. Surabhi Kumar and has two children.

Indian American Lawmaker Unveils New Legislation for Protecting Immigrants during Covid-19 Pandemic

WASHINGTON (TIP): Following a growing number of immigrants in federal custody testing positive for COVID-19, U.S. Representative Pramila Jayapal (D-WA) and U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) unveiled new legislation, called the Federal Immigrant Release for Safety and Security Together (FIRST) Act, that would move immigrants out of detention and halt immigration enforcement against individuals not deemed a significant public safety risk during the COVID-19 pandemic and future public health emergencies.

Jayapal is the Vice Chair of House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship and the Co-Chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus. Booker is a member of Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Border Security and Immigration.

"The federal government is entirely responsible for the safety and wellbeing of immigrants in detention centers and Congress must ensure that ICE is heeding critical public health guidance and keeping immigrants and our communities safe from infection," Jayapal said. "By reducing the number of people held in ICE detention centers and making sure those who remain in detention have access to needed soap and proper hygiene products, the FIRST Act reduces the risk of spreading disease and protects immigrants and our public health. We are in the midst of a public health crisis that has upended all of our daily lives, and we have a moral obligation to look out for the most vulnerable people among us."

"Detention centers are like a ticking

time bomb - they are severely at risk for a COVID-19 outbreak, considering the close quarters in which detainees are housed and a population with much higher rates of underlying health issues," Booker said. "We have an obligation to do everything we can to prevent the spread of this deadly disease, and that means moving people out of detention centers when they do not pose a public safety risk. This is really a matter of life and death: it's time that we act quickly and decisively to save as many lives as possible, and that means ending the unnecessary detention of immigrants during this public health crisis."

"I felt insecure in the jail. You were hearing things, seeing things on the news, but you don't see the jail staff doing anything different. You would ask for things-cleaning supplies, masks, soap, hand sanitizer, and none was provided. I'm worried because there's a lot of people still in there who feel like they can do nothing. Some people left kids, and the kids got taken into foster care, so they can't talk to their kids right now. [The prison is] just not the place to be when you've got family outside, it's terrifying," said Marco Milian, a client of the National Immigrant Justice Center who was released from ICE custody in Illinois on April 2, 2020.

"I support this bill because it is necessary now but also because something could happen in two years and people should not be at risk. Why hold on to us when you are putting our lives at risk? What I experienced when I was detained was unfair, I thought I was being punished. We already had a lot to worry about with our cases and we shouldn't

have to worry about being at risk of dying. I don't want others to have to go through what I went through. This is not about immigrant rights-it is about human rights," said Karlena Dawson, a client of the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project who was released from the Northwest ICE Processing Center until March 30, after being detained since February 2019.

Under the FIRST Act, individuals moved out of immigration detention would not be forced to return to detention once the public health emergency has lifted unless an individualized determination is made that the person is a threat to public safety or alternatives to detention are insufficient to guarantee attendance at immigration proceedings.

The bill would also modify in-person reporting requirements, suspend collateral arrests, make telephone calls and video-conferencing available for detained immigrants free of charge (since in-person visits have been temporarily suspended), and ensure that soap, hand sanitizer, and other necessary hygiene products are provided free of charge to immigrants in detention (recent reports have revealed that these basic sanitation supplies are not being provided at many detention centers across the country). Full text of the bill is available here.

Despite reports that ICE would alter enforcement priorities as the country grapples with the coronavirus pandemic, officials within the Department of Homeland Security have sent mixed signals about how enforcement priorities will be modified to address the crisis. It's estimated that roughly 37,000 immigrants



Jayapal is the Vice Chair of House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship and the Co-Chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus

are detained nationally, with about 1,200 located in New Jersey and 700 in Washington state. According to data released by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), 72 immigrants have tested positive nationally.

In the U.S. House of Representatives, the bill is cosponsored by U.S. Representatives Earl Blumenauer, Tony Cárdenas, Judy Chu, Adriano Espaillat, Chuy García, Sylvia R. Garcia, Alcee L. Hastings, Eleanor Holmes Norton, Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr., Zoe Lofgren, James P. McGovern, Gwen Moore, Jerrold Nadler, Ilhan Omar, Mark Pocan, Mike Quigley, Bobby L. Rush, Jan Schakowsky, Adam Smith, Rashida Tlaib, Nydia M. Velázquez, Peter Welch.

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)

With 1,409 infections in 24 hrs, cases in India rise to 21,393

NEW DELHI (TIP): The total cases of COVID-19 in the country, including 77 foreign nationals mounted to 21393, the Union Health Ministry said on Thursday.

Of the total cases, at least 16,454 are active cases, 4,257 people have recovered and 681 people have lost their lives.

Maharashtra reported 5,652 cases and 269 fatalities so far, followed by Gujarat with 2,407 cases and 103 deaths and Delhi with 2,248 cases and 48 deaths.

The number of people who recovered in Maharashtra stands at 789. In the national capital, it is 724 and in Gujarat, 179 people have recovered so far.

Other states which have more than 1,500 cases are Rajasthan (1890), Tamil Nadu (1629) and Madhya Pradesh (1592).

Centre asks states, UTs to strictly comply with lockdown guidelines

The Centre has asked states and union territories to strictly comply with the lockdown measures announced to combat the novel coronavirus pandemic and not to dilute them at any level.

In a communication to chief secretaries of state governments and Union Territory administrations, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla said some states and UTs are issuing orders allowing activities which have not been allowed as per the guidelines issued by the home ministry under the Disaster Management Act, 2005.

"I would again urge you to ensure compliance of the revised consolidated guidelines, and direct all authorities concerned for their strict implementation in letter and in spirit without any dilution and to ensure strict compliance of lockdown measures," he said.

The consolidated revised



guidelines on the measures to be taken by central ministries and departments, and state and Union Territory governments were issued on April 15 after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced extension of the nationwide lockdown till May 3.

The lockdown was earlier from March 25 to April 14. The home ministry has sought strict implementation of the guidelines in all parts of the country to contain the spread of COVID-19.

The home secretary also drew the attention of the chief secretaries to the guidelines which categorically say that state and Union Territory governments will not dilute them in

any manner and strictly enforce the same.

They can, however, impose stricter measures than the guidelines as per the requirement of local areas.

Bhalla also pointed out to a recent Supreme Court observation that all state governments, public authorities and citizens will faithfully comply with the directives and orders issued by the Union of India in letter and spirit in the interest of public safety.

The observations, which must be treated as the directions of the apex court, were conveyed in "my letter dated April 1 to all states and UTs (union territories)", he said.

Lockdown creates supply snags in India's race to build more ventilators for Covid-19 crisis

BENGALURU (TIP): Indian medical device makers, racing to churn out ventilators as domestic COVID-19 cases spike, have been beset by supply bottlenecks, cost overruns and labour shortages that are delaying their efforts to produce an affordable device.

Ventilators help patients breathe and are seen as critical given severe COVID-19 can lead to pneumonia and lung damage. Experts warn India may run out of devices as it has fewer than 50,000 and may need 20 times that in a peak infection scenario.

Companies, including Bengaluru-based Dynamatic, startup Nocca Robotics and New Delhi's AgVa Healthcare, are rushing to fill the expected supply gap with stripped-down ventilators, priced between \$33 and \$7,000.

Top-end ventilators can cost up to \$16,000 in India.

But with many countries boosting output and India forced into a lockdown, components and labour are in short supply, leading to production delays of up to two weeks.

"We require components that are extremely hard to procure," said Amitabha Bandyopadhyay, a professor at the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, who is



collaborating with Nocca.

Nocca has been set back by two weeks and now aims to make 30,000 ventilators by mid-May, as it struggles to import high-capacity pumps and flow sensors that help regulate air in ventilators, Bandyopadhyay added.

"These materials are so rare now in the international market that there has been a 50%-75% increase in prices in the last one month," he said. This has doubled the estimated price of Nocca's devices to Rs 1,50,000 (\$1,950).



GOVT SETS UP NATIONAL VACCINE TASK FORCE

NEW DELHI (TIP): The central government on Sunday constituted another national task force on vaccine development and drug testing having representatives from the ministry of Ayush (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy) among others as members.

The main job of this task force will be to work as a bridge between academia, research institutions, and international collaborations in the field of drug testing and vaccine development.

"We are contributing towards drug research as there are many herbs known for their medicinal properties. It is a collaborative effort with CSIR, ICMR etc," said Ayush secretary Rajesh Koticha.

The other members will be from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), department of science and technology (DST), department of biotechnology (DBT), council of scientific and industrial research (CSIR), defence research and development organisation (DRDO), directorate general of health services (DGHS) and drug controller general of India (DCGI).

"This task force will monitor the progress, not just in India but globally, happening in the field of vaccine development and drug trials. They will create a clinical cohort for long-term follow-up of people for achieving a better understanding of disease management. Bio specimens will be collected as part of the exercise, which will be different from the usual sample collection, for further drug and vaccine trials," said Lav Agarwal, joint secretary, health ministry.

'Govt acted on our Covid-19 suggestions in miserly way': Sonia Gandhi

NEW DELHI (TIP): Congress president Sonia Gandhi had said that the suggestions she gave to the government on tackling Covid-19 crisis, were only acted upon partially. At a meeting of party's highest decision-making body, the Congress Working Committee, Gandhi said that "large-heartedness and alacrity from the Central Government is conspicuous by its absence".

"Since our meeting three weeks ago, the pandemic has increased disturbingly - both in spread and speed," the Congress president said in her opening remarks.

"I offered our constructive cooperation and suggestions. Unfortunately, they have been acted upon only partially and in a miserly way. The compassion, large-heartedness and alacrity from the central government is conspicuous by its absence," she added.

She also said that certain sections of the society, like farm labourers, migrant labourers, construction workers and those in unorganised sector, are facing acute hardships. "Trade, commerce and industry have come to a virtual halt and crores of livelihoods have been destroyed."

"We have repeatedly urged the Prime Minister that there is no alternative to testing, trace and quarantine. Unfortunately, testing still remains low and testing kits are still in short supply and of poor quality. PPE kits number and quality is poor," she said.

Upto 7 years in jail for attacking Covid warriors, govt brings in ordinance

NEW DELHI (TIP): The central government on Wednesday brought in an ordinance under which any person who attacks a health worker who is treating Covid-19 cases can be jailed for a maximum of seven years.

The ordinance was brought in to amend the century old Epidemic Act.

Addressing a press conference, Union minister Prakash Javdekar said the ordinance has been brought in to "save health workers and other corona warriors".

Under the new law, attack on health workers is a cognisable and non-bailable offence.

For timely action, the ordinance stipulates a period of 30 days under which investigation on attack against health workers must be completed. It says the verdict in such cases should be delivered within one year.

The ordinance awards the following punishments:

Normal cases

Jail term: 3 months to 5 years
Fine: Rs 50,000 to Rs 2 lakh.

Serious cases

Jail term: 6 months to 7 years
Fine: Rs 1 lakh to Rs 7 lakh.

In case damage is caused to the vehicles and clinics of health workers, the guilty will be made to pay a fine which is double the market rate of the property damaged.

This move comes a day after the



Indian Medical Association demanded the Centre to bring in a law on urgent basis to protect medical professionals from attack on duty. This demand was amid rising incidents of violence against healthcare workers on the frontline of the fight against Covid-19.

The IMA also asked doctors and hospitals across the country to light candles on Wednesday as a protest against such attacks.

"Light a candle with white coat. White Alert is only a warning," the IMA said in a letter addressed to its doctors and hospitals.

"The COVID-19 has only made us acutely aware of our helplessness against mindless abuse and violence. Stigma and social boycott are everywhere. Harassment by administration is nothing but

violence by the state. Our legitimate needs for safe workplaces have to be met," IMA said in the letter addressed to all State Presidents and Secretaries, Local branch Presidents and Secretaries and all National office-bearers along with past National Presidents and Past HSGs.

The doctors' body had also warned that they would observe a 'Black Day' if no action is taken by the government and doctors in the country will work with black badges on April 23.

However, the symbolic protest was called off after Union Home Minister Amit Shah held talks with IMA representatives today and assured them that the government will provide adequate security to health workers.

Maharashtra Covid-19 doubling rate down to 7 days, 14 hotspots now down to 5: Minister

MUMBAI (TIP): Amidst growing number of Covid-19 cases in Maharashtra, there comes some good news. Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope has said that the doubling rate of positive cases in Maharashtra has now fallen to 7.01 days.

"Our doubling rate has now reached 7.01 today. This means that present figures will double after 7 days. But we will not allow that to happen and will bring it further down," Tope said in his online media address.

Tope further informed that the coronavirus hotspots in Maharashtra have come down.

"There were 14 hotspots in the state, now there are only 5, which are Mumbai, MMR, Nagpur, Pune and Malegaon," the Maharashtra health minister said.

Insisting that the state is fully prepared, Tope further said that the state has 1,55,000 isolation beds and is leading in the country with its testing capacity of 7,000 tests per day. "13% patients are getting



discharged every day while 83% are asymptomatic," he added.

"We will aggressively increase institutional quarantine from Thursday. We are also widely using plasma therapy. We are using blood samples/antibodies of recovered patients and using it for treating others," Tope added.

The minister informed that in

areas such as Dharavi, home quarantine is of no use, so the administration will be using larger spaces like schools for institutional quarantine. The state will also arrange for oxygen stations there.

Total coronavirus positive cases in Maharashtra have now touched 5,649. In Mumbai alone the number is 3,683.

18 docs, 36 medics quarantined in Chandigarh after baby with heart disease tests positive

CHANDIGARH (TIP): Fifty four staffers of the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) in Chandigarh, including 18 doctors, have been quarantined after a 6-month-old baby girl tested positive for Covid-19 on Wednesday.

The baby girl hails from Phagwara Punjab and was admitted to the advanced pediatric centre on April 9. She had to undergo an open heart surgery but the doctors noticed that she was having other problems.

The infant was diagnosed with a congenital heart disease with congestive heart failure. She had a ventricular septal defect, atrial septal defect and other issues. She was admitted to a private hospital in Ludhiana for 36 days and was subsequently referred to PGI, Chandigarh for corrective surgery.

The infant, according to doctors, showed gradual improvement in her overall condition. However, she was found to have contacted coronavirus.

"A pre-operative test for COVID-19 returned positive on April 21. The baby was subsequently shifted to the COVID-19 facility in Nehru Hospital Extension, PGI. She continues to receive ventilatory support," a PGI bulletin said.

All close contacts of the baby are being screened.

"We are currently investigating how the baby caught the COVID-19 infection. Given that the incubation period of COVID-19 infection is generally up to 2 weeks (but can be variable), it is possible that the baby may have been incubating the infection at the time of admission to PGI," a spokesperson said.

The infant did not have any suggestive travel history or family contact so there was no pre-emptive screening.

73 cops quarantined after 5 Moradabad violence accused test positive for coronavirus

MORADABAD (TIP): As many as 73 police personnel who came in contact with those arrested in connection with the Nawabpura stone-pelting incident here last week were quarantined on Wednesday after five of the accused tested positive for coronavirus, a police official said.

The five accused are among the 17 who were arrested after a mob attacked a team of health workers in Nawabpura area here on April 15 to prevent it from taking a coronavirus-infected man to an isolation facility.

Senior Superintendent of Police Amit Pathak said samples of all 73 police personnel, who have been quarantined at different centres here, have been sent for testing.

"We have enough staff at Nagphani police station to tackle the situation," he said.

'Lockdown in India impacted 40 million internal migrants'

The nationwide lockdown in India which started about a month ago has impacted nearly 40 million internal migrants, the World Bank has said.

"The lockdown in India has impacted the livelihoods of a large proportion of the country's nearly 40 million internal migrants. Around 50,000-60,000 moved from urban centers to rural areas of origin in the span of a few days," the bank said in a report released on Wednesday.

According to the report -- 'COVID-19 Crisis Through a Migration Lens' -- the magnitude of internal migration is about two-and-a-half times that of international migration.

"Lockdowns, loss of employment, and social distancing prompted a chaotic and painful process of mass return for internal migrants in India and many countries in Latin America," it said.

Thus, the Covid-19 containment measures might have contributed to spreading the epidemic, the report said.

Covid-19 vaccine trial set to begin in UK; scientist says 80% chance of success

BERLIN (TIP): The race to develop an effective vaccine against the novel coronavirus gathered pace this week, as clinical trials on humans were approved in Germany and launched in the UK.

Though there are now around 150 development projects worldwide, the German and British plans are among only five clinical trials on humans which have been approved across the globe.

In Britain, volunteers in a trial at the University of Oxford are set to be given on Thursday the first dose of a potential vaccine based on a virus found in chimpanzees.

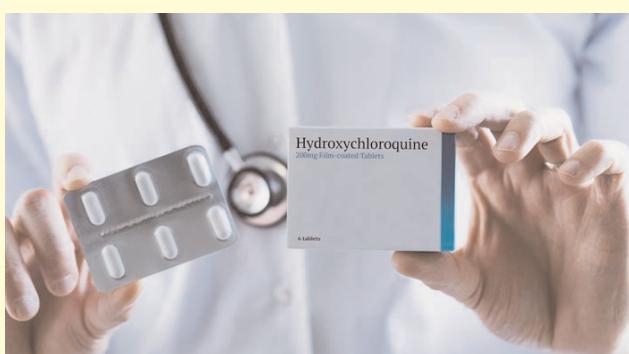
Meanwhile on Wednesday, German regulatory body PEI green-lighted the country's first trials on human volunteers for a vaccine developed by German firm Biontech and US giant Pfizer.

The Oxford trial, run by the university's Jenner Institute, will involve 510 volunteers aged between 18 and 55 in the first phase.

Research director Professor Sarah Gilbert estimated that it has around an 80 percent chance of being successful.

The institute aims to develop a million doses of the vaccine by September, so as to distribute it as quickly as possible after approval.

The Oxford trial is part of a nationwide effort in the UK which since Friday has been spearheaded by a government taskforce.



Use of hydroxychloroquine shows no benefit for treating Covid-19 patients: Report

WASHINGTON (TIP): The plan to use hydroxychloroquine for treating the COVID-19 patients in the US has received a setback with more deaths being reported among those who were given the much-touted anti-malarial drug, according to a report. Another report, however, suggested that there was insufficient clinical data to either recommend or oppose the use of hydroxychloroquine for treating those infected with the deadly coronavirus.

US President Donald Trump, who has been aggressively promoting the use of hydroxychloroquine in the treatment of COVID-19 patients, said that he would look into the reports.

His administration has stockpiled more than 30 million doses of hydroxychloroquine, a large chunk of which has been imported from India.

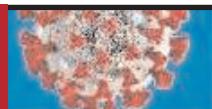
"I don't know of the report. Obviously, there have been some very good reports and perhaps this one's not a good report. But we'll be looking at it. We'll have a comment on it at some point," Trump told reporters during his daily White House news conference on coronavirus on Tuesday.

Trump was responding to a question on a study released by a group of scientists on use of hydroxychloroquine with or without antibiotic azithromycin for 368 COVID-19 patients.

The unreviewed study submitted to New England Journal of Medicine for publication and posted online found no evidence that the use of hydroxychloroquine, either with or without azithromycin, reduced the risk of mechanical ventilation in patients hospitalised with COVID-19. "An association of increased overall mortality was identified in patients treated with hydroxychloroquine alone," said the study that was funded by the National Institute of Health (NIH).

UK coronavirus death toll hits 18,100 as peak nears

TRACKING THE VIRUS



GLOBAL

Cases **2,638,024** | Deaths **184,235**

INDIA

Cases **21,393** | Deaths **681**



MAKE NO MISTAKE, CORONAVIRUS WILL BE WITH US FOR A LONG TIME: WHO CHIEF

GENEVA (TIP): Covid-19 will stalk the planet for a long time to come, the World Health Organization said Wednesday, warning that most countries were still in the early stages of tackling the pandemic.

WHO boss Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said some countries that thought they had the new coronavirus under control were witnessing a resurgence in cases, while there were troubling upward trends in Africa and the Americas.

He also insisted that the UN health agency had declared a global emergency in good time on January 30 for countries to prepare and plan their response.

The body has been heavily criticised by the United States for its handling of the pandemic but Tedros brushed off calls for him to resign.

"Most of the epidemics in western Europe appear to be stable or declining," Tedros told a virtual press conference in Geneva.

"Although numbers are low, we see worrying upward trends in Africa, Central and South America, and eastern Europe."

"Most countries are still in the early stages of their epidemics. And some



that were affected early in the pandemic are now starting to see a resurgence in cases.

"Make no mistake: we have a long way to go. This virus will be with us for a long time."

The global death toll has passed 175,000, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP, while more than 2.5 million declared cases have been registered since the epidemic first emerged in China in December.

Tedros was pressed on whether the WHO had acted swiftly enough.

"Looking back, I think we declared the emergency at the right time" on January 30, he said, adding that the world "had enough time to respond".

250.

They have also created 260,000 square feet of distribution warehousing – nearly four football fields worth.

"People used to joke in this country you couldn't

build a hospital that quickly [as China], well we didn't just build one, we built seven and we thank our armed forces for helping to make that happen," said Raab, in reference to new

makeshift hospitals built on conference centre sites around the UK.

"The sight of our armed forces working with NHS staff offers a calm reassurance to the British public," he added.

Honoring all nurses on the frontlines "THE AMERICAN NURSE", film

BY MABEL PAIS

"An ode to nurses who put their patients first on a daily basis... Each of the stories will tug at your heartstrings."

- **The New York Times**

"...mix of powerful images with words of men and women whose lives are devoted to healing."

- **The Washington Post - ("A Look at the Lives of American Nurses")**

"Katie salutes nurses across the country. Meet the heroes who heal us, inspire us and save our lives." KATIE Couric Show

- **"Celebrating Nurses" (Aired July 16, 2014)**

Nurses matter.

At some point in our life each of us will encounter a nurse, whether it be as a patient or as a loved one. And that one encounter can mean the difference between suffering and peace; between chaos and order.

"The American Nurse", Book

"The American Nurse," published in 2012, chronicles the life and work of 75 nurses across the nation. Black and white photographs accompany interviews, painting a rich portrait of nursing in America.

"The American Nurse Project" aims to elevate the voice of nurses in this country by capturing their personal stories through photography and film. In early 2012, photographer Carolyn Jones and her team began a journey across the United States, recording the unique experiences of nurses at work. The photographs and narratives aim to inspire audiences to think about nurses in a way that they may never have before, with a newfound appreciation for this indispensable figure on the front lines of health and health care today: the American nurse.

"The American Nurse", Film

Dir. Carolyn Jones 1 USA 1 2014 1 Doc 1 h 21m 1

Fueled by both critical success and the support of the nursing community, The 'American Nurse Project' completed production on a feature length documentary. The film follows 5 nurses from the book along with their patients: Tonia Faust with maximum-security prison inmates; Jason Short with home health patients in Appalachia; Brian McMillion with soldiers returning from war; Naomi Cross with mothers giving birth; and Sister Stephen with nursing home patients at the end of life.



Sister Stephen



Jason Short



Tonia Faust

Photos / Courtesykinolorber.com

"The American Nurse" explores some of the biggest issues facing America - aging, war, poverty, prisons - through the work and lives of five nurses. It is an examination of real people that will change how we think about nurses and how we wrestle with the challenges of healing America.

The Subjects

Confronted with a U.S. population that is growing, aging and facing deteriorating health, these 5 fearless nurses serve on the front lines of health care, navigating their patients through birth, death, prison, war and harsh poverty.

Sister Stephen

Sister Stephen is the Director of Nursing at the Villa Loretto Nursing Home in rural Wisconsin, where she has cultivated a menagerie of animals including dogs, cows, sheep, llamas, alpaca and ring-tailed lemurs. The Villa is also the weekend home of kids in need of respite-some are in foster homes, others have emotional problems or have been victims of abuse-and the animals are therapeutic for the kids and the elderly residents alike. Sister Stephen brings all of the nurses together to sing a last hymn to their long-term and beloved residents as they approach the end of life.

Brian McMillion

Brian McMillion, a military nurse with the V.A. San Diego Health System, spent time overseas where he was the first person that wounded soldiers would see when they woke up, often missing limbs and suffering from PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder), wanting only to go back to their brothers in combat. In his current role, Brian works with young injured soldiers fresh from the combat theaters of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Naomi Cross

A Labor & Delivery nurse at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Naomi Cross spends most of her days filled with the joy of helping to bring new life into the world. When things don't go as planned, Naomi also serves as a bereavement counselor, pulling from her own experience of loss to counsel a family when their baby dies.

Jason Short

Born and bred in one of the poorest rural counties in the United States, Jason Short was a mechanic and truck driver who has now transitioned from fixing cars to fixing people. He spends his days forging into the remote hollows of Eastern Kentucky, helping his patients in their battles with cancer, diabetes, and black lung disease. Caring for a region plagued by poverty, drug addiction, industrial pollution and more, Jason is intimately acquainted with a part of America few ever see.

Tonia Faust

Tonia Faust grew up in the shadow of a maximum-security prison with a mother who worked in security at the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola. Tonia

started working as a nurse and ended up following her mother's path to Angola, where she now directs the hospice program. Tonia oversees a team of inmates who volunteer to care for their dying peers with a compassion and grace one would not expect to find behind bars.

"The American Nurse" premiered to sold out crowds during National Nurses' Week 2014 at theaters nationwide, and that was just the beginning! If interested in hosting a screening, or bringing the film to a theater near you, reach out to kinolorber.com

Any nurse that watches the film, in theaters or online, will be able to get CE credits through partners at Walden University. A portion of all proceeds benefit a scholarship fund for nurse education through the American Nurses Foundation. The film is also available for digital download and on DVD.

The film is a part of the American Nurse Project, made possible with the generous support of Fresenius Kabi, a company that puts lifesaving medicines and technologies in the hands of people who care for patients, and to find answers to the challenges they face. To learn more Fresenius Kabi, visit: americannurseproject.com/sponsor

About KINO LORBER

With a library of over 2,800 titles, Kino Lorber Inc. has been a leader in independent art house distribution for 35 years, releasing 30 films per year theatrically under its Kino Lorber, Kino Repertory and Alive Mind Cinema banners, garnering seven Academy Award® nominations in nine years. In 2019, the company launched its new art house digital channel Kino Now which features over 1000 titles from the acclaimed Kino Lorber library. To learn more, visit kinolorber.com

About Fresenius Kabi

Fresenius Kabi is a global health care company that specializes in lifesaving medicines and technologies for infusion, transfusion and clinical nutrition. Its products and services are used to help care for critically and chronically ill patients. For more information about Fresenius Kabi, visit fresenius-kabi.com/us.

To learn about the 'American Nurse Project,' visit americannurseproject.com

(Mabel Pais writes on Social Issues, The Arts and Entertainment, Health & Wellness, and Spirituality)



NEHA KAKKAR TAKES THE 'PILLOW CHALLENGE'

If coronavirus lockdown has helped you to be best friends with your bed, then this viral challenge is the best thing on the internet for you. Netizens have tried every single thing and now have come across 'The Pillow Challenge'. Dozens of fashion Instagrammers are flaunting their just-rolled-out-of-bed looks with a pillow as their only accessory. Yes, it's true! Recently, singer Neha Kakkar took up the challenge and shared a video on her social media account where she can be seen grooving in just pillow. The song played in the background is from her latest release Moscow Mashuka.

Neha Kakkar made her pillow look like a strapless mini dress, tied up with a ribbon and belt. She complimented the look with bindi and jhumkas. The pillow challenge was started by Swedish social media influencer Firo.

The trend involves cinching a pillow in the waist with a chunky belt or a fancy ribbon, and accessorising to your heart's content. The hashtag #pillowchallenge has almost 200,000 posts on social media, with results varying from super sexy to downright hilarious.

The uplifting beats of Moscow Mashuka song will make you hit the dance floor right away. The number is a mix of Punjabi and Russian language. The Russian vocals are given by Ekaterina Sizova.

SARA TURNS POET TO THANK MOTHER NATURE ON EARTH DAY

To express gratitude towards Mother Nature, actress Sara Ali Khan shared a collage of throwback pictures on Earth Day. From the mountains to the beaches, Sara is seen striking a pose at various exotic locations in the post. Along with the photos, the actress penned a short poem for her fans, reminding them to stay at home during the nationwide lockdown to stop the spread of the novel coronavirus.

She wrote, "Happy Earth Day, About Mother Nature what to say. Snowflakes in December, Jungles in May, On the beach, where the hair can sway. In the mountains, on my sleigh. In the desert, the camel leads the way. But for now at home we must stay. And with gratitude and appreciation thank Mother Earth everyday #stayhome #staysafe #staypositive (sic)."

Commenting on the post, Ishaan Khatter reminded Sara that Earth day is tomorrow (April 22). The actress had shared the post on the evening of April 21.

The Dhadak actor, who also admitted to making the same mistake, wrote, "Maine bhi yeh hi ghalti ki..in one small detail the problem lay; Earth day is tomorrow, errbody thinkin we cray (sic)."

Take a look at Ishaan's Earth Day wish for fans:

Both Sara and Ishaan made their Bollywood debut in 2018. While Ishaan starred alongside Janhvi Kapoor in Dhadak, Sara was seen opposite Sushant Singh Rajput in Kedarnath.



KARTIK AARYAN SPREADS POSITIVITY AMID LOCKDOWN, SAYS 'HASTE HASTE KAT JAAE RASTE'

Actor Kartik Aaryan has been entertaining fans and spreading awareness amid the coronavirus lockdown period with interesting Instagram posts. His latest is yet another fun throwback video with a message of hope.

Sharing a video, he wrote: "Haste haste kat jayein raste (We will laugh our way out through this too)" borrowing words from a hit song of the same name from the '80s era film, Khoon Bhari Maang, starring Rekha and Rakesh Roshan. In the video, Kartik is seen with two boys when one of them bursts a chewing gum bubble, making all three of them laugh.

In yet another funny video, shared by the actor sometime back, he got slapped by his sister Kritika. In the clip, Kritika, a doctor, and Kartik are seen re-enacting a prank in which she beats him up. Kritika can be heard telling Kartik: "I've got a string, an invisible string. I'm going to put it through your ear." Then she tells Kartik to "hold the invisible string" and asks him to pull it. As he pulls the string, Kritika slaps him.

"Subah Utho Nahao Pito So Jao (Wake up in the morning, bathe, get beaten up, go to bed) #QuarantineLife #KokiToki," Kartik captioned the video, which has been viewed by



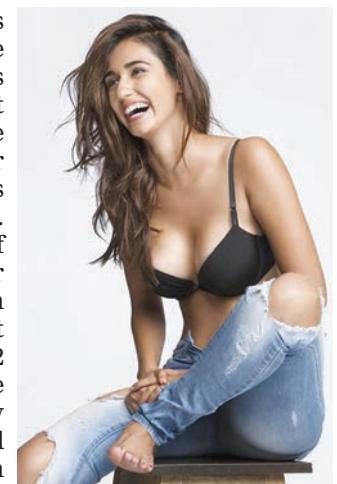
millions on the photo-sharing website.

Some time back, he had shared a picture and asked his fans if he should shave or not. Kartik had uploaded a carefully manicured 6pm shadow and an overgrown beard for his fans, letting them judge to which

was more attractive. The first image he captioned: "Phir se sexy dikhne ka mann kar raha hai Daadhi nikaal dun (I want to look sexy again. Should I shave)?" For the second picture he wrote: "Kaise shave kar dun yaar? Yeh bhi sexy kam nahi hai (How can I shave? This is no less sexy)."

IS DISHA PATANI LIVING WITH TIGER SHROFF AMID LOCKDOWN?

Recent reports amid the Coronavirus lockdown stated that Disha Patani may be staying with Tiger Shroff and his family for the period. While rumours of Disha and Tiger have been coming in since the longest time, the Baaghi 2 stars have maintained that they are good friends and like to hangout with each other. Disha also shares a great bond with Tiger's sister Krishna and mom Ayesha Shroff. Often, Disha and Krishna engage in Instagram banter and that leaves netizens speculating about Tiger and Patani's relationship as well.



Now, after reports of Disha staying with Tiger and his family went viral, Baaghi 3 star's sister Krishna clarified the same recently. In an interview with Mumbai Mirror, Krishna opened up about the same. When asked about crediting Disha for her makeup in a recent photo, Krishna clarified that she isn't staying with the family but lives close by. Krishna clarified that Disha isn't living with them amid lockdown but they live near so end up heading to grocery shopping together.



Kylie Jenner Claps Back at Body Shamers

Kylie Jenner is not interested in body shamers. The 22-year-old reality star, billionaire and makeup mogul clapped back on Wednesday after several commenters on a fan site shared their thoughts on her "skinny" throwback video.

The clip featured Kylie at a fan event three years ago, posing in a skin-tight dress. One fan wrote, "Wow she's so skinny here," and another replied, "She was better."

This didn't rub the mother of 2-year-old Stormi Webster the right way, and she quickly replied, "I birthed a baby."

Though she's definitely gotten confident in her post-baby body, Kylie was candid about adjusting to her new mama figure in a 2018 episode of Keeping Up With the Kardashians.

"I'm just feeling a little insecure," she admitted to her older sister, Kim Kardashian West, at the time. "I feel like my hips have just spread... like, my favorite jeans, they're never going to fit me again."

JOE JONAS & SOPHIE TURNER PROVIDE A HELPING HAND TO EAST LA DOCTORS

With everyone on quarantine mode, businesses have been affected terribly with many under financial crisis! As a helping hand to the Fueling The Fearless campaign, which is a non-profit organisation who hires local restaurants struggling to make ends meet due to the COVID-19 outbreak, Joe Jonas and Sophie Turner are doing their part to help humanity.

In an Instagram post by Fueling The Fearless campaign's official page, it was revealed that Joe and Sophie along with Jonas' manager Phil McIntyre and his wife Shonda teamed up with the organisation to donate 100 hot meals to East LA Doctors Hospital. Their caption reads as, "A BIG THANK YOU to @joejonas @sophiet @philmack @shondamcintyre for donating 100 meals to East LA Doctors Hospital. This hospital is in the heart of downtown LA and serves a vastly underprivileged community with limited resources and support."

"The staff work tirelessly to care for the community and those often forgotten. Through these types of fully paid sponsorships @alikisgreektaverna and her donors bring a moment of relief to a most grateful staff. One hot meal lets them know we are all in this together. So again, thank you @joejonas @sophiet



@philmack @shondamcintyre for taking care of LA nurses and doctors. #eastla #healthcareheroes," the caption continued.

Meanwhile, rumours are rife that Sophie is pregnant with the couple's first child and will be due in summer 2020. However, the couple is yet to confirm the pregnancy!

PADMA LAKSHMI SLAMS TROLLS WHO CALL HER 'IMMORAL'

Padma Lakshmi is in no mood to let people shame her for going braless. Amid the ongoing Coronavirus lockdown, The "Top Chef" host has been regularly updating her Instagram feed with cooking videos to inspire her followers to stay at home and cook. During one of her recent cooking videos, where she made chicken tagine, Padma wore a sleeveless grey dress and decided to go braless. Many people pointed this out on social media and trolled her for being immoral.

In her latest Insta post, Lakshmi clapped back at the bullies who criticised her for going braless in the video. She urged people to stop policing women's bodies. "I got some comments last time that it was immoral for me to not wear a bra in my own kitchen during the quarantine. So those people should be happy to note that I'm wearing two today. But seriously, let's not police women's bodies in 2020 ok," she wrote alongside the video in which she can be seen cooking Lasagna with White Ragu.

In the comment section, her fans praised her for voicing her opinion. "Seriously took a screenshot of your braless in that tank and sent it to my boyfriend. Braless in tank top is my at home wardrobe. I felt seen!!! lol. Thank you for being a regular woman who is letting the animals



run wild at home!" a fan wrote. "S**** them. Go topless and blur it out," another commented. "LET THOSE PUPPIES HANG PADMA," another fan wrote.

This is not the first time the television personality has raised her voice against the society that forces

women to wear clothes according to their norms. In 2019, the 49-year-old walked the Emmy's red carpet dressed in a fitting dress, but without any kind of shapewear or a bra. Defending her choice, Lakshmi stated that she feels the female body is beautiful in its natural state.

SHARON STONE'S COVID-19 PARTY FEARS

Sharon Stone had doctors checking people's temperatures at her birthday bash. The actress celebrated her 62nd birthday with a lavish party on March 8 and although social distancing measures had not been introduced to the USA at that time, she was so concerned about the coronavirus that she enlisted medical professionals to help monitor her guests.

Sharon explained to Naomi Campbell on the supermodel's 'No Filter' YouTube series: "I had a doctor and a nurse come early and check all of the catering people, and the wait staff as they arrived to make sure none of the food and the people working there were feverish or ill.

"And then I had a nurse at the door taking temperature, and this was March 8th. I just thought we had to be super careful.

"People thought I was a little extreme. That I was a little bit crazy."

Sharon also revealed she knew that Covid-19 would be a global crisis after she met playwright John Dempsey at Sir Elton John's Oscars bash in February and he told her what friends of his were going through in China, where the virus originated.

She said: "When I saw John Dempsey at Elton's Oscar party, I just looked at his face and he said, '40 per cent of our business is crashing and I'm losing friends in China'. And I looked at him



and knew, 'Oh my God. This is about to become a global epidemic'.

"[I] called my lawyer, canceled my global events. The people said they were going to sue me. I said, 'They won't.' And my lawyer said, 'Oh they're going to.' And I said, 'They won't have time to. It will be okay.' Our lawyer said, 'Oh no it's going to be terrible,' and I'm like, 'Don't worry about it.'"

TRIBECA 2020 VIRTUAL FEST:DOC FILMS

By Mabel Pais

"While we cannot gather in person to lock arms, laugh, and cry, it's important for us to stay socially and spiritually connected. Tribeca is about resiliency, and we fiercely believe in the power of artists to bring us together. We were founded after the devastation of 9/11 and it's in our DNA to bring communities together through the arts." - Jane Rosenthal, Co-Founder - Tribeca Film Festival

TFF 2020 DEBUTS SELECT VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING, BRINGING AUDIENCES & STORYTELLERS TOGETHER

The following are highlights of some documentary films available.

THE STATE OF TEXAS vs. MELISSA, World Premiere
DIR: SABRINA VAN TASSEL | US | M | DOC FEATURE



The State of Texas v. Melissa, Poster Photo / Courtesy Tribeca Film Fest 2020

Melissa Lucio was the first Hispanic woman sentenced to death in Texas. For over ten years she has been awaiting her fate and now faces her last appeal. Sabrina Van Tassel's urgent documentary is the portrait of a woman against the entire system.

Her name is Melissa Lucio. For over

"If Melissa had had a fair trial, she would not be on death row."

"One cannot be confronted with such an injustice and walk away. It was my duty to make her story known. To make sure that the ID number 999537 stands out and does not become just another entry in the United States death sentence statistics."

- Sabrina Van Tassel, Director (April 2020)

ten years, she's been awaiting her fate on death row and is now on her last appeal. Melissa was the first Hispanic woman sentenced to death in Texas. To many, Melissa looks like she is responsible for her daughter's death. Guilty of abusing Mariah, her two-year-old child, day after day, until she died from a blunt head trauma. But strangely, she was never known to be violent towards her children. And nobody had ever seen her being abusive to Mariah. This film explores her life's journey. It highlights the bizarre miscarriage of justice she went through. It is the portrait of a woman against the entire system. To learn more, visit tribecafilm.com/films/state-of-texas-vs-melissa-2020

THE UNDOCUMENTED LAWYER, World Premiere

DIRS: CHRIS TEMPLE & ZACH INGRASCI | US | 20M | DOC SHORT

Directors Temple and Ingrasci's projects have raised over \$91.5 million for their films' causes and have changed over 275,000 lives.

Lizbeth Mateo is an attorney in Los Angeles - one who started a law practice, hired four employees, and took an oath to uphold the U.S. Constitution. She also has no legal right to be in the country. Lizbeth is undocumented.

Since crossing the border at age 14, Lizbeth hasn't let her immigration status hold her back. Frustrated by a broken system, she's drawing from her own experience to fight for immigrant rights in the streets and in the courts.

Her latest client is Edith Espinal, a woman avoiding deportation by taking sanctuary in a church. As the months turn to years, Lizbeth is running out of legal options to help. She returns to her activist roots and teaches Edith to fight back - because sometimes you need to ignore the law in order to change it.

Timely developments: During the COVID-19 pandemic sweeping across the United States, Lizbeth has been forced to go to court, as President Trump has decided to keep immigration courts open. Just last month, her own case was reopened by ICE for deportation. She believes this is an attempt to silence undocumented activists, and she is more motivated than ever to tell her story. To learn more, visit tribecafilm.com/films/undocumented-lawyer-2020



HLF's 'Holistic Me' summer camp instructor & young proteges, from "The Difference."

Photo / Courtesy Tribeca Film Fest 2020

THE DIFFERENCE, New York Premiere

DIRS. B. BERKSON and M. GLUCKSTERN | US | 14 M | DOC SHORT

Do we really want to bring a child into this World?" The question is often posed, the global reality surely daunting. As soon-to-be-parents, we wonder what can we do to make a difference? In collaboration with the Holistic Life Foundation of Baltimore (hlfinc.org), we explore how we can provide all children with accessible, inherent tools so they live and thrive rather than struggle to survive - tools such as yoga, meditation, breathwork, mindfulness, self-care techniques and music. Ultimately, despite the external chaos that may be occurring, the children realize "we have the power, it's in our hands it's up to us."

To learn more about the Holistic Life Foundation (HLFINC.ORG) of Baltimore's work : youtu.be/Dqhq_EtSsOk

To learn more, visit tribecafilm.com/films/difference-2020

UNDERPLAYED, World Premiere

DIR: STACEY LEE | US | DOC FEATURE

Women make up less than 3% of production and technical roles in the music industry - Annenberg Institute In the top 150 clubs, the annual percentage of female DJs is 6% - Djane Magazine

Underplayed" explores gender inequality through the lens of the electronic music scene and the women championing the change over the summer festival season.

Electronic music was born from the ideals of diversity, community, and inclusivity; yet in 2019 only 5 of the top 100 DJs were women. Filmed over the summer festival season, "Underplayed" presents a portrait of the current status of the gender, ethnic and sexual equality issue through the lens of the female pioneers, next-generation artists and industry leaders who are championing the change, and inspiring a more diverse pool of role models for future generations. Ultimately the film explores how gender disparity happens; a theme that transcends music and finds relevance in many of today's industries. To learn more, visit tribecafilm.com/films/underplayedthefilm.com

With The Difference, we explore how we, as humans, can make our world better, both individually and collectively, a message we feel is of utmost importance and relevance considering the nature of the world today. - Brianne Berkson and Miguel Gluckstern, April 2020

MY FATHER THE MOVER, World Premiere

DIR. JULIA JANSCH | US | 65 M | DOC SHORT

"Everyone can have freedom. It just depends on whether you want to be free or not." - Stoan MOVE Galela

There are so many movers and shakers, just like Stoan, who are using their craft to move mountains in their communities. My goal with this film is to launch a platform for these Movers." - Julia Jansch, Director

"My Father The Mover" invites you on an exploration of Gqom dance and movement to ignite your own sense of freedom while introducing you to the crucial work of Stoan Move Galela and his United Township Dancers.

Alatha's father says he's more than a dancer - he's a Mover. Using African electronic "Gqom" dance, The Mover helps kids in the township of Khayelitsha, South Africa, to transcend the grips of poverty and abuse and find their superpowers. The Mover is also one of the few single fathers in the township. And while he has helped many kids find freedom, he still has difficulty getting his own daughter, Alatha, to break open and find her own powers. But in a tender moment together, this is all about to change. To learn more, visit tribecafilm.com/films/my-father-the-mover-2020

(Mabel Pais writes on Social Issues, The Arts and Entertainment, Health & Wellness, and Spirituality)

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UK, India Corporates Join COVID-19 Fightback



Companies around the world have been forced to look beyond their conventional production lines and expertise to join the war against an invisible common enemy

Italy Prime Minister adopts a tough stance ahead of EU talks

ROME (TIP): Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said on Tuesday that he would accept "no compromises" at a videoconference of EU leaders this week aimed at addressing the economic consequences of the coronavirus pandemic. Conte told an Italian parliament session that he would not sign up to a "bargain deal" at Thursday's conference. "The EU and the eurozone cannot afford to repeat the same mistakes they made in the 2008 financial crisis, when it was not possible to offer a joint response," he said. "Either we all win, or we all lose." Conte's push for the issuance of mutualised EU debt — dubbed coronabonds — has run into opposition from countries such as Germany and the Netherlands. EU finance ministers have agreed an initial rescue package worth about 500 billion euros (\$545 billion) but pushed back any decision on joint debt earlier this month.

Up to 240 billion euros of the rescue are being made available through the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) — a bailout fund whose use is usually accompanied by EU oversight and conditions. The ESM is politically toxic in Italy and Conte has said he was unconvinced that the conditions will be less stringent this time.

But he said Tuesday that he did not want to oppose the ESM outright because other hard-hit countries such as Spain — another supporter of the coronabonds — were in favour of its use. Italy's official COVID-19 toll of 24,114 is the highest in Europe and second globally after the United States. — AFP

North Korean media silent on Kim's whereabouts as speculation on health rages

SEOUL (TIP): North Korean state media on Wednesday made no mention of leader Kim Jong Un's health or whereabouts, a day after intense international speculation over his health was sparked by media reports he was gravely ill after a cardiovascular procedure.

North Korean media presented a business as usual image, carrying routine reporting of Kim's achievements, publishing his older or undated quotes on issues like the economy.

South Korean and Chinese officials and sources familiar with U.S. intelligence have cast doubt on the South Korean and U.S. media reports, while the White House said it was closely monitoring the matter.

U.S. President Donald Trump, who held unprecedented summits with Kim in 2018 and 2019 in an attempt to persuade him to give up his nuclear weapons, said the reports had not been confirmed and he did not put much credence in them.

"I just hope he's doing fine," Trump told a White House news conference on Tuesday. "I've had a very good relationship with Kim Jong Un. And I'd like to see him do well. We'll see how he does. We don't know if the reports are true." Asked whether he would try to reach out to Kim to check on his condition, Trump said: "Well I may, but I just hope he's doing fine."

Speculation about Kim's health first



arose due to his absence from the anniversary of the birthday of North Korea's founding father and Kim's grandfather, Kim Il Sung, on April 15.

On Wednesday, the main headlines from KCNA included pieces on sports equipment, mulberry picking, and a meeting in Bangladesh to study North Korea's "juche" or self-reliance ideology. The official Rodong Sinmun newspaper carried older or undated remarks attributed to Kim in articles about the economy, the textile industry, city development, and other topics.

As usual Kim's name was plastered all over the newspaper, but there were no

LONDON (TIP): Industries the world over have geared themselves towards a focused mission of joining the supply chains for equipment required for the COVID-19 fightback — from ventilators and testing kits to hand sanitizers and face masks.

Indian companies like Mylab and the Mahindra group are at the forefront of the battle to fight COVID-19, with several British corporations such as Dyson, JLR and F1 teams joining in. Smaller breweries and distilleries in the UK are also looking at using their production lines to make sanitizers.

The biggest reflection of this new kind of approach to fighting a common global enemy came in the form of a collective of seven UK-based Formula 1 teams, traditionally accustomed to competing against each other on the racetrack but ready to unite for a higher purpose.

Their respective technology arms have made significant progress in coordinating their response to the UK government's call for assistance with the manufacture of medical devices to help in the treatment of COVID-19 patients. The seven teams' combined efforts, termed Project Pitlane, are part of a British industry-wide effort to manufacture and deliver respiratory devices to support the national need.

F1 said that Project Pitlane will pool the resources and capabilities of its member teams to greatest effect, focusing on the core skills of the F1 industry: rapid design, prototype manufacture, test and skilled assembly.

reports on his whereabouts.

Daily NK, a Seoul-based website, reported late on Monday that Kim, who is believed to be about 36, was hospitalised on April 12, hours before the cardiovascular procedure.

The story's English version carried a correction on Tuesday to say the report was based on a single unnamed source in North Korea, not multiple as it earlier stated. It said his health had deteriorated since August due to heavy smoking, obesity and overwork, and he was now receiving treatment at a villa in the Mount Myohyang resort north of the capital Pyongyang. Reuters

Chinese writer faces backlash for 'Wuhan Diary'

BEIJING (TIP): After Wuhan was sealed off from the world, acclaimed Chinese writer Fang Fang started an online diary about the coronavirus tragedy unfolding in her hometown.

Her journal drew tens of millions of readers -- but now that it is about to be published abroad in several languages, she is facing a nationalist backlash at home.

Critics say the 64-year-old, who was awarded China's most prestigious literary prize in 2010, is providing fodder to countries that have slammed Beijing's handling of the pandemic.

Fang began to document life in Wuhan, the city of 11 million where COVID-19 first emerged in December, after it was placed under an unprecedented lockdown on January 23.

As authorities desperately scrambled to stop the disease from spreading across the country, she wrote about the fears, anger and hope of the industrial hub's residents in isolation.

In one entry she mentioned seeing pictures of the city's empty East Lake, and the "deserted and peaceful expanse of the water". She described residents helping each other, and the simple pleasure of the sun lighting up her room.

But she also touched on politically sensitive topics such as overcrowded hospitals turning away patients, mask shortages and relatives' deaths.

"A doctor friend said to me: in fact, we doctors have all known for a while that there is a human-to-human transmission

of the disease, we reported this to our superiors, but yet nobody warned people," she wrote in one entry.

Born to a family of well-off intellectuals, the writer's real name is Wang Fang but she uses the pen name Fang Fang.

Readers flocked to the online diary to get an unfiltered account from Wuhan in a Communist-ruled country that lacks independent media.

But some social media users have turned on the author -- especially as a new diplomatic spat has erupted between China and the US, which accuses Beijing of a lack of transparency in the outbreak's early days, costing the world valuable time. "Bravo Fang Fang. You're giving Western countries ammunition to target China," said one post about her on the country's Twitter-like Weibo platform. "You've shown your treacherous nature," it said.

Another accused Fang of making money off Wuhan's nearly 4,000 virus victims, writing: "How much did you sell the diary for?" Hit by a barrage of online insults, Fang wrote on Weibo that she was the victim of "cyberbullying" by fringe nationalists.

And in an interview posted on the website of Chinese weekly Caixin, the author said she had received death threats and that her home address was posted online.

The way US publisher HarperCollins introduces the book -- which goes on sale in June and is succinctly titled "Wuhan

Diary" -- has added fuel to the online fury.

"The stark reality of this devastating situation drives Fang Fang to courageously speak out against social injustice, corruption, abuse, and the systemic political problems which impeded the response to the epidemic," the publishing house says on its website.

The book, it says, blends "the eerie and dystopian" and provides "a unique look at life in confinement in an authoritarian nation".

French publisher Stock told AFP the book is a "first-hand testimony by a talented writer".

Hu Xijin, editor-in-chief of nationalist tabloid Global Times, said the diary's foreign publication "is not really in good taste" while Beijing is in the throes of confrontation with Washington.

"In the end it will be the Chinese, including those who supported Fang Fang at the beginning, who will pay the price of her fame in the West," Hu said in a social-media comment that drew more than 190,000 likes.

An article in the state-run newspaper said that to many Chinese people, the book is "biased and only exposes the dark side in Wuhan".

Publishers in China who were interested in her diary are now hesitating due to the controversy, Fang said in the interview on Caixin's website.

Politically sensitive content is often censored or banned in mainland China.

In 2015 five booksellers in Hong Kong, where the mini-constitution guarantees



Fang Fang. AFP

freedom of expression, disappeared into mainland custody after publishing salacious tomes about China's leaders.

"Why not publish this book? Just because some could use us?" Fang said.

"If people truly read my diary, they will discover the effective measures that China took against the epidemic." Fang said she would donate "every royalty" she receives and "will give the money to the families of health workers who worked in the frontline and died".

Loyal fans of the author have rallied around her on Weibo.

"Fang Fang owes nothing to anyone," wrote one. "You're free to write a diary that goes against what she wrote, translate it and publish it abroad! AFP

Israeli strikes in Syria kill 9 pro-regime fighters: Monitor



A handout picture provided by the Iranian Presidency on April 15, 2020, shows Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif (2nd-R) alongside members of the Iranian government wearing face masks during a cabinet session in the capital Tehran. AFP photo

BEIRUT (TIP): Israeli air strikes late Monday in the area of the central Syrian city of Palmyra killed nine fighters loyal to the Iran-backed Damascus regime, a war monitor said Tuesday.

Those who died in several missile strikes included three Syrians and six foreigners of unknown nationalities, the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

Since the start of the civil war in 2011, Israel has carried out hundreds of strikes in Syria targeting government troops as well as allied Iranian forces and fighters from Lebanese militant group Hezbollah.

Syrian state media had said that Syrian air defences late Monday downed Israeli missiles over Palmyra in the central Homs province before they could reach their targets.

Contacted by AFP, an Israeli army spokesperson declined to comment.

Israel has repeatedly vowed to impede any Iranian encroachment in war-torn Syria across its border.

Monday's attack came hours after Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif met President Bashar al-Assad in Damascus.

Last week, an Israeli drone targeted a Hezbollah car in Syria near the Lebanese

border, a source from the group said.

Late last month, Syrian air defences intercepted an Israeli missile attack also targeting Homs province in the centre of

the war torn country.

The Observatory said the target was a military airport where Iranian forces were present. --- AFP

Kim in 'fragile' condition

SEOUL (TIP): South Korea said it was investigating reports that North Korea's Kim Jong-un is in a "fragile" condition after undergoing an unspecified surgical procedure. Officials from the South Korean intelligence services said they were looking into a report that said the North's leader was "in grave danger." A report by Seoul-based news outlet said Kim was staying at a countryside villa outside Pyongyang while he recovered from heart surgery, and that his condition was improving. A government source said South Korea was yet to see any "unusual signs" coming from the North regarding Kim's health condition. — Agencies

Muted celebrations as Queen Elizabeth turns 94

LONDON (TIP): Queen Elizabeth turned 94 on Tuesday but the coronavirus lockdown meant there was little fanfare to mark the occasion. Elizabeth, the world's eldest and longest-reigning monarch, typically spends her birthday privately but this year the event will be even more muted. Royal birthdays and anniversaries are traditionally marked by ceremonial gun salutes, in which blank rounds are fired from various locations across London, but the Queen felt it would be inappropriate to allow this to go ahead given the circumstances. Reuters

NATURAL REMEDIES TO REMOVE THAT STUBBORN MAKEUP

Parties, weddings, festive occasions or workplace—when done right, makeup can bring you no possible harm. Whether it is just eyeliner or a dab of blush on our cheeks, the correct application of makeup helps you go a long way. But what comes after the makeup is as important as the main act.

We often forget that taking off the makeup off requires equal time and attention, because if left on overnight, this very makeup can become a cause for several beauty problems, facial marks, freckles or even acne. While we have enough products in the market to remove all the colour from our face, most of them contain chemicals that aren't exactly wonderful for the skin. While finding the correct product for your skin is a tough task, nature—as always—has several surprises in store. Apart from being cheap and natural, these products are also easily available—five of which we list down below.

Baking Soda and Honey

This remedy is good for any skin type. Grab some honey lying in your kitchen and put it on a piece of cotton or a clean cloth. Sprinkle some baking soda on the honey and watch it act as great cleanser as well as exfoliator. Just rub the cloth or cotton gently on your face to wipe off the makeup and rinse it off. You can use a face wash but it can take away the after effect of honey on your skin, so it is better if you just rinse with lukewarm water and let the effect of honey repair your skin cells all night long.

Coconut oil

Coconut oil is a natural ingredient which the skin absorbs like magic. If you have coconut oil at home, there is literally nothing better to remove



all the makeup on your face. This is particularly useful for heavy makeup and even waterproof make-up.

Simply rub some coconut oil all over your face and neck, and wipe it off with cotton pads. You can even make natural wipes, by putting lots of cotton balls soaked in a small jar full of coconut oil. It is a natural moisturiser and is great for the winter season. It repairs and moisturises your skin well while restoring the natural oils on our face.

Milk

Milk is known for its health benefits and for being a wonderful ingredient for your skin. The essential fats and protein found in whole milk allow our skin to retain moisture and repair damaged cells. Milk has strong bleaching properties and is a natural ingredient for skin lightening, in case you're interested. Simply soak your cotton pads in a small bowl of milk and use them to wipe off your makeup. You can even mix a tablespoon of almond oil in it for heavier make-up. This remedy will refresh your face and will keep your

skin hydrated. If you have excessively oily skin, it is better to use a face wash followed by a night cream after washing off the milk.

Cucumber juice

Many commercial beauty products including face washes and cleaners have cucumber as an ingredient. That's because this common kitchen ingredient is a no-fuss healer. It has anti-inflammatory properties and can soothe irritated or acne prone skin. It is a water-based vegetable and is an excellent makeup remover particularly for oily skin.

So the next time you face a beauty woe, or want to remove all that makeup without hassle, look no further from your own refrigerator. Use a blender to mash cucumber until it becomes like a paste, add some olive oil to this paste and watch your home-made cleanser change your life. The natural mixture will tackle your makeup troubles and will soothe your skin. Rinse your face with lukewarm water and try to avoid any other product afterwards to let the facial moisture repair your skin.

FOOD CORNER



MEWARI PANEER

INGREDIENTS

- 1 litre full cream milk
- 2 gm chopped raisins
- 2 gm chopped pistachios
- 1 pinch saffron
- 3 gm red peppers
- 125 gm chopped onion
- 5 gm sliced onion pearl
- 10 gm garlic paste
- 25 ml refined oil
- 10 gm cumin powder
- 8 gm fresh cream
- 5 gm white butter
- 10 gm chopped coriander leaves
- 2 gm chopped almonds
- 2 gm chopped walnuts
- 2 gm chopped cashews
- 4 ml lemon juice
- 3 gm capsicum (green pepper)
- 150 gm tomato
- 10 gm ginger paste
- 25 ml tomato puree
- 10 gm coriander powder
- 6 gm garam masala powder
- 2 pinches salt
- 10 gm powdered deggi chilli
- 3 gm black cumin seeds.

Method

- To prepare the homemade paneer, boil milk in a handi and curdle with lemon juice.
- When the milk is curdled, add chopped dry fruits and saffron in it. Strain the mixture in muslin cloth and let it stand at least for an hour.
- When the paneer is prepared, dice the paneer pieces.
- Now, heat oil in a saucepan over medium flame and put all the ground spices in it. When the seeds starts to crackle, put black cumin add chopped onion in it.
- When it's brown, add ginger and garlic paste, chopped tomatoes, sliced white onion (white pickled onion).
- Then add all the dry spices and stir it when leaves the oil on the top, add diced paneer and bell pepper in it.
- Garnish with fresh cream and chopped green coriander.

Placebo effect could help you get over a breakup



Getting over a broken heart can be an extremely difficult affair, and we've all heard multiple theories about just how long it takes. A common one states that for every year you were with a romantic partner, you can expect to grieve the relationship for one month, but there's not exactly hard science to back that up. However, new research suggests the placebo effect could play a role in speeding this process up.

In a study on heartbreak published in the Journal of Neuroscience, 40 participants who had gone through romantic rejection in the prior six months were studied by social scientists Leonie Kobar and Tor Wager at the University of Colorado Boulder.

Participants were placed inside magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machines, shown images of their exes, and asked to think about the emotions their exes inspired. They were also exposed to heat on their arms. Later, all participants were given a saline nasal spray. The first group of participants was told the spray had no effects, while the second was told it was a "powerful analgesic that is also effective in reducing emotional pain and negative affect."

The responses of both groups was then tested again as they were exposed to the same stimuli. As it turned out, members of the group that had been told it had received something to reduce their pain actually did experience a

significant reduction in pain, both emotional and physical, while the other group measured the same as before. That's the placebo effect—a change in symptoms due to a person's belief a given treatment will work, not due to the treatment itself—at work.

This gets tricky if you set out to do it for yourself, given that once you know something is a placebo, the effect ceases to work. It isn't all hopeless for those of us hoping to take our recovery into our own hands, though. Doing things that you believe may help your heart mend—such as journaling, calling a friend, and choosing to get up and go outside—can help ease your heartache faster, and not just because of the benefits of the activities themselves.

FOODS TO EAT FOR GOOD, GLOWING SKIN

Nutrition is vital in maintaining your overall health, and is especially so in the case of your skin.

The following foods will help you keep your skin healthy.

Fatty Fish

Rich in omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin E and zinc, fatty fish such as salmon, mackerel and herring are great food choices for maintaining skin health.

Omega-3 fatty acids keep your skin thick and moisturized, and can reduce inflammation, lessening the likelihood of getting redness and acne. In addition, they even reduce the harmful effects of the sun's UV rays on your skin. An omega-3 deficiency leads to dry skin.

A major antioxidant for your skin, vitamin E is essential for helping your skin from the damaging effects of free radicals and inflammation.

Zinc, a vital mineral, regulates not only inflammation, but also overall skin health and skin cell production. Aside from causing skin inflammation, a zinc deficiency leads to lesions and delayed wound healing.

Avocados

Avocados are high in healthy fats, enough of which are essential in maintaining flexible, moisturized skin, among other bodily functions. These buttery fruits are also rich in vitamins E and C.

While both vitamins protect your skin from oxidative damage and reduce aging, vitamin C is a vital component in the production of collagen, a protein that helps keep your skin strong and healthy.



Though rare, a vitamin C deficiency is marked by dry, scaly and rough skin that tends to bruise easily.

Walnuts

Aside from being a good source of essential healthy fats, walnuts are rich in both omega-3 and omega-6.

Excessive intake of omega-6 can promote inflammation, exacerbating psoriasis and other inflammatory skin conditions. On the other hand, omega-3 reduces inflammation not just on your skin, but your whole body. The omega-3 fats found in walnuts can help reduce the potential inflammatory response to excess omega-6.

In addition, walnuts contain zinc, vitamin E, selenium and protein.

Sweet Potatoes

Sweet potatoes are rich in beta-carotene, a plant-based nutrient that converts into vitamin A when inside the body. This antioxidant is also found in oranges, carrots, bell

peppers and spinach.

Beta-carotene is a carotenoid that acts as a natural sunblock, keeping your skin healthy. When consumed, it is incorporated into your skin and protects your skin cells from sun exposure, ensuring that your skin remains soft and supple while preventing sunburn and cell death. It also adds a warm, orange color to your skin, contributing to overall healthy appearance.

Broccoli

In addition to containing vitamins and minerals essential to skin health, broccoli contains the carotenoid lutein. Like beta-carotene and other carotenoids, lutein helps protect your skin from oxidative damage, which causes your skin to become dry and wrinkled.

In addition, broccoli contains sulforaphane, which may have anti-cancer properties that work against some types of skin cancer, among its potential health benefits.



CAN CORONAVIRUS LIVE ON YOUR SHOES?

A new study from a hospital in China showed that half of health care workers surveyed were found to have coronavirus detected on their shoes, but there's no reason to panic yet.

The study, which was published in a medical journal called Emerging Infectious Diseases (EID) in April, used swab samples from potentially contaminated objects in hospital wards, collected between February 19 and March 2, to see what objects could carry the virus. However, since the materials tested were in a hospital and the health care workers surveyed worked in an intensive care unit, it's unlikely that the average person is at risk of coming in contact with the virus through shoes.

According to NBC investigative correspondent Vicky Nguyen, it's "very unlikely" that the virus will collect on shoes unless you work in a nursing home, hospital or other space that has lots of sick people.

"We know (that shoes) are a magnet for bacteria," Nguyen told TODAY's Savannah Guthrie. "It's unlikely that you are going to have virus on the bottoms of your shoes."

Even if the virus does gather on your shoes, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) stressed that while it is possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching an affected surface or object and then touching their mouth, nose or eyes, this is "not thought to be the main way the virus spreads."

So far, there haven't been any studies measuring how long the virus can live on fabrics or soft surfaces. A study published in the New England Journal of Medicine on April 16 showed that the virus is most stable on plastic and stainless steel, where it is detectable for "up to 72 hours after application to those surfaces." The study also noted that the virus could live on copper for up to four hours, on cardboard for up to 24 hours, and in aerosols for up to three hours.

"Other studies show that viral particles are unlikely to cling to your clothes," said Nguyen, who added that unless your clothes are directly sneezed or coughed on by someone who has the virus, it's "unlikely" you'll get the live virus on clothes.

Most sources advise that people continue to social distance and stay away from crowded areas in an effort to avoid the virus. Nguyen also recommended picking one pair of shoes to wear out and about and removing them as soon as you enter your home and leaving them by the door to avoid spreading the virus (or other bacteria) within your house.

As always, take care to wash your hands with hot water and soap for at least 20 seconds after touching any potentially contaminated surface, and avoid touching your face.

The hidden benefits of turmeric

For many years, the health-conscious have linked turmeric to healing properties and cosmetic benefits. The bright, yellow-orange spice related to ginger is gaining more popularity each day. Now, we are seeing more people eating or drinking turmeric.

It's available as a ground spice or in supplements and other beauty and dermatology products.

Want to know the sudden interest in the spice? According to scientists, curcumin, a substance in turmeric contains bioactive compounds with powerful medicinal properties.

Natural Anti-Inflammatory

Chronic inflammation contributes to many common Western diseases. Curcumin can suppress many molecules known to play major roles in inflammation.

According to the 2002 study on the US National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health, scientists now believe that chronic, low-level inflammation plays a major role in almost every chronic, Western disease. This includes heart disease, cancer, metabolic syndrome, Alzheimer's and various degenerative conditions.

Contribute to a natural glow

According to MD Health, turmeric contains antioxidants and anti-inflammatory components. These characteristics may provide glow and luster to the skin. Turmeric may also revive your skin by bringing out its



natural glow. You may want to try a turmeric face mask at home to see if the spice has any positive effects on your skin. You can mix small amounts of Greek yogurt, honey, and turmeric together and apply to your face. Keep the mask on for 15 minutes and then wash off with water.

Helps with Rheumatoid Arthritis

Modern research also suggests that curcumin, the active chemical in turmeric, may have beneficial properties for rheumatoid arthritis (RA) symptoms.

A 2012 randomized, pilot study to assess the efficacy and safety of curcumin in patients with active rheumatoid arthritis published in the US National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health, found curcumin as a potent antiarthritic property.

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DR. SATISH AND GITANJLI ANAND



DR. SATISH ANAND
Former Chairman, Board of Trustees, AAPI National
E-Mail:
sanandmd@gmail.com

GITANJLI ANAND
Former President, India Association of Long Island (IALI)
E-mail:
gitanjlianand@gmail.com



FACEBOOK AVATARS, A BITMOJI COMPETITOR, LAUNCHES IN EUROPE

Facebook Avatars, which lets users customize a virtual lookalike of themselves for use as stickers in chat and comments, is now available across Europe, the company said.

The social giant's Avatars, a clone of Snapchat's popular Bitmoji, was first unveiled last year and introduced to users in Australia. The feature is aimed at making engagements on Facebook fun, youthful, visually communicative, and "more light-hearted." Users can create their avatar from the sticker tray in the comment section of a News Feed post or in Messenger.

As my colleague Josh Constine wrote last year, "Avatars aren't quite as cute or hip to modern slang as Bitmoji. But they could still become a popular way to add some flare to replies without resorting to cookie-cutter emoticons or cliche GIFs." A number of companies including Xiaomi have replicated Bitmoji in recent years.

Spotify's tastemakers create 17 specialized podcast playlists

Spotify's curated playlists are a treasure trove for music lovers seeking out new tunes and tracks they already like — now that easy discovery is coming to podcasts. From today, you'll find editorially-curated podcast playlists covering all sorts of topics, including true crime, food, celeb drama, science and more.

The playlists will be curated by Spotify's local content curators and updated regularly. Three flagship playlists will take center stage — Best Podcasts of the Week, Crime Scene and Brain Snacks — with 14 additional playlists bringing up the helm. So whether you're into generic comedy banter or something altogether more niche, you won't have to scrabble around the internet any longer to find something worth listening to.

It's not an entirely surprise move. Spotify has long shown its commitment to both personalization and — after investing a hefty sum in them last year — podcasts. It's already implemented a "podcasts for you" feature, and has been experimenting with curated playlists since June 2019.

WhatsApp adds new stickers to support social distancing

Whatsapp is giving its 2 billion users an extra reminder about the importance of staying home during the coronavirus pandemic. The app is rolling out a new set of "together at home" stickers as part of its wide-ranging effort to turn the messaging service into a force for accurate and helpful updates, rather than misinformation.

WhatsApp is giving its 2 billion users an extra reminder about the importance of staying home during the coronavirus pandemic. The app is rolling out a new set of "together at home" stickers as part of its wide-ranging effort to turn the messaging service into a force for accurate and helpful updates, rather than misinformation. Facebook has previously said it's seen use of its messaging apps spike as more of its users are forced to stay home. At the same time, the increased usage had also forced WhatsApp to roll out more protections against misinformation about the pandemic.

COULD GENETICS EXPLAIN WHY SOME COVID-19 PATIENTS FARE WORSE THAN OTHERS?

Certain genetic differences might separate people who fall severely ill with COVID-19 from those who contract the infection but hardly develop a cough, a new preliminary study suggests.

The research is still in its early days, though, experts say.

The immune system can react to viruses thanks, in part, to specific genes that help cells spot unfamiliar bugs when they enter the body. The genes, known as human leukocyte antigen (HLA) genes, contain instructions to build proteins that bind to bits of a pathogen; those proteins serve as warning flags to alert immune cells. The immune cells, once trained to recognize these bits, jumpstart the process of building antibodies to target and destroy the invasive germ.

Within each individual, HLA genes code for three different classes of proteins; in other words, HLAs come in a variety of flavors, and depending on which HLAs you have, your body may be better or worse equipped to fight off certain germs — including SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

In a new study, published April 17 in the Journal of Virology, researchers used computer models to predict which combination of HLAs might be best at binding SARS-CoV-2, and which might be worst.

If certain HLAs can bind well to a



large proportion of the virus's proteins, "we expect there to be a more protective immune response," authors Abhinav Nellore and Dr. Reid Thompson, who lead a computational biology research group at the Oregon Health and Science University, told Live Science in an email. A better bind means that the viral proteins are more likely to be presented to immune cells and prompt the production of specific antibodies, the authors said.

"If the interaction is not stable, you will not have a proper [immune] response," said Dr. Shokrollah

Elahi, an associate professor in the Department of Dentistry and adjunct associate professor in the Department of Medical Microbiology and Immunology at the University of Alberta, who was not involved in the study.

But a stable bond, alone, does not guarantee the best immune response, Elahi added. If an HLA binds a viral protein that happens to be critical for the germ to replicate and survive, the subsequent antibody activity will likely target the virus more effectively than that prompted by a less important protein, Elahi said.

NASAL SPRAY BEING TESTED AS POTENTIAL CORONAVIRUS TREATMENT

Researchers in Utah are studying the effectiveness of antihistamine-treated nasal spray on cell cultures infected with SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsible for COVID-19. Preliminary results from the new in vitro study indicated that chlorpheniramine maleate—an over-the-counter anti-inflammatory drug typically used to relieve allergy, cold or flu symptoms, like runny nose, sneezing, itchy and watery eyes—could reduce the presence of infection when combined with a nasal spray solution. Previous research has suggested chlorpheniramine maleate (CPM) acts as an antiviral treatment against various influenza strains as well.

With CPM's antiviral properties in mind, representatives from a Utah-based pharmaceutical company partnered with Utah State University's Institute of Antiviral Research and pulmonologist Dr. Gustavo Ferrer to evaluate its effects on the new coronavirus. The antihistamine was combined with a nasal spray solution currently being developed as an anti-allergy remedy



and introduced to infected cell samples. After 25 minutes of contact, data showed reduced measurements of the virus in cell samples to a degree researchers deemed statistically significant.

Due to the coronavirus' concentrated presence in nasal tissue, administering medication through nasal spray could be useful to provide maximum exposure. However, further testing is necessary to accurately gauge the method's efficacy in treating coronavirus patients. CPM has been approved for oral use by the Food and Drug

Administration (FDA), with drowsiness being its primary side effect. Authors of the in vitro study proposed two subsequent tests: "a randomized placebo-controlled study of intranasally delivered chlorpheniramine in patients with mild to moderate SARS-CoV-2" and an additional study to determine potential effects of CPM when used in conjunction with hydroxychloroquine, a medication historically used to treat malaria as well as autoimmune diseases, in patients hospitalized due to coronavirus.

Facebook buys 9.9% in Jio Platforms for \$5.7bn

Mumbai (TIP): Facebook Inc. bet a massive \$5.7 billion in the digital assets of Reliance Industries Ltd, aimed at leveraging the reach of the Indian company's telecom assets and WhatsApp's 400 million local users to connect small businesses and consumers in Asia's third largest economy.

The social media giant will purchase a little less than 10% of Jio Platforms, which houses its telecom and digital businesses, becoming the largest minority shareholder, Reliance Industries Ltd said on Wednesday.

The investment, which values Jio Platforms at around \$66 billion, will help Reliance Industries cut its spiralling debt pile.

Facebook's decision to press ahead with the investment at a time the global economy has been savaged by the coronavirus pandemic signals its confidence that Indians will continue to embrace digitisation and take to online shopping and payments.

At the core of their partnership lies millions of offline small businesses, whom Jio and Facebook have been courting to integrate into their digital ecosystems.

The valuation of Jio Platforms puts the Reliance Industries' unit in the league of India's largest household goods maker Hindustan Unilever Ltd and the nation's largest private lender HDFC Bank



Ltd, and almost on a par with its parent's oil and gas business. Jio Platforms combines RIL's digital apps and its mobile phone services unit Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd.

The transaction, the biggest non-control minority investment by any technology company, also sets the stage for future fund-raising rounds for Jio.

The RIL stock jumped by as much as 12% in intraday trading following the announcement and closed 10% higher on Wednesday.

Facebook will get a board seat on Jio Platforms.

Plummeting oil prices have put a question mark on a potential \$15 billion investment by Saudi Aramco in Reliance Industries' oil and gas

business that was announced in August.

"We view the Facebook investment as a structural positive for Jio. Given Facebook's expertise in monetizing data via its platforms, it should accelerate Jio's monetization of the vast data it collects from its 400 million subscribers (and growing). So far, almost all of Jio's revenue is mobile tariff-based and, though the company has taken initial steps to create alternative revenue streams, we have not yet seen material revenue streams so far. The Facebook investment should accelerate the process," said JP Morgan Equity Research in a report dated 22 April.

Asia stocks pull ahead on US stimulus, oil rebound

Asian stock markets rose on Thursday as the combination of a rebound in crude prices from historic lows and the promise of more US government aid to cushion the coronavirus-ravaged economy helped calm nervous markets.

Better-than-expected US corporate earnings also lifted equities, analysts said, though overall sentiment remained fragile as the pandemic cut a destructive path through the world economy.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia Pacific shares outside of Japan bounced from two-week lows to be up 0.5 per cent at 460.43 points. Australian S&P/ASX added 0.4 per cent, Chinese shares opened firm with the blue-chip index up 0.3 per cent. Japan's Nikkei climbed 0.8 per cent.

The gains followed a strong overnight lead from Wall Street with the Dow up 2 per cent, S&P 500 adding 2.3 per cent and Nasdaq rising 2.8 per cent.

All 11 S&P 500 sector indexes climbed as the US Senate unanimously approved the new relief package, adding to trillions of dollars in stimulus that has helped Wall Street rebound from its March lows.

The House of Representatives is expected on Thursday to clear the relief, which would be the fourth coronavirus measure passed by Congress, and would boost the overall federal financial response to almost \$3 trillion.

Stock markets may have bottomed out after the impressive bounce since a rout last month, analysts said.

Even so, the recent recovery has been narrowly focussed on the big tech firms, said Seema Shah, chief strategist at Principal Global Investors. Four out of every five stocks are still in a bear market while European benchmark equity indices and the US small-cap index are also in bear territory, "throwing severe doubts on the impression that investors are optimistic about the outlook," she added.



RBI HIKES CENTRE'S WMA LIMIT TO RS 2 LAKH CR FROM RS 1.2 LAKH CRORE

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has hiked the limit of Ways and Means Advances (WMA) facility of the central government, allowing it to borrow up to Rs 2,00,000 crore from the central bank to meet the short-term liquidity requirements.

This is the second hike in WMA limit by the RBI in the last one month. On April 1, the WMA limit — the ceiling on its temporary loan facility with the RBI — for the central government was raised to Rs 1.2 lakh crore from Rs 75,000 crore, a 60 per cent increase. According to the RBI, the limit for WMA for the remaining part of first half of the financial year 2020-21 (April 2020 to September 2020) will be revised to Rs 2,00,000 crore "to tide over the situation arising from the outbreak of the pandemic". On April 17, the RBI enhanced the limit on WMAs to the state governments from 30 per cent to 60 per cent, enabling them to raise more funds from the RBI. On April 1, the RBI increased the WMA limit by 30 per cent from the existing limit for all states and Union Territories to enable them tide over the situation arising from the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

WHEN \$8 TRILLION IN GLOBAL FISCAL STIMULUS STILL ISN'T ENOUGH

As governments dedicate more than \$8 trillion to fight the coronavirus pandemic, a further widening in the gap between rich and poor countries threatens to exacerbate the global economy's pain.

Wealthy nations have delved deep to cushion the blow. For instance, Germany and Italy have each allocated more than 30% of gross domestic product to direct spending, bank guarantees, and loan and equity injections, for a combined \$1.84 trillion in aid, figures from the International Monetary Fund show.

Yet the countries IMF analysts say they're most concerned about have only been able to trickle out support: Many African and Latin American economies have failed to reach even a few billion dollars in fiscal aid, according to IMF data and reporting from more than 60 countries collated by Bloomberg News.

"Governments worldwide are unleashing fiscal support measures, but not all fiscal packages are the same," said Chua Hak Bin, a senior economist at Maybank Kim Eng Research Pte. in Singapore. While "fiscal bazookas are the norm in the more advanced economies," emerging-market governments "don't have that kind of ammunition and fiscal space. Their fiscal packages are more water pistols than bazookas."

IMF Chief Economist Gita Gopinath has repeatedly voiced concern that developing nations have less policy space and less sophisticated infrastructure to manage the virus outbreaks taking hold in their countries.

Much of the global fiscal tally of more than \$8 trillion consists of bank guarantees in developed nations -- France and Spain have allocated more than \$300 billion and \$100 billion respectively for this kind of support, for example. Total virus-relief spending in the U.S. stands in excess of \$2.3 trillion.

Global CEOs see U-shaped recession due to coronavirus

Global business leaders are preparing for a drawn-out U-shaped recession due to the impact of coronavirus and many fear their companies won't survive the pandemic, a survey of thousands of chief executives showed on Wednesday.

The pandemic sweeping the world has killed nearly 170,000 people, routed financial markets and could trigger the worst economic meltdown since the 1930s Great Depression.

Around 60% of chief executives are preparing for a U-shaped recovery - a long period between recession and an upturn - compared with 22% who predict a double-dip recession, according to an April 15-19 poll of 3,534 chief executives from 109 countries conducted by YPO, a business leadership network.

The survey found that 11% of chief executives see coronavirus as a risk to the survival of their firm, while a further 40% say the pandemic poses a severe threat.

"We have not seen a crisis like this for over a hundred years, and some household names will not survive," said Glenn Keys, Executive Chairman of Aspen Medical, a Singapore-based health services firm and YPO member.

Business leaders in the hospitality and restaurant sectors were the most vulnerable with 41% of executives saying their firms were at risk of not surviving, while 30% in aviation and 19% in wholesale and retail sales feared they may go under, the survey found.

Almost two-thirds of business leaders forecast a negative impact on earnings to continue for more than a year, while a quarter expect their workforce to be down by more than 20% a year from now.

"Across the globe, the mindset of the business leader is clearly that the world has changed in a very short space of time," said Scott Mordell, YPO's chief executive.

"We are in unchartered waters, filled with an unprecedented number of pitfalls, that are challenging some businesses' very existence."



Shree Ganeshaya Namah

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



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

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

Weekly Horoscope April 27 - May 3, 2020

ARIES: Ganesha says you rope in your associates in your dealings and this proves to be a good move. The attention also shifts from the work front to home and family and there are many domestic responsibilities and joys to handle and enjoy. You also have to invest some time in your housing society or community and you can't get away from all this. Plus, there may be demands from siblings, co-workers, immediate and distant family and neighbours.

TAURUS: Love and money are the twin themes of the period. You also find time to relax, and there could perhaps be a home away from home as a kind of holiday retreat or weekend getaway. There will be loans, joint accounts, bonds, insurance and funds of all kinds to deal with on the money front, along with soaring expenses. You will also be spending a lot of time with loved ones and that will give you many happy moments. The family is important.

GEMINI: Your people skills will be at their best and you will get the support of both colleagues and loved ones. Partnerships and collaborations are vital and most beneficial in this period. You surmount many obstacles and ride the wave to glorious times. You confide in family and form a strong team to battle these challenges. You find great support and strength in your association.

CANCER: Money and its jingle appeal to you more than ever before. You look at finances in a big way, as that is the main theme of this period. Personal and work-related finances hog the limelight. There are tax issues and all sorts of monetary developments that will take up your time. You have to solve it all and spend time behind closed doors getting to the nitty gritty of your finances and its implications.

LEO: Once the finances are worked out, you get to spending the money which you believe is hard earned. There are many expenses and, for a change, your creative instincts blossom. You may even get an award for something you have done. You love the limelight and the appreciation that it all brings. You are the toast of the office, and may get a promotion, if not more. If you are on your own, you make tangible expansion of the business/enterprise. A tremendous sense of aestheticism, of beauty, now grips you.

VIRGO: You have achieved a lot but you don't want to stop here. You are prepared to stick your neck out like a platoon commander flushing out terrorists. Your new interests include religion and spirituality, travel and education. You have to kept money aside for the family and for a nest egg, and so monetary issues are not the real focus this period. You look for harmony and try to smooth the feathers you have rustled in the past.

LIBRA: Your conciliatory moves and work success are highly appreciated. There is enhanced income and prestige. You party a lot now and look at finances in the form of inheritance and legacies. You are a social butterfly and spend time at various gatherings enjoying yourself thoroughly. You are ebullient and enthusiastic and your happy mood is contagious.

SCORPIO: You are again on the work track. You are confident, pragmatic and determined and will forge ahead furiously. You earn plaudits for your achievements and decide to expand further and make more money, which is never out of your sights for long. You look at holistic progress and make the necessary adjustments to your personal and work life so that both show steady progress and harmony. There are expenses and minor delays to your plans including some medical expenses.

SAGITTARIUS: You give your best to work and your relationships and there is great intensity in whatever you do. You are full of commitment and bond well with others. You are endowed now with a new vision and charisma and look at the future with immense possibilities in mind. You are riding the crest of a wave and feel that the world is yours to conquer.

CAPRICORN: You see yourself in a new light and are empowered by your success. The early part of the year was hectic and now you try to enjoy yourself and ride on the momentum generated in the previous months. You are caring and considerate, alert and active. There is a new you eyeballing the world and whatever it has to offer. But, at the same time, while all this is hunky dory, avoid unnecessary show downs and run-ins with friends, family, colleagues and the law.

AQUARIUS: You are busier than ever before and highly motivated in all that you undertake - and it shows in the results. But there are pinpricks like unexpected expenses, ill-health in the family, and a frittering away of valuable resources on issues that are of no relevance to you; in other words there is highly avoidable wastage of both time and money. There is envy and politics at the workplace and you have to tread with caution. Don't put your faith in people without ascertaining their credentials.

PISCES: There are many distractions at play here. There are partnerships, religious ceremonies, meetings and interviews and several business/collaborations/connections, all of which lead you into a profitable, upward spiral. This is a good time to spread your wings and meet as many people as possible. There will be journeys and conferences and you will benefit greatly from them.

Birthday Horoscope April 27 - May 3, 2020

APRIL 27: Ganesha says The Moon floats into a harmonious day of emotional celestial interactions, making retreat, introspection, time alone (or in nature) a glowingly positive reflection of soulful karmic progress.

APRIL 28: A deep, mysterious inner knowledge will guide you toward a karmically evolved future that anchors your deepest secret wishes into a foundational home filled with emotional security and rich sharing.

APRIL 29: The year brings a subtle emotional

message that you're on the right track. The Moon makes you itchy for things to go your own easygoing way - which they are not apt to do.

APRIL 30: The dreams you've been nurturing in the depths of your heart and soul finally begin to materialize in the real world. Keep fuelling these hopes with emotional intention and watch them come alive.

MAY 1: With Mercury you start to see the benefits to collaborative communications. Stalled fiscal matters also float forward again.

Shared funds or hidden resources can optimize dream manifestation.

MAY 2: Sometimes it's the little things, right? Shopping, errand running, and spending all run into frustrating difficulties, especially if undertaken in the morning. Look for evening pleasures instead.

MAY 3: The Moon opens up revelatory channels of fresh-ideas awareness. Pursue partnership or career cooperation with a gentle understanding.

Akshaya Tritiya is a very popular festival that the Hindus and Jains celebrate every year.

It is considered as one of the most important days for Hindu community as it is the day of the birth of the Lord Parasurama. The Hindu community considers this day as a lucky day and believes that any venture such as a business or the construction of a building started on that day will follow betterment and prosperity. Akshaya Tritiya is a one day event celebrated in late April or early May. Hindus celebrate this day because, according to them, Akshaya Tritiya is the day when the great God of Wisdom, God Ganesha, started writing the epic work called "Mahabharata". It is believed that when the Pandavas were in exile the Lord presented them a bowl which was named Akshaya Tritiya. That bowl was never empty and produces an unlimited amount of food on demand.

Akshaya Tritiya is considered as the most golden day of the year because the word Akshaya means the most "Eternal" that which never diminishes. Any initiative made on that day or anything bought on that day is considered to be good fortune. The most popular activity is the buying of gold and it is believed it will be a sign of good fortune for the buyer. In the Indian culture people typically starts a new business or begins a new venture on Akshaya Tritiya. This is also one of the most popular days for weddings to take plans as the spirit of this day bids them on a very long and fulfilling life journey. It was also believed that people born in that month will be very lucky and will shine bright throughout their life.

The most popular story regarding the celebration of Akshaya Tritiya is that Lord Krishna and Sudama were friends during their childhood. Sudama was poor and he went to Krishna to ask him for some financial help or to give him money as a gift as a friend. Sudama did not have anything else except the pouch of Poha and he felt ashamed when he gave it to Krishna as he treated Poha as a king. His poor friend was overwhelmed by the hospitality shown by the Lord Krishna that he could not ask his friend for financial support which led him to go home empty-handed. When he arrived at his home he saw that his run-down hut was converted into a palace and his family was wearing royal attire. Sudama knew that this was the blessing of his friend Krishna who blessed him with more wealth than he needed or could ever imagine. This is why Akshaya Tritiya is associated with material gains.

Akshaya Tritiya is the festival, which is considered as a Golden Day for Hindus and Jains. This festival is only for Hindus and Jains, therefore not considered as a public holiday nor is celebrated anywhere else in the world.

Legend Of Akshaya Tritiya

It is said that when the Lord wanted to create this world, the first word He uttered was - 'Akshaya'. The scriptures refer to the Akshaya Tritiya day with great reverence, as is evident from the following stories from mythology.

Annapurna's Birth

Annapurna, the Goddess of food, was born on this day. She is a special form of Parvati who feeds the hungry. Once, Shiva disguised himself as a beggar and approached Annapurna for food. On the Akshaya Tritiya day, she fed Lord Shiva himself. Why should Shiva beg when He is the lord of the Universe? Shiva's begging is a symbolic act - he begs for all his beggars.

AKSHAYA TRITIYA

THE POPULAR FESTIVAL WILL BE CELEBRATED ON APRIL 26 THIS YEAR



Kubera's Appointment

Kubera, the Banker in Heaven, received his wealth on this day by worshipping Lord Shiva in the temple at Sivapuram. It is only on this day Lord Shiva blessed Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth, with all the riches. Thus, Lord Siva appointed both of them to their coveted positions as custodians of wealth and prosperity.

Akshaya Patram

In the great epic Mahabharata, there was a king named Yudhisthira. He was the eldest brother among the five Pandavas, and was recognized as the son of Dharma. At Thirumanthurai temple, the Gods granted Yudhisthira with an Akshaya Patram or bowl that grants undiminishing food. He used this for the benefit of the people. He received this bowl on the Akshaya Tritiya day.

Once, Garuda, the divine vehicle of Lord Vishnu, worshipped Goddess Lakshmi. She offered an Akshaya Patram to Garuda. While worshipping the Sun God, he offered food to the deity in this golden Akshaya bowl. These incidents happened in Arasar temple in the previous Yugas.

Krishna and Kusela

On the Akshaya Tritiya day, Kusela went to meet his childhood friend Lord Krishna with the hope of solving his poverty as Krishna was a very rich king. However, he could only afford to carry along rice flakes to greet Krishna. Though he was ashamed initially to

share the rice flakes with Lord Krishna, Krishna forced him to give those flakes. The moment Krishna tasted those flakes, Kusela's poverty vanished and he became rich overnight.

Puranic Story

During the ancient times, there was a merchant who was so poverty-stricken that he found it difficult to afford even one square meal a day. However, he was intensely religious and noticing his devotion the elders explained to him the greatness of Akshaya Tritiya. The poor merchant decided to follow their advice. On an Akshaya Tritiya day, he woke up at dawn, bathed and offered food, water, sugarcane juice, milk and money to poor Brahmins. Despite his wife's disapproval,

he followed all the necessary austerities as advised by the elders. Due to his sincere efforts, he was born as Kushapathy Chakravarthy in his next birth.

The Golden Link

The word "Akshaya" means imperishable or eternal - that which never diminishes. Initiations made or valuables bought on this day are considered to bring success or good fortune. Buying gold is a popular activity on Akshaya Tritiya, as it is the ultimate symbol of wealth and prosperity. Gold and gold jewelry bought and worn on this day signify never diminishing good fortune. Indians celebrate weddings, begin new business ventures, and even plan long journeys on this day.

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"Indians alone can save India, and India and Hinduism are one."



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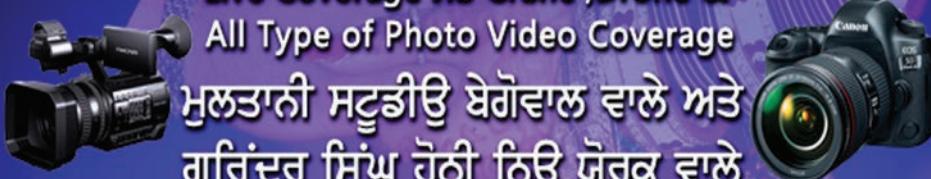
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contd from page 1

Trump Suspends Immigration...

It affects people applying for green cards through employment, family or other means, with some significant exceptions.

Describing it as a very powerful order Trump told reporters during his daily news briefing at the White House on Wednesday, April 22, that he signed the order before coming for the press briefing.

"By pausing immigration, we'll help put unemployed Americans first in line for jobs as America reopens. It would be wrong and unjust for Americans laid off by the virus to be replaced with new immigrant labor flown in from abroad," he said.

He also said it will "preserve our healthcare resources for American patients" afflicted by the coronavirus.

The executive order, a copy of which was released by the White House, said the new provisions apply to foreign nationals outside the U.S. who do not have an immigrant visa that is valid on the effective date of proclamation.

It also applies to those foreign nationals who do not have an official travel document other than a visa that is valid on the effective date of proclamation or issued on any date thereafter that permits him or her to travel to the U.S. and seek entry or admission.

The suspension, the executive order said, does not apply to those foreign nationals already inside the country on a green card. It provides exemptions to healthcare workers, and those seeking to enter the U.S. as a legal permanent resident under investment category. Spouses of a U.S. citizen, 21 years and younger kids of American nationals, or those who are under the process of being adopted are also exempted from this temporary suspension of immigration.

Trump said he was determined that, without this measure, the U.S. faces a potentially protracted economic recovery with persistently high unemployment if labor supply outpaces labor demand.

Excess labor supply affects all workers and potential workers, but it is particularly harmful to workers at the margin between employment and unemployment, who are typically 'last in' during an economic expansion and 'first out' during an economic contraction, he said in his executive order. In recent years, these workers have been disproportionately represented by historically disadvantaged groups, including African Americans and other minorities, those without a college degree, and the disabled, he said. These are the workers who, at the margin between employment and unemployment, are likely to bear the burden of excess labor supply disproportionately, he added.

The White House in a statement said that this is a temporary pause demanded by the crisis being faced as a nation. The pause will be in effect for 60 days, and the administration will continue to monitor the labor market to amend or extend the proclamation if needed, it said. Trump is also asking his administration to review guest worker programs to assess whether additional measures should be taken to protect American workers. The White House further said that mass migration of low-skilled labor into the U.S. disproportionately harms historically disadvantaged Americans. Trump said this week he would impose a more sweeping order, saying he intended to close the United States to people trying to immigrate to the country to live and work. But under intense pressure from business groups, he backed off barring guest workers for technology companies, farms as well as other employers. Still, some business groups said they were frustrated by the move. (With input from agencies)

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

No exponential rise in Covid-19...

"No new case of Covid-19 was reported from 78 districts in the last 14 days. A total of 388 patients were cured in one day, the recovery rate is 19.89 per cent. There are 33 new districts in nine states from where no new case was reported in the last 14 days," said Luv Agarwal, Joint Secretary at the Union Health Ministry.

The total number of confirmed cases in India is 21,393. While 4,257 people have been cured so far, 681 persons have succumbed to the dreaded virus. The number of active cases in the country is 16,454. In the last 24 hours, 1,409 positive cases were reported from across the country.

"We have scaled up nearly 33 times in 30 days. We need to consistently ramp up testing",

CK Mishra, Chairman of Empowered Group 2, at a press conference said, "On March 23, we had done 14,915 tests across the country and on April 22, we did more than 5 lakh tests, and as per a rough calculation, we have scaled up nearly 33 times in 30 days. We need to consistently ramp up testing." Mishra said.

Mishra said the focus of the government is on the districts. "Our focus is on the districts now. The way positive cases moved in India, the growth is more or less linear and not exponential. Certain strategies are in work to contain it to a particular level. Beyond this, looking at the story of positive cases in these 30 days, we are more or less in the same position where we were one month ago. Among those tested, 4.5 per cent cases have returned positive," added Mishra.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Cuomo says 21% of NYC found...

The governor said the stunning assessment - which means up to two million New Yorkers in the city have gotten the virus - will shape the state and city's plans to reopen at some point from the devastating pandemic.

"What you do in a place with 21% is very different," he said. "The facts dictate the action."

Statewide, 13.9% of New Yorkers tested positive for the antibodies that are produced when people fight off the virus. Long Island had a 16.7% rate. Westchester and Rockland clocked in at 11.7%.

Upstate, just 3.9% tested positive in the study, which covered 19 counties and 40 municipalities.

Cuomo announced the figures as the daily death toll dipped a bit to 438 Thursday, April 23.

The governor bemoaned the fact that New York has flattened the coronavirus curve, but still has about 1,300 new hospitalizations a day.

"We've basically flattened it out at about 1,300 people coming through the door," he said. "And that's not great. We'd like to see it going down faster." (Source: Daily News)

contd from page 4

Indian American Appointed by...

Dr. Sudarsanam Suresh Babu is a Governor's Chair in Advanced Manufacturing and is a professor based in the Department of Mechanical, Aerospace, and Biomedical Engineering (MABE) at UT and has a joint professorship with the Department of Materials Science and Engineering (MSE). As a Governor's Chair, he will also have an appointment in the Energy and Environmental Sciences Directorate and in the Advanced Manufacturing Program at Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL). Babu, a former professor in the Welding Engineering Program in the Department of Materials Science and Engineering at The Ohio State University (OSU), directed a National Science Foundation Industry and University Cooperative Research (IUCRC) center centered on materials joining for energy applications.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

US unemployment applications reach over 26m as many States struggle to deal with the Pandemic

An additional 4.4 million Americans filed last week, as losses have wiped out all the job gains made since end of the last recession in 2008

NEW YORK (TIP): From a record number of employments to a record-breaking number of unemployment, the US is facing a grim situation with joblessness. The total number of Americans filing for unemployment shot up to over 26 million, with the addition of 1 4.4 million Americans who filed for unemployment last week since the coronavirus pandemic shut down swaths of the US and brought its economy to a standstill.

The latest Department of Labor figures show the pace of layoffs appears to have slowed slightly but a backlog of claims mean millions more are likely to file in the coming weeks. States across the country are encountering problems with the sheer number of people applying for unemployment benefits.

In New York, laid off workers still struggle to file for unemployment and wait to receive benefits. Between the weeks ending March 14th and April 11th, 1.2 million New Yorkers have filed unemployment claims-a number far greater than the 300,000 who submitted unemployment claims during the 2008 financial crisis.

New York's Department of Labor has struggled under the burden of incoming unemployment claims since Governor Andrew Cuomo's executive order shutting down non-essential businesses took effect. The DOL has added 2,700 workers to process unemployment applications, expanded the hours jobless individuals can file claims, and sent \$2.2 billion to 1.1 million unemployed New Yorkers.

As calls overwhelmed phone lines and cascading web traffic caused the DOL website to repeatedly crash, Cuomo announced that the state had retained assistance from Google, Deloitte, and Verizon to speed up claims processing with a "Tech Surge."

Yet despite those fixes, many New Yorkers said they remain unable to complete an unemployment application.

In Florida, the widespread collapse of its already flawed benefits system, just 14.2% of the more than 668,000 claims filed since 15 March have been paid. In Ohio, claimants now have to file on a specific day of the week, depending on the first letter of their last name, to ease congestion. Washington residents are complaining that the state's website crashes or takes hours to respond. Elsewhere, too, people have complained that they cannot access the website to file their unemployment claims.

Delays in processing applications have boosted the weekly totals in recent weeks but economists believe the unprecedented wave of claims is near its peak.

However, there seems to be no respite for Americans facing, probably, the most challenging economic conditions in recent history of the nation.

(With inputs from agencies and Labor department)

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OOTY: QUEEN OF THE NILGIRIS

The most famous hill station south of the Vindhya range, Ootacamund's resplendent tea plantations and red-roofed bungalows still carry echoes of its colonial past. Originally a densely forested area in the Nilgiri mountains, it was converted into a summer retreat for the British in the 19th century. The undeniable natural beauty of Ooty (as it's universally referred to) and its misty green trails continues to draw visitors every year. Ooty is pleasant all year round, but the summer months are the high season. If you want to avoid the crowds and don't mind a drizzle then head here between August and November, when the rains turn the hills a luxuriant green.

Tea plantation tours

Several tea estates in Ooty's neighbour Coonoor offer guided tours, which offer stunning views and fascinating insights into the making of the popular beverage.

DODDABETTA PEAK

At 8,969 feet, Doddabetta is the highest peak in the area. It lies between the western and eastern ghats, around 10 kilometres outside Ooty. On a clear day, you can get commanding views of the Nilgiris, and even the plains around Coimbatore. There's also a telescope which allows you to zoom in on surrounding hill-stations like Coonoor and Ketti.

MUDUMALAI NATIONAL PARK

The first wildlife sanctuary in southern India, this national park is located in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve. Spread across the states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala, it has plenty of options for wildlife enthusiasts.

You can take a jungle bus safari to spot common wildlife such as elephants, deer and gaur (Indian bison). The Theppakadu Elephant Camp also organises visits and elephant rides, and their evening feeding sessions are a star attraction. If you'd like to stay for a longer time, book yourself a room at the eco-friendly Jungle Retreat, which organises treks, safaris and river hikes.

AVALANCHE LAKE

Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, a biodiversity hotspot that's home to a large number of species of plants,



mammals, birds and reptiles. Watch out for You can walk along the shore or fish for trout and carp. The surrounding areas are inhabited by the Todas, one of the oldest Nilgiri tribes.

Pykara falls and lake

Surrounded by forests, locally known as sholas, this picturesque lake is located 25 kilometres away from Ooty.

Things to do

Besides visiting its sprawling tea plantations and red-roofed bungalows, there are plenty of things to do in Ooty. You can say a prayer at the St. Stephen's Church that was built in 1829 in neo-Gothic style and is supported by wooden beams from Tipu Sultan's palace. A ride in the Nilgiri Mountain Railways is also a great way of exploring this region. If you have the luxury of time, you can even hop off at Coonor or Wellington enroute.

If you think that the city only has churches and tea plantations to offer, head out to the Racecourse where horse riding is a 125 years old tradition or

stopover at the Botanical Gardens for a refreshing day time excursion. With the crowds conspicuous by their absence, it's no wonder that Ooty is a honeymooner's paradise.

Shopping in Ooty

When it comes to shopping in Ooty, there isn't very much the city has to offer, but there are a few things you can stock up on while you're in this hill station in the Nilgiri mountain range. The weather in Ooty is favourable for the growth of spices and tea—almost every shop you come across will be selling locally produced varietals of both—aside from which the locally made cheese and oil is also worth buying, as is the delicious home-made chocolate.

Things you should buy before leaving Ooty

Acres Wild

Acres Wild, a family-run farm-stay in Coonoor, produces vegetarian and organic cheese with milk from Jersey and Holstein cows.

The Green Shop

Epicures can also get fresh spices like cloves, nutmeg, pepper and cardamom from The Green Shop in Ooty.

Handmade chocolates

Ooty has a sizeable handmade chocolate industry. Indulge your sweet tooth with the truffles, fudges and marshmallows available at King Star Confectioners on Commercial Road or The Modern Store on Botanical Gardens Road.

Aromatic Oils

Ooty's plantations also produce aromatic essential oils such as camphor, eucalyptus and citronella, which can be used for medicinal purposes.

Tea

Ooty is most famous for its tea plantations. Connoisseurs will find plenty to choose from: dust and leaf; black, green, black and white varieties; and flavours such as masala, jasmine, cardamom and even chocolate.



Can't wait to go to Australia and play Tests, says Rohit Sharma

NEW DELHI (TIP): Swashbuckling India opener Rohit Sharma believes the presence of David Warner and Steve Smith will make the tour of Australia later this year a "different ball game" for his side, which is also at its best right now.

India won the 2018-19 Test series 2-1, their first in 71 years of touring Down Under, but it came against a depleted Australian team which didn't have Warner and Smith, who were both serving a one year ball-tampering suspension.

"I was looking forward to the New Zealand series but unfortunately, injury (calf muscle) happened at the wrong time," Rohit told 'India Today' on Wednesday.

"I can't wait to go to Australia and play the Test matches there. Australia in Australia with those two guys will be a different ball game," India's white ball vice-captain said.

For him, opening is a challenge that he has relished and a testimony to that was his stupendous start against South Africa at home. However, he has been ready for the job since the 2018 Australia tour when the team management gave him enough hints.

"I was told you might be opening in Tests as well. It was two years ago. I was preparing myself from then onwards," he said.

For him, watching the game from the dressing room is no fun.

"You wanted opportunity, everybody wants to be out there in the middle. I wanted to play and not watch the



game. "When the chance came along, I was ready. There were some technical aspects, I needed to be aware of," he said. Rohit said the Australia series will be an exciting one as this Indian team is currently playing its best cricket.

"As a team, we are playing best cricket right now, everybody wants to take the game back to the opposition. If it happens (amid the COVID-19 pandemic), it will be a great series to be part of," he said. The tour is planned between October and January but there is speculation on whether it can be conducted smoothly amid the global health crisis which hasn't shown any signs of being under control as of now.

'No cricket in India in near future'

NEW DELHI (TIP): Amid suggestions and reports of squeezing in the IPL ahead of the T20 World Cup in October this year despite there being question marks on the world event taking place in Australia itself, BCCI president Sourav Ganguly made it clear that cricket in India has taken a backseat and there are no chances of the sport taking place in the country in the near future because of Covid-19 pandemic.

The global outbreak of coronavirus has ceased all major sporting activities around the world including the indefinite postponement of IPL for the first time since its inception. Though there has been no official word from BCCI but there have been reports about the board trying to find a window before the T20 World Cup for IPL.

Board president Ganguly, however made it clear health is more important than cricket.

Spanish GP: F1 will renegotiate fees for races without fans

Formula One organizers are open to renegotiating hosting fees for races that may take place without fans this season because of the coronavirus pandemic, the general manager of the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya said.

Joan Fontseré told The Associated Press that Liberty Media is "conscious" that if races need to go on without fans the contracts with event promoters will have to be somehow renegotiated.

"They are conscious that this is an exceptional situation," Fontseré said Tuesday. "We are obviously on the same page. If they want to keep some races on because of the TV rights, because of the teams ... they know that our income (will be reduced), they realize that this year it will be like that, so for sure we are on the same page."

Spanish Grand Prix organizers at this moment are not even considering a race with fans in Barcelona. He said it's not only ticket sales that would be affected if the event goes on with empty stands and no hospitality suites.

"When the Catalan government invests in F1, it's not only for the tickets that we sell, it's also for the financial impact that the event has in the country, in Catalonia," Fontseré said.

The economic impact for the country will be very reduced. It means no income for taxis, for hotels ... so that changes completely the agreement between the two parties."

Liberty Media did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The Spanish GP brings in more than 160,000 million euros (\$173 million) to the



region, with the total of its financial impact during the year nearing 300 million euros (\$325 million), according to data from the track. The attendance for last year's race-weekend surpassed 160,000 people.

Fontseré said he received a couple of phone calls from F1 CEO Chase Carey to discuss possible solutions for the Spanish GP. He said Carey said the series is trying to run as many races as possible, but it was still too early to know when the season would actually resume, whether it would be in the summer or only in the fall.

Nine of the 22 races have already been postponed or canceled, and F1 recently put half of its staff on furlough until the end of May. Some teams also took similar actions to reduce costs.

F1 organizers have said they hope to hold between 15 and 18 races this year. The Australian GP and the Monaco GP have already been canceled.



FEDERER RAISES PROSPECT OF MERGING MEN'S AND WOMEN'S TOURS

ZURICH (TIP): Roger Federer raised the prospect of merging the governing bodies that oversee the men's and women's professional tennis tours on Wednesday.

The 20-time Grand Slam champion began a string of posts on Twitter by saying the shutdown of tennis because of the coronavirus outbreak has given the sport an ideal opportunity to assess its future.

"Am I the only one thinking that now is the time for men's and women's tennis to be united and come together as one?" Federer wrote, sparking an initial flurry of replies on the social media platform.

The professional era in tennis started in 1968, and the ATP was founded in 1972 and has run the men's game since. The WTA was founded by Billie Jean King in 1973, uniting the women's professional game into one tour.

Federer emphasised he was "not talking about merging competition on the court" but rather the two governing bodies.

Kapil Dev goes bald amid lockdown; Manjrekar says 'love this look, Paaji'

MUMBAI (TIP): Former India batsman Sanjay Manjrekar has advised Kapil Dev to keep sporting the shaved head look, saying he loved it.

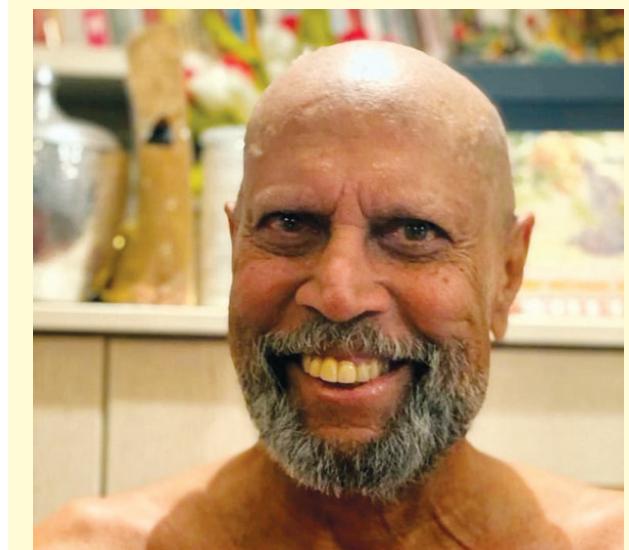
A day after Sachin Tendulkar posted pictures of trimming his own hair amid the COVID-19 lockdown, former India captain and legendary all-rounder Kapil Dev's new look was revealed on Twitter where he was seen posing with a shaved head.

India's first World Cup-winning captain was also seen sporting sunglasses and wearing a black blazer as he looked dashing.

"Love this look Paaji! Keep it!" Manjrekar said in a tweet with Dev's photo sporting the new look with a grin on his face.

Kapil had previously urged countrymen to stay indoors during the lockdown which according to him has become the "lifeline for mankind" amid the coronavirus pandemic.

According to Kapil, during the lockdown which has been imposed to stop the spread of novel coronavirus, people should stay at home as that is the least they can do to combat the disease which has claimed thousands of lives across the world.



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NEW YORKERS: STAY HOME TO STOP THE SPREAD OF CORONAVIRUS

New Yorkers working together and staying home can slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) in New York City. When you go out for essential needs, work or to get fresh air, keep distance between yourself and others and take the following precautions.



PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS

- Keep at least 6 feet between yourself and others.
- Wash your hands with soap and water often.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or sleeve when sneezing or coughing.
- Do not touch your face with unwashed hands.
- Monitor your health more closely than usual for cold or flu symptoms.



IF YOU ARE SICK

- Stay home.
- If you have a cough, shortness of breath, fever, sore throat and do not feel better after 3-4 days, consult with your doctor.
- If you need help getting medical care, call 311.
- NYC will provide care regardless of immigration status or ability to pay.



PROTECT THE MOST VULNERABLE

- Stay home if you have lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, cancer or a weakened immune system.
- Stay home and call, video chat or text with family or friends who have one of these conditions.



REDUCE OVERCROWDING

- Stay home.
 - Telecommute if possible.
- If you do go out:**
- Stagger work hours away from peak travel times.
 - Walk or bike.
 - Do not gather in crowds.

Text COVID to 692-692 for real-time updates or visit nyc.gov/coronavirus.

Call 311 to report harassment or discrimination. Call 888-NYC-WELL, text "WELL" to 65173 or chat online at nyc.gov/nycwell to connect with a counselor.

*Messages and data rates may apply. Check your wireless provider plan for details.

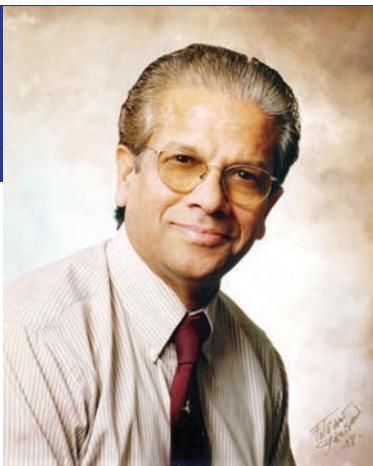


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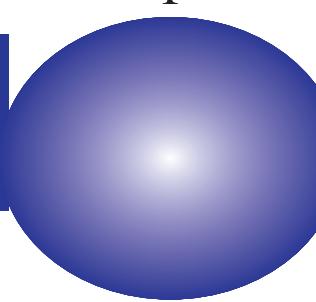


CORONAVIRUS HELPLINE

Dr. VK Raju and Dr. Leela Raju of the Eye Foundation of America will be glad to answer any eye related concerns of the readers of The Indian Panorama during this difficult period of Coronavirus onslaught



DR. VK RAJU IS A CLINICAL PROFESSOR OF OPHTHALMOLOGY AT WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY



DR. LEELA RAJU IS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF OPHTHALMOLOGY AT NYU LANGONE MEDICAL CENTER



They can be reached at
eyefoundationofamerica.org@gmail.com