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**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

COVID-19 IN BRIEF

- THERE ARE MORE THAN 1 MILLION CASES OF CORONAVIRUS GLOBALLY, ACCORDING TO JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY.
- THE US HAS REPORTED MORE THAN 243,000 CASES, WITH MORE THAN 5,900 DEATHS.
- 6.6 MILLION PEOPLE IN THE US FILED FOR UNEMPLOYMENT LAST WEEK - THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF INITIAL CLAIMS IN HISTORY.
- US FEDERAL STOCKPILES OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL GEAR ARE ALMOST DEPLETED.
- ITALY, GERMANY AND PAKISTAN HAVE PROLONGED THEIR LOCKDOWNS.

Coronavirus cases hit 1 million worldwide, deaths pass 52,000

Global Recession Feared; US Joblessness at a record high



NEW YORK (TIP): The number of coronavirus infections worldwide has hit 1 million, with more than 50,000 deaths, according to the tally kept by Johns Hopkins University.

The figures were another bleak milestone in the epidemic that has forced the lockdown of entire countries and brought economies to a shuddering halt. The coronavirus outbreak has thrown 10 million Americans out of work in just two weeks, the swiftest, most stunning collapse the U.S. job

contd on Page 32

In New York, Governor Andrew Cuomo warned that the State is quickly running out of breathing machines

India's Prime Minister calls upon CM's to Prepare Common Exit Strategy post lockdown



"In the next few weeks, testing, tracing, isolation and quarantine should remain the areas of focus", said Prime Minister Narendra Modi Twitter picture @narendramodi.in

Important to ensure staggered movement post shutdown, he says

NEW DELHI (TIP): India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday, April 2, suggested that states should prepare a common exit strategy for a

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Coronavirus Outbreak in New Jersey Accelerates with 537 Deaths

TRENTON , NJ (TIP): The coronavirus outbreak in New Jersey continued to accelerate with 182 new deaths April 2, bringing the statewide total of 537 deaths and total 25,590 coronavirus cases, as officials reported 3,489 new positive tests.

Gov. Phil Murphy and U.S. Sen. Bob Menendez spent about 20 minutes Thursday, April 2, touring the state's first field hospital in response to the

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NJ Governor Phil Murphy, April 2, took stock of the situation in the wake of increase in the number of Coronavirus cases and deaths.



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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.*



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The CARES Act - What You Need to Know

Late Wednesday, March 25, the Senate unanimously approved an historic stimulus bill - the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act ("CARES Act") - to provide significant aid to the American people and businesses impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. The text of the bill is a lengthy 880 pages and as expected, provides significant relief for small business and expanded unemployment benefits for individuals. Below are some highlights.

Payroll Tax Relief

The CARES Act includes nine business tax provisions, including a credit to retain workers during COVID-19 related closures, deferral of payroll tax payments for two years, a change to the tax treatment of business losses and some technical corrections to the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. Below are some key points on the payroll tax credit and payroll deferrals.

Tax Credit:

This provision provides eligible employers with a refundable tax credit against the employer's share of payroll taxes for applicable employment taxes. For each calendar quarter during the applicable period, the employer can receive a credit in an amount equal to 50% of qualified wages (inclusive of health insurance) up to \$10,000 per employee per quarter ending on December 31, 2020. The credit is treated as a refund if it exceeds the employer's applicable employment taxes for a given quarter.

A business is eligible for this tax credit in two ways: (i) If operations were partially or fully suspended due to a mandatory government shut-down related to COVID-19; or (ii) if the business remained opened during any quarter in 2020 but gross receipts for that quarter were less than 50% of what they were for the same quarter in 2019. The business will then be entitled to a credit for each quarter, until the business has a quarter where gross receipts exceed 80% of what they were for the same quarter in the previous year.

Eligible employers. Employers with greater than 100 employees are eligible to receive the credit if they continue to pay employees that are not providing services. Employers with fewer than 100 employees may receive the credit if they continue to pay employees whether they are or are not providing services.

For purposes of this credit, qualified wages do not include wages paid under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act for sick leave or family medical leave, which are already subject to certain tax credits.

If an employer takes out a payroll protection loan under Section 7(a) of the Small Business Act as amended by this Act, no employee retention credit will be available.

Tax Deferral of Payroll Tax:

The CARES Act allows a 50% deferral of the employer's share of the 6.2% Social Security tax that would otherwise be due from the date of the CARES Act's enactment through December 31, 2020.

A payment of 50% of the deferred payroll taxes would be due on December 31, 2020 and the remaining amount by

December 31, 2022 (50%).

A taxpayer who is self-employed can defer paying 50% of his or her self-employment tax that would be due from the date of the CARES Act's enactment through the end of 2020 until the end of 2021 (25%) and 2022 (25%).

Under this provision, an employer can defer payment of payroll taxes for two years and still take immediate advantage of the new payroll tax credits described above, as well as credits for payment of emergency sick and family leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, if applicable.

If an employer takes out a payroll protection loan under Section 7(a) of the Small Business Act as amended by this Act, no payroll tax deferral will be available.

Small Business Assistance

The CARES Act allocates approximately \$350 billion for small business assistance. The United States Small Business Administration (the "SBA") will administer the SBA 7a loan program created to eligible businesses to help pay operational costs like payroll, rent, health benefits, insurance premiums, utilities, etc. Subject to certain conditions, loan amounts are forgivable if employers retain employees. We can report the following specifics:

Small Businesses with 0-500 employees are eligible to apply.

The loans reward businesses for keeping workers on payroll (this is retroactive to February 1, 2020 for those laid off on or after that date).

The loans allow businesses to pay employees, mortgages and lease payments.

Loan amounts can be up to 2.5 times a company's annual to average monthly payroll (between January 1, 2020 and February 29, 2020), mortgage payments and lease payments (this excludes compensation paid to any one employee over \$100k). Maximum loan amount is \$10 million.

An advance grant of up to \$10k can be requested 3 days after applying for the loan. Even if the business is denied the loan, the advance will not have to be paid back provided it is used for business expenses such as payroll and rent payments.

No personal guaranty or collateral is required.

Independent contractors, 1099 workers, self-employed individuals and sole proprietorships are eligible to apply.

Interest rates would be maximum 4% with 10-year term.

Restaurants and hotels are eligible as long as they employ 500 workers or less per location.

Loan forgiveness. A second application must be filed for loan forgiveness. That portion of the loan used for:

Payroll (less any reduction in payroll over 25% who earn 100k or less - so if the business laid off 25% of their workers and the workers each made 100k or less - this amount would be deducted from the total loan forgiveness)

Lease payments

Mortgage payments

**Any amount forgiven will not be taxable income

Businesses with current SBA loans can suspend certain payments and this program may not be exclusive.

It is not clear however, when businesses will be able to apply for these loans. In the interim there are other programs currently available and funding, including, but not limited to:

NYC Employee Retention Grants

NYC Business Continuity Loans

NYS Emergency Loans

SBA Disaster Relief Loans

Expanded Unemployment Benefits

Who is Covered?

The CARES Act has substantially expanded benefits to the types of workers that would usually not be eligible for unemployment benefits. This expansion of coverage now includes individuals who are self-employed (e.g., gig workers - Uber Drivers, and other part-time workers such as bartenders and waiters - freelancers, and independent contractors).

Covered individuals include those who are unemployed, partially unemployed or unable to work because:

*an individual has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or is experiencing symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis.

*an individual has a member of the household diagnosed with COVID-19.

*an individual is providing care for a family member or member of the household diagnosed with COVID-19.

*an individual is the primary caregiver and relies on a school or another facility to care for a child, elderly parent or another household member in order to work and that school or facility has been closed because of COVID-19.

*an individual is unable to get to work because of a quarantine imposed as a direct result of COVID-19.

*an individual is unable to get to work because such individual has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.

*an individual was scheduled to commence employment and does not have a job or is unable to get to such job as a direct result of COVID-19.

*an individual has become the breadwinner or major support of a household because the head of the household has died as a direct result of COVID-19.

*an individual has to quit his or her job as a direct result of COVID-19.

*an individual's place of employment is closed as a direct result of COVID-19; or

*an individual meets any additional criteria to be established by the Secretary of the Treasury.

Under the CARES Act part-time workers would be eligible for benefits, but benefit amounts and the duration of benefits will depend on each state's unemployment insurance program.

Individuals who can work from home, and those receiving paid sick leave or



paid family leave, are not covered.

What are the Benefits?

Exact unemployment benefits will depend on each state's unemployment insurance program. However, under the CARES Act, covered individuals would be entitled to receive an extra \$600 per week in addition to their state benefits.

In New York, an individual would be eligible for the maximum state unemployment benefit of \$504 per week and under the CARES Act would receive an additional \$600 of federal compensation. States will have the option of providing the entire amount in one payment or sending the additional payment separately, provided that both payments have to be made on the same weekly basis.

Benefit amounts for self-employed individuals would be calculated based on previous income, using a formula from the Disaster Unemployment Assistance program.

Self-employed workers would also be eligible for the additional \$600 weekly benefit.

The CARES Act would provide all eligible individuals with an additional 13 weeks of payments following the end of state benefit programs; provided that the total period cannot exceed 39 weeks (certain states may adopt shorter periods).

The extra \$600 payment would last for up to four months, covering weeks of unemployment ending July 31, 2020.

Expanded coverage would be available to workers who were newly eligible for unemployment benefits for weeks starting on Jan. 27, 2020 and through Dec. 31, 2020.

The additional \$600 benefit would count as income when determining eligibility for means-tested programs, except for Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program; and

States have been incentivized to waive the one-week waiting period, but processing claims may take some time given the current climate.

Individual Payments

The CARES Act will provide direct payments to individuals depending on income.

\$1,200 per single individual who earns up to \$95,000 in adjusted gross income.

\$2,400 for married couples who earn up to \$150,000; and

An additional payment of \$500 per child under the age of 17.

The payment would scale down by income, phasing out entirely at \$99,000 for singles and \$198,000 for couples without children. Qualifying income levels will be based on 2019 federal tax returns, if already filed, and otherwise on 2018 returns. (Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin earlier this month delayed the filing deadline until July 15.) Payments should be received in three weeks.

(Source: Warshaw Burstein, LLP
www.wbny.com)

Javits Center Treating COVID Patients Now ; Healthcare Enrollment Extended

NEW YORK(TIP): New York Governor Andrew Cuomo , April 2, announced that the temporary hospital facility at the Javits Center will now treat COVID-19 patients.

"The growing number of Coronavirus cases are threatening the capacity of our hospital system. The original plan for the Javits Center was to use it for non-COVID patients in order to free up beds at other hospitals. However, the number of COVID patients has increased to the point that it is prudent for Javits to support and care for COVID patients. I asked President Trump this morning to consider this request and stressed the urgent need and he agreed to it", said the Governor at the briefing April 2.

Governor Cuomo also announced the enactment of the 2021 Budget. "Now more than ever, the government needs to deliver results for the people. The 2021 Budget includes a comprehensive Paid Sick Leave law, a cap on insulin co-pays, a first-in-the-nation domestic terrorism law and much more. I thank and congratulate my partners in the Legislature, especially Speaker Heastie and Leader Stewart-Cousins, for working with us to get this budget done in these extraordinary times", Cuomo said.

Governor announce the extension of the special enrollment period to get a healthcare plan on the state's



New York Governor Andrew Cuomo at a daily briefing

health exchange. It is now extended to May 15.

"Uninsured New Yorkers can apply for coverage through NY State of Health or directly to insurers. If you lost employer coverage, you must apply within 60 days of losing that coverage. Because of a loss of income, New Yorkers may also be eligible for Medicaid, the Essential Plan, subsidized Qualified Health Plans or Child Health Plus", Governor said.

On the subject of Ventilators which are in short supply and which form the fundamental strength of the medical system, Governor Cuomo said, "The State is doing everything we can to make sure we have enough ventilators to meet our needs. The Department of Health has approved a new protocol from Northwell Health allowing BiPAP machines (a kind of breathing aid machine) to be converted into ventilators. The State has purchased 3,000 BiPAP machines from Philips in Pittsburgh, and 750 machines are already in stock and will be distributed to hospitals. This is just one of the extraordinary measures we are taking to secure these life-saving devices.

Governor said if New Yorkers wanted any information on how COVID -19 affects housing, they should look for answers to their questions on NY State's Homes and Community Renewal Agency Frequently Asked Questions page which has comprehensive information about housing issues for tenants, landlords and homeowners.

Governor expressed gratitude to Apple for donating 1.9 million masks to New York State - with more on the way.

As of April 2, New York State total number of confirmed cases stands at 92,381 and the total deaths on record are 2468.

New Jersey Governor Signs Executive Order to Grant Temporary Licenses to Foreign Doctors



Governor Phil Murphy holds a coronavirus briefing in Trenton on March 26, 2020.

Picture courtesy - Governor's Office

TRENTON, NJ (TIP): Governor Phil Murphy on April 1 signed Executive Order No. 112, authorizing the Division of Consumer Affairs to temporarily reactivate the licenses of recently retired health care professionals and grant temporary licenses to doctors licensed in foreign countries. The executive order also temporarily permits certain health care professionals to perform acts outside of their ordinary scope of practice and grants broad civil immunity to health care professionals and facilities providing services in support of New Jersey's COVID-19 response efforts who are acting in good faith.

"My Administration is working tirelessly with our hospital systems and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to expand bed capacities, reopen closed hospitals, and erect field medical stations to prepare for additional COVID-19 cases," said Governor Murphy. "We need trained, experienced medical personnel to ensure proper staffing as we build out this new capacity, which is why we have put out the call to retired health care professionals to join our fight and support our existing workforce. By signing this executive order,

we are removing bureaucratic roadblocks to quickly bring more health care professionals into our efforts and provide additional flexibility and protections for our frontline responders to aid in New Jersey's response to COVID-19."

The executive order supplements the State's existing health care workforce by:

- Authorizing the Division of Consumer Affairs to temporarily reactivate the licensees of healthcare professionals previously licensed in the State within the last five years. This will enable doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals who have recently retired or have allowed their licenses to lapse to temporarily reactivate their license.
- Authorizing the Division of Consumer Affairs to grant temporary medical licenses to doctors who are licensed and in good standing in foreign countries.
- Temporarily waiving certain scope of practice restrictions on Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs) related to physician collaboration, including a rule requiring that an APN enter into a joint protocol with a collaborating physician and a rule requiring APNs to obtain authorization from a collaborating physician in order to dispense narcotic drugs.
- Temporarily waiving certain scope of practice restrictions on Physician Assistants (PAs) related to physician supervision, including a rule requiring PAs to obtain physician authorization prior to prescribing a controlled dangerous substance.

Gurbani Maestro Padma Shri Nirmal Singh Khalsa Falls to Covid-19

NEW YORK (TIP): Padma Shri awardee and former "Hazuri Raagi" at the Golden Temple, Nirmal Singh Khalsa died at Amritsar of coronavirus Thursday, April 2 morning, news reports reaching New York said.

The 62-year-old "Gurbani" exponent had recently returned from abroad and tested positive for coronavirus on Wednesday, April 1, according to information received from health officials in Amritsar.

Bhai Sahib had many admirers and friends in New York. A close friend of his Bhai Bhupinder Singh, Head Granthi at the oldest and the largest Gurdwara on the East Coast, Gurdwara Sikh Cultural Society, Richmond Hill described Bhai Sahib as a jewel of the Sikh community and termed his death as a terrible blow to the Sikh religion and the Sikh community, the world over.

An admirer of Bhai Sahib, Harjit (Harry) Singh Panaser from New Jersey, condoling his sad demise recalled Bhai Sahib's association with his family in India and said his death is a personal loss to him as much as it is a loss to the Sikh community.

Bhai Sahib was born on 12th April 1952 in Village Jand Wala Bhime Shah, Distt. Ferozepur, Punjab. He obtained a diploma in gurmat sangeet from the Shaheed Missionary College, Amritsar in 1976. He served as a music teacher in Gurmat College, Rishikesh, in 1977 and in Shaheed Sikh Missionary College, Sant Baba Fateh Singh, Sant Channan Singh, Budha Johar, Ganga Nagar, Rajasthan, in 1978. From 1979, he started serving as 'Hazoori Raagi', at Sach Khand Sri Harmandir Sahib. He has also performed Kirtan at all the five Takhts, historical Gurdwaras in India and in many countries. He was one of the finest raagis having knowledge of all the 31 Raags in Gurbani of Dhan Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

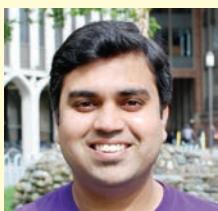
For his services in the field of "arts", he was awarded the Padma Shri, India's fourth-highest civilian award by the government of India in 2009. He was the first hazoori raagi to receive this award.

We, at The Indian Panorama express our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and pray for eternal peace to the departed soul.



Bhai Nirmal Singh Khalsa was a highly accomplished Raagi whose popularity took him to around 70 countries where he performed Kirtan

Indian American Aditya Vashistha Receives Google Research Award



NEW YORK (TIP): Aditya Vashistha, an Assistant Professor of Information Science at Cornell University has received Google Research Award. He designs and builds computing systems to empower people in low-resource environments.

Vashistha's team will use human-centered AI to combat online harassment of marginalized women and build gender-equitable social computing platforms. The team will explore ways to make voice forums - phone-based communication platforms commonly used by millions of people around the world who are too poor, remote or low-literate to access the internet - more inclusive and equitable for women. The goal of the Google Faculty Research Awards program is to recognize cutting-edge research in mutual areas of interest and to "identify and strengthen long-term collaborative relations with faculty working on problems that will impact how future generations use technology," according to its website.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news

Indian American Fighting Covid-19 on the Frontlines by Giving Lifesaving Soap into More Hands

BIDISHA ROY

NEW YORK (TIP): All of a sudden people have woken up to a new reality when everyone is talking about handwashing with soap to keep coronavirus away.

But in 2014, a young Indian American, then college student, Samir Lakhani noted a need for basics like soap while volunteering in rural Cambodia where a bar of soap is a luxury for poor that they cannot afford. While still attending the University of Pittsburgh, Lakhani started the Eco-Soap Bank. The nonprofit recycles discarded bars of soap from hotels in Cambodia and distributes it to people in need.

Now at the time of COVID-19, Samir is fighting the pandemic on the Frontlines. "In the last two and half months we have provided over 3 hundred and seventy-five thousand bars of soaps to the affected countries", he told in an interview with CNN.

Last month ESB gave out over 6,500 bars of soap to 80 organizations and schools in Siem Reap. "The current public health emergency around the world makes the need for hygiene standards stronger than ever, so we are working harder to get lifesaving soap into more hands. Every year, we provide soap and hygiene education to over a



Samir Lakhani noted a need for basics like soap while volunteering in rural Cambodia. Then a college student, he started a nonprofit to recycle discarded soap from hotels

million people to prevent diseases like pneumonia, cholera, Ebola, and now, Covid-19. Sometimes, the simplest acts make the biggest impact. This is the moment to raise awareness and save lives," he was quoted by The Phnom Penh Post.

Samir received a CNN Heroes Award for Eco-Soap Bank in 2017 and a Unilever Young Entrepreneurs award in 2018. Eco-Soap Bank is a humanitarian and environmental non-profit organization working to save, sanitize, and supply

recycled hotel soap for the developing world. Our work has three objectives:

Contribute a highly cost-effective hygiene product to improve health

Significantly reduce the waste generated by the hotel industry.

Provide livelihoods and free education to disadvantaged women with no other reliable source of income

Samir Lakhani is a social entrepreneur dedicated to restoring health and dignity to developing countries. Before founding Eco-Soap Bank in 2014, Samir was deeply involved in aquaculture and nutrition projects in northern Cambodian villages. He has also developed solar lighting solution projects in Cambodia, Bangladesh, and Nepal. Through his six years of nonprofit work in the areas of nutrition, water accessibility, and sanitation/hygiene, he has witnessed firsthand how delivering key products like soap transform the health and well-being of impoverished communities.

Samir Lakhani noted a need for basics like soap while volunteering in rural Cambodia. Then a college student, he started a nonprofit to repurpose discarded soap from hotels.

Samir is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh and currently lives in Pittsburgh, PA.

Indian American Surita R. Bhatia Inducted into Medical and Biological Engineering Elite



Dr. Bhatia was nominated, reviewed, and elected by peers and members of the College of Fellows for "impactful work on the nanostructure and mechanics of soft biomaterials, and advocacy for women and underrepresented groups in engineering."

NEW YORK (TIP): The American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering (AIMBE) has announced the induction of Surita R. Bhatia, Ph.D., Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Professor, Department of Chemistry, Stony Brook University, to its College of Fellows.

Election to the AIMBE College of

Fellows is among the highest professional distinctions accorded to a medical and biological engineer. The College of Fellows is comprised of the top two percent of medical and biological engineers. College membership honors those who have made outstanding contributions to "engineering and medicine research, practice, or education" and to "the pioneering of new and developing fields of technology, making major advancements in traditional fields of medical and biological engineering, or developing/implementing innovative approaches to bioengineering education."

"Surita's commitment to excellence in science and engineering is manifest every day," said Nicole S. Sampson, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and distinguished professor of Chemistry. "I am honored to have the opportunity to work with her on so many different levels: university administrator, departmental colleague, and scientific collaborator. My deepest congratulations to Surita on this well-deserved honor."

Dr. Bhatia was nominated, reviewed, and elected by peers and members of the College of Fellows for "impactful work on the nanostructure and mechanics of soft

biomaterials, and advocacy for women and underrepresented groups in engineering."

As a result of health concerns, AIMBE's annual meeting and induction ceremony scheduled for March 29-30, 2020, was cancelled. Under special procedures, Dr. Bhatia was remotely inducted along with 156 colleagues who make up the AIMBE College of Fellows Class of 2020.

Dr. Bhatia received her bachelor's degree from the University of Delaware and her PhD from Princeton University, both in Chemical Engineering, followed by postdoctoral training at the Rhodia/Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) Complex Fluids Laboratory. She has worked in public higher education for two decades, joining Stony Brook University in 2012 as a faculty member in the Department of Chemistry with a joint position as a Staff Scientist with the Center for Functional Nanomaterials at Brookhaven National Laboratory. Dr. Bhatia served as Vice Chair for Research and Facilities in the Department of Chemistry before her current role as Vice Provost of Faculty Affairs for the campus.

Dr. Bhatia's research program focuses

on structure, assembly, and rheological properties of polymeric gels, soft biomaterials, and nanoparticle dispersions. Exclusive of center grants, she has been PI or Co-PI on grants totaling \$16 million from NSF, NIH, the Department of Energy, philanthropic foundations, and private industry; including a recently awarded \$3M NSF NRT training grant. She is the recipient of an NSF CAREER Award, a Dupont Young Professor Award, a 3M Corporation Non-Tenured Faculty Award, and a 2018 AIChE Women's Initiatives Committee (WIC) Award for Outstanding Contributions to Chemical Engineering. Dr. Bhatia also has strong interests in mentoring, engineering education, and diversity in STEM fields. In this regard, she has served as PI on three NSF REU projects, joint-PI on NIH IIMSD and NIH PREP programs for underrepresented minority students in the biomedical sciences, and is a recipient of the national AIChE WIC Mentorship Excellence Award.

AIMBE Fellows are among the most distinguished medical and biological engineers including 3 Nobel Prize laureates, 18 Fellows having received the Presidential Medal of Science and/or Technology and Innovation, and 173 also inducted to the National Academy of Engineering, 84 inducted to the National Academy of Medicine and 37 inducted to the National Academy of Sciences.

(Source :Stony Brook University)

Indian American Lawmakers Hail Passage of \$2.2 Trillion COVID-19 Stimulus Package

WASHINGTON (TIP): Indian American lawmakers have hailed the passage of the bipartisan CARES Act, which will direct trillions in federal economic and public health assistance to

Americans across the country.

"As a doctor, I am proud to support this historic piece of legislation, which will bring urgent relief to American families and small businesses," said Rep. Ami Bera, M.D. (CA-07) after the House of Representatives passed the bipartisan emergency relief package for American families

and small businesses impacted by the novel coronavirus. "Today's vote is an important step in getting our communities back to health and on a path to economic recovery. I'll continue to work with local, state, and national leaders and public health experts to ensure Sacramento County receives all the resources to keep our community safe."

"This bill is an important step forward. It significantly expands unemployment insurance benefits for laid-off and furloughed workers, puts money directly into the pockets of struggling working people and families, provides critical relief in the form of emergency grants and forgivable loans to devastated small businesses and nonprofits, infuses cash into strained local and state governments and health care systems, increases the amounts of personal protective equipment in the Strategic National Stockpile, and supports struggling industries that do right by their employees" said Representative Pramila Jayapal (D-WA), Co-Chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus.

Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL-08) says this is step forward for everyday Americans suffering from both

the economic and public health impacts of COVID-19.



Representative
Pramila Jayapal (D-WA), Co-Chair of the
Congressional
Progressive Caucus
said, "This bill is an
important step
forward."

"I've spent the past week working with both Democrats and Republicans to make sure this package is geared towards the families and small businesses that have been disproportionately hit by this pandemic. While all legislation is built on compromise and we still have far to go in overcoming the coronavirus and its economic impact, the CARES Act provides immediate aid to families, workers, and the small businesses that form the backbone of our country while greatly expanding resources to health care workers on the front lines", said Congressman Krishnamoorthi.

Key provisions of the legislation include:

- A \$150 Billion State and Local Coronavirus Relief Fund: Creates a \$150 billion State and Local Coronavirus Relief Fund to provide states and localities additional resources to cope with the coronavirus pandemic. It is estimated that Illinois will receive approximately \$4.9 billion in desperately needed funds to benefit our state's residents.
- \$260 Billion in Dramatically Expanded Unemployment Benefits: Includes numerous provisions to improve unemployment benefits including providing an additional \$600 per week for the next four months, providing an additional 13 weeks of federally funded benefits, and expanding eligibility to include workers in the gig economy and self-employed workers.
- Immediate Direct Cash Payments to Lower and Middle-Income Americans: Provides for

immediate, direct cash payments to lower-and middle-income Americans of \$1,200 for each adult and \$500 for each child, beginning to phase out at an annual income of



Congressman Raja
Krishnamoorthi (D-
IL-08) says this is
step forward for
everyday Americans
suffering from both
the economic and
public health impacts
of COVID-19.

\$75,000 for an individual and \$150,000 for a household. These payments will provide individuals with the cash they need right now to survive with much of the economy currently shut down.

● More Than \$375 Billion in Small Business Relief: Provides more than \$375 billion in small business relief, including \$349

billion for forgivable loans to small businesses to pay their employees and keep them on the payroll; \$17 billion for debt relief for current and new SBA borrowers; and \$10 billion in immediate disaster grants.

● Approximately \$200 Billion for Our Hospitals, Health Care Workers, and Health Research: Provides an investment of about \$200 billion in our hospitals, health systems, and health research, including expanding funding for the personal protective equipment desperately needed by our health care workers, including ventilators, N95 masks, gowns, gloves, etc.

More Than \$100 Billion in Additional Emergency Appropriations, Including the Following:

- Transit Agencies: Provides \$25 billion to transit agencies, which have all seen a drastic drop in revenues as social distancing has been implemented. This funding is to be used to protect the jobs of the employees of the transit agencies,

funding their paychecks during this public health emergency. Illinois will receive \$1.6 billion under this program.

- HUD Emergency Solution Grants: Provides \$2 billion for HUD Emergency Solution Grants to states that will be distributed by formula. These grants are designed to address the impact of the coronavirus among individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and to support additional homeless assistance, prevention, and eviction prevention assistance. Of this \$2 billion, Illinois will receive approximately \$99 million. In addition, the bill provides an additional \$2 billion for these grants that will be allocated by HUD to the most hard-pressed areas.
- Child Care and Development Block Grant: Supports childcare and early education by providing \$3.5 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant. Illinois state will receive \$117.5 million under this emergency appropriation.
- Byrne-Justice Assistance Grant Program: Provides \$850 million for this program, giving additional support to state and local law enforcement agencies, thereby allowing them, for example, to obtain the personal protective equipment and other medical items they may need during this public health emergency. Illinois will receive approximately \$32 million under this appropriation.
- Election Assistance: Provides \$400 million for Election Assistance Grants for states to help prepare for the 2020 elections. Coronavirus is already resulting in the postponement of some primaries and this funding can help states make voting safer for individuals. Funding can be used, for example, to increase the ability to vote by mail, expand early voting, and expand online registration. Illinois will receive \$13.9 million for these purposes.



As a doctor, I am
proud to support
this historic piece of
legislation, which
will bring urgent
relief to American
families and small
businesses", said
Rep. Ami Bera

American families and small businesses impacted by the novel coronavirus. "Today's vote is an important step in getting our communities back to health and on a path to economic recovery. I'll continue to work with local, state, and national leaders and public health experts to ensure Sacramento County receives all the resources to keep our community safe."

"This bill is an important step forward. It significantly expands unemployment insurance benefits for laid-off and furloughed workers, puts money directly into the pockets of struggling working people and families, provides critical relief in the form of emergency grants and forgivable loans to devastated small businesses and nonprofits, infuses cash into strained local and state governments and health care systems, increases the amounts of personal protective equipment in the Strategic National Stockpile, and supports struggling industries that do right by their employees" said Representative Pramila Jayapal (D-WA), Co-Chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus.

Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL-08) says this is step forward for everyday Americans suffering from both

Indian American Stanford Student Awarded Michel David-Weill Scholarship

NEW YORK (TIP): Stanford senior Riya Verma is the recipient of the Michel David-Weill Scholarship, which provides funding for two years of graduate study at Sciences Po in Paris, France. Verma is the first Stanford student to receive the prestigious award.

The Michel David-Weill Scholarship provides \$80,000 for exceptional American college

students to pursue graduate degrees at Sciences Po, an international research university that specializes in the social sciences and offers multidisciplinary programs taught in French and English. This fall, Verma will move to Paris where she will begin a master's program in international development.

This spring, Verma, who is from Westchester, New York, will graduate

from Stanford with bachelor's degrees in computer science and French. During her Stanford career, she has been active on many academic and professional fronts, both on campus and internationally.

Senior Riya Verma is the first Stanford student to receive the Michel David-Weill Scholarship



Senate Majority Passes New York State Budget

Focus on Protecting New Yorkers' Health and Values & Combating the Coronavirus Pandemic

ALBANY, NY (TIP): The Senate Majority passed the 2020-2021 State Budget that addresses the needs of New York residents and businesses, especially in light of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Despite the anticipated long-term economic problems caused by this crisis, the Senate Majority fought to increase education aid, protect health care spending, and maintain essential services New Yorkers rely on. The enacted State Budget supports struggling taxpayers, farmers and businesses, environmental protection efforts, and local governments as they combat the COVID-19 epidemic.

"This is not the budget we had hoped to pass at the beginning of Session, or even the budget we had envisioned just a month ago," Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said. "Our state's financial situation has been thrust into a true economic crisis due to the coronavirus pandemic. Yet even in this crisis we managed to achieve a balanced budget that includes victories for the people of New York. The Senate Majority will continue to fight for our progressive values and priorities in the months ahead."

Senate Finance Committee Chair Liz Krueger said, "This budget is a crisis budget. It is not what we expected to be passing when we came to Albany in January, but it is what this moment calls for. Through this budget we will keep New York State solvent and functioning, and meet the needs of the present emergency. In the face of challenges the likes of which our state and our nation have not faced in generations, we will protect New Yorkers' health, and stand up for New York students, families, and small businesses. But make no mistake - this budget is not the final word. Far from it. When the immediate crisis is over, we must take a hard look at where we stand and how we got here; we must face down the structural flaws and inequities in our society that this crisis has revealed; and we must begin to chart a path for New York in which no one is left behind or sacrificed, in which everyone pitches in their fair share, and in which we make the hard and complex decisions to ensure the future is bright for all New Yorkers."

Protecting New Yorkers Health and Health Care Services

As New York State confronts the coronavirus pandemic, the need to protect health care spending and invest in quality medical services for New Yorkers has never been more essential. To advance those goals, the State Budget passed by the Senate Majority includes:

- Expanding access to telehealth in the Medicaid program so more New Yorkers can connect with their physical and mental health providers.
- Tobacco and vaping control regulations, including:
 - Prohibiting the retail sale of flavored vapor products, unless the product is approved by the Federal Food and Drug Administration through the premarket tobacco product application process;
 - Prohibiting the public display of tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, or vapor product advertisements near schools;
 - Increasing the general penalties for selling tobacco or vape products to minors;
 - Requiring disclosure of ingredients in vape products;
 - Regulating dangerous carrier oils that cause vaping illnesses; and
 - Creating a new education campaign regarding the dangers of vaping for school aged youth.
- Designating 13 fentanyl analogs to Schedule I controlled substances to get these drugs off the streets and protect New Yorkers.
- Authorizing the Department of Financial Services to investigate prescription drug price increases of over 50% and indications of fraud, and creating the Drug Accountability Board to participate in the investigations.
- Limiting out-of-pocket expenses for a 30-day supply



:Our state's financial situation has been thrust into a true economic crisis due to the coronavirus pandemic", said Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins.

of insulin to be capped at \$100.

- Establishing the Curing Alzheimer's Health Consortium within SUNY to identify genes that predict an increased risk for developing Alzheimer's.

Standing Up for Struggling New Yorkers

The Senate Majority understands that New Yorkers are struggling due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and the economic downturn as businesses work to stay open and pay employees. To help New York taxpayers address this crisis, the 2020-2021 State Budget includes:

- Providing \$200 million in additional support through the Child Care Development Block Grant to assist families affected by the public health emergency.
- Increasing funding for Unemployment Insurance (UI) Administration by \$1.05 billion in anticipation of increased UI claims.
- Prohibiting gender pricing discrimination, commonly referred to as the 'Pink Tax.'
- Ensuring all New York employees have between five to seven days (40 to 56 hours, respectively) of sick leave.
- Eliminating the current photo identification requirement for public assistance recipients and allowing these New Yorkers to access a free identification card from the state Department of Motor Vehicles.
- Allowing the State Department of Taxation and Finance to provide the Earned Income Tax Credit to eligible New Yorkers who qualify, but hadn't applied.
- Expands prevailing wage requirements to private projects over \$5 million paid in whole or partially with public funds as well as projects where public funds make up at least 30 percent of the aggregated total costs, with certain exemptions.

Investing in New York Students

The Senate Majority understands that education is the great equalizer in our society and that every student, regardless of their zip code, deserves access to a world-class education. The Senate Majority fought to restore proposed cuts and maintain funding for New York State schools and education programs, despite the economic downturn and lower anticipated revenue. The 2020-2021 State Budget includes:

- Providing a \$104 million increase in School Aid for a total of \$27.9 billion
- Ensuring every school district is held harmless in Foundation Aid and will receive the same amount as in 2019-20 - a total state-wide investment of \$18.4 billion.
- Providing a \$96 million increase for expense-based aids for a total funding level of \$8.99 billion
- Providing \$10 million in new funding for student mental health support grants and \$1 million for civics curriculum development. Additionally, past

years' competitive grants are maintained, totaling more than \$230 million in funding to school districts for programs such as early college high schools, after-school programming, and advanced courses.

- Authorizing a regional high school in Syracuse, known as the Syracuse Comprehensive Education and Workforce Training Center, to offer a high school curriculum that focuses on science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM).
- Establishing a monitor system for the Rochester City School District and directing the State Education Commissioner to designate a monitor whose appointment will last through June 30, 2023. Additionally, spin up aid will be provided to the Rochester City School District to address the district's \$35 million shortfall.

Boosting Economic Development across New York State:

The economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic is harming New York businesses and workers. The Senate Majority has already stepped up to help struggling employees and small businesses impacted by coronavirus quarantines and will continue to support New York job creators. To help grow the economy and rebound from the COVID-19 situation, the 2020-2021 State Budget includes:

- Extending the application period for START-UP NY for five years to December 2025.
- The enacted budget provides an additional \$4,714,000 for statewide and local economic development programs.
- Extending the Excelsior Tax Credit Program for 5 years.
- Making the New York Buy American Act permanent.
- Expanding the eligibility of the Economic Transformation Facility Redevelopment Program through 2021 to support the economies of communities affected by the closure of certain correctional facilities in 2011.
- Providing an additional \$365,000 Minority and Women-Owned Business Development.

Protecting New York Communities and Reforming the Criminal Justice System

Building on the Senate Majority's historic legislation to protect New York children and communities from the scourge of gun violence, the 2020-2021 State Budget includes provisions to help keep more guns off New York streets. Additionally, as part of the Senate Majority's ongoing efforts to fix the state's broken criminal justice system and keep New York communities safe, key provisions were advanced in the Budget to ensure New York continues to serve as a progressive leader to the nation. The 2020-2021 State Budget includes:

- Improvements to New York's bail law such as making several high-level offenses now bail eligible including certain sex crimes, high level drug offenses, domestic violence felonies, crimes resulting in a death, and offenses directly related to an individual's flight risk. The reform proposal also:
- Creates a mechanism to address individuals who repeatedly commit crimes;
- Expands reporting requirements so that the Department of Criminal Justice Services and the Office of Court Administration can better track outcomes of the state's new bail law; and
- Maintains the existing bail structure where most misdemeanors and non-violent felonies are not bail eligible.
- Providing \$40 million to support the implementation of discovery reforms.

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By Kalinga Tudor Silva

In the global South, a military style lockdown, though inevitable given the circumstances, may reinforce prejudices

I agree with Eric Klinenberg's recent submission to The New York Times that social distancing, advocated by health authorities worldwide, as a means of combating the spread of the coronavirus, can only be a part of firefighting. The rapid worldwide spread of COVID-19 has a lot to do with the fallout of globalization, including the travel industry, tourism and the neoliberal attack on universal health care. Moreover, unfettered promotion of social distancing can reinforce existing social prejudices driven by different forms of social exclusion.

The Korea example

In illustrating how social distancing actually works in the periphery, I will draw from a few examples from corona-affected countries. The COVID-19 epidemic in South Korea started with the controversial Shincheonji Church of Jesus with a personality cult centered around 88-year-old Lee Man-hee, identified as a messianic savior. This cult facilitated the transmission of the disease from Wuhan to South Korea because of frequent travel among its followers. Consequently, more than half of all COVID-19 patients at the onset of the epidemic belonged to this religious movement, which accounted for less than 1% of the Korean population.

Social isolation among new immigrants in Korean cities was incidentally a major incentive for people to join this cult. In this context social distancing was not popular among them due to the simple reason that the movement served as an extended family for many of its members. In this instance, social distancing once successfully introduced may have

actually served to contain the epidemic, but it also further stigmatized a religious group already in the margins of Korean society, interfering with disease containment.

Iran became a leading COVID-19 hot spot in West Asia due to a unique set of circumstances. It was compelled to develop ties with China due to economic sanctions imposed by U.S.-led western countries. An Iranian trader who made a business trip to Wuhan was reportedly the very first COVID-19 patient in Iran. The initial hub of disease transmission in Iran was Qom, a popular pilgrimage center for Shiite Muslims. The next center was the Iranian Parliament, having strong ties with Qom, the spiritual hub of Iranian society. As many as 23 parliamentarians, comprising 8% of all MPs, were infected with the disease by March 3. Social distancing was contrary to popular forms of social greeting in Iran particularly among the ruling elite. In any case the coronavirus was introduced in Iran through globalization-triggered international alignment and incubated through political and religious processes.

Spread in Sri Lanka

The onset of the COVID-19 epidemic in India and Sri Lanka has a lot to do with tourism and labor migration, processes intimately connected with globalization. Both in India and Sri Lanka, the first cases were reported among foreign tourists from Italy and China, respectively. The tour guides who travelled with the respective tourists and their contacts became the first set of local people exposed to the disease triggering local transmissions. Both Sri Lanka and Kerala in India have large portions of their labor force employed overseas. Returnees from these overseas destinations have contributed to the upsurge in the COVID-19 epidemic in South Asian countries. For instance, among 18 conformed COVID-19 patients

AS I SEE IT

BEYOND SOCIAL DISTANCING TO FIGHT COVID-19



Avoid groups and crowds and maintain 6 feet of personal space.

in Sri Lanka by March 15 as many as 11 (61%) were Sri Lankan returnees from Italy, a popular destination for Sri Lankan migrant workers from the 1990s.

Thus, imported cases and those directly exposed to them comprise over 90% of all COVID-19 cases detected in Sri Lanka as of March 22. Roughly about 20.5% of confirmed cases are connected with tourism. Nearly 60% of all cases are among Sri Lankan workers returning from abroad and their contacts indicating that exposure to the disease through overseas employment has triggered the epidemic in Sri Lanka. Considering that nearly 50% of the entire caseload in Sri Lanka is among workers returning from Italy, it is important to note that many Sri Lankan workers in Italy work as live-in care givers for elderly people. The spurt of cases of Indian origin lately has led to identification of Chennai as a high-risk region in Sri Lanka.

Thus, the COVID-19 pandemic can be seen as a fallout of globalization, particularly in the global South. The quarantine and social distancing processes may not be totally effective in

so far as these workers and their families are often in between two states, experiencing difficulties at both ends. The workers returning from Italy and South Korea were the first to be sent to quarantine centers in Batticaloa and Kandakadu from March 10. Initially, they resented the mandatory two-week quarantine in a remote location. Both migrant workers and tourist guides already experience discrimination of various kinds because of their occupations and the risks involved. A military style lockdown though inevitable given the circumstances is likely to reinforce the existing prejudices. This clearly shows that we need to think beyond social distancing and address problems of the fallout from globalization in dealing with the pandemic in the global South. It appears as if the much-publicized problems of a run-away world have been finally crystallized in this deadly global epidemic.

(The author is Professor of Sociology at University of Peradeniya. He can be reached at kalingatudorsilva@gmail.com)

GUEST COMMENT

India must use the lockdown for full contact tracing, especially after the Nizamuddin scare

Nizamuddin in Delhi has turned into a large cluster of novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) cases after a big religious congregation was held in mid-March by the Tablighi Jamaat at the Alami Markaz Banglewali Masjid. More than 400 people showing symptoms have been hospitalized in Delhi alone and nearly 240 have tested positive; at least 10 have died. The specter of large-scale community spread by a few hundred attendees from different States cannot be ruled out. That the three-day event began on a day when the Health Ministry said that it did not consider the novel coronavirus as a health emergency despite 81 cases

Beyond the blame game: On the Tablighi Jamaat episode

being reported cannot be an excuse. After all, WHO had called COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11. The organizers should have been very much aware that a similar congregation organized by them in Malaysia in end-February led to a spike in cases there and the attendees had carried the virus to other countries. But the Delhi government is equally culpable as nothing was done to stop such a meeting except issuing an order on March 13 prohibiting the assembly of more than 200 people. What prevented the State government from following the Centre's March 6 advice to States to avoid or postpone mass gatherings till the pandemic was contained? There have been several such large gatherings, religious and non-religious, in the country after India reported its first

case, beginning with the Namaste Trump rally in Ahmedabad, to migrants gathering in a few cities including Delhi a few days ago. Until the lockdown began, many places of worship were open and political events held. Each such event could have potentially seeded the virus into the population and should have therefore been cancelled or prevented. But India failed despite being aware how global congregations - some linked to religion - had led to an alarming spread of the virus, examples being the large outbreaks in South Korea, Singapore, southern Italy and Spain.

States that already have cases with a link to the Nizamuddin event should now use the lockdown period to actively engage in finding everyone who has

attended the event, trace their contacts, quarantine, test and treat them without losing time. Both South Korea and Singapore have demonstrated how meticulous tracing of contacts of a church event, isolation and aggressive testing helped prevent the highly infectious virus from spreading widely in the community. Ideally, the remaining period of the shutdown should be used to expand the testing to at least limited community level to find every suspected case linked to the attendee. The last thing that India can afford in the war against the virus is the disease acquiring a religious or class color. Community leaders have been irresponsible, but those in the government have been lax too.

(The Hindu)

The Corona Threat to US Navy



By Group Capt Murli Menon (retd)

"The Chinese have been evolving their surface-to-surface missile weaponry such as the hypersonic DF-17 to target American aircraft carriers and other naval ships at sea. The Americans apparently have developed a counter to this threat. Virus warfare aimed at the non-operationalization of one or even two premier aircraft carriers in the Pacific would be another ballgame altogether. The urgent need for a corona vaccine has a military dimension now."

“

Whilst the entire world is battling the corona virus threat with varying degrees of success, a most fearsome happenstance in this nightmare is unfolding far away in the Eastern maritime theater. South China Morning Post, Fox News and the Deputy Secretary Navy have all stated on March 29 that at least 36 crew members of US Navy aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) have been inflicted with the virus and the ship along with nearly 5,000 personnel is quarantined at Guam in the Pacific. The ship, radio call sign nicknamed 'Rough Rider' after President Roosevelt's volunteer cavalry unit in the Spanish - American War, is known to have made a port call at Vietnam three weeks earlier.

Given the peculiarities of such combat ships, virtual floating cities with thousands of sailors working and living in close quarters, the disease can be transmitted faster onboard. This accounts for a third of the reported positive cases in the US military and a vital combat asset is going to be nonoperational for at least a few weeks (possibly longer) for testing of all sailors and decontaminating the ship.

The ship's air conditioning would have been instrumental in spreading the corona bug. The 100,000-tonne Nimitz class carrier with sailors packed like sardines, even in equipment and weapon bays and food buffets personnel are forced to cohabit in very close proximity, quite unlike the working environment in the Army or the Air Force. Also most naval men spend a majority of their time in equipment maintenance, calling for them to be touching every corner and surface on the ship, thus leading to rapid transmission of the infamous virus. Besides, disinfecting the war ship would be challenging as there are several equipment and weapon systems that could be contaminated by the disinfecting chemicals.

Another carrier, USS Ronald Reagan, is likewise held up at the Japanese port of Yokosuka, two of its sailors having showed up positive for corona. It is not clear if this ship too would be rendered nonfunctional shortly. Ironically, both these aircraft carriers were part of Donald Trump's Indo-Pacific strategy aimed at countering China. Though the US Navy has put it out that their combat capability has not been eroded by these two instances, prudence indicates that the assets would not be combat-worthy for a considerable period of time, at least for around a month.

Two intelligence-related incidents, in the backdrop of the corona fiasco, concerning Chinese research scientists bear mention. In July 2019, Canada expelled a team of virology scientists led by Dr Xiangguo Qui from Winnipeg's National Microbiology Laboratory for transgression of bio war related technologies. Then again in November 2018, US Customs and Border Patrol stopped a Chinese biologist with three vials of 'antibodies' in his luggage(actually containing SARS and MERS material), allegedly meant for a colleague researcher at a US Institute. Recently the US Justice department preferred charges against Professor Charles Leiber of Harvard's chemistry department for unethical deals with Chinese entities. Strong US-China cooperation at that time enabled the Chinese to run dubious dual use technology research programs in the US, with serious bio war implications.

The manner in which the US Navy's combat potential has been seriously compromised in the eastern maritime theatre without firing a shot makes me wonder whether it was all part of an intentional Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) ploy by China against the US, as a retaliation against Trump's recent trade and tariff war measures . Social media has been rife with such conspiracy theories alright, but the predicament of the two USN carriers makes



one wonder if the entire pandemic has indeed been 'launched' by China for ulterior motives.

MOOTW is a doctrinal term coined by the US military during the nineties and since fallen into disuse. US Army's Field Manuals and Joint Doctrines say that OOTW encompasses a wide range of activities wherein military forces are employed for purposes other than large scale combat operations associated with conventional war. Generally envisaged outside the US such operations involve a combination of air, land, sea, space, special ops and activities of non-government organizations in a concerted effort, to achieve diplomatic, economic and informational goals . It is not beyond the realm of possibility that China which nurses global dominance ambitions would have motives and capabilities in this arena. Virus warfare and bio war could well fall under the realm of OOTW, though in this case possibly waged by an adversary. This possibility does not sound good from an international military point of view, as it could imply a military confrontation between two military world powers, one the only superpower and the other an emerging superpower. The only saving grace is that motives are difficult to establish in this context and counter action by affected parties therefore difficult and unfeasible.

Whilst the Chinese regime's misinformation propaganda ramps up efforts to pass on blame to entities such as a US military sports contingent, many aspects of the corona pandemic defy logical explanation. The fact that after its origin from the wet market of Wuhan, the spread of the virus was strangely contained in that one city in China itself is perplexing. Of course currently there are too many imponderables that defy logic. Herd immunity, immunity caused by other pathogens such as malaria parasite and tuberculosis are still unclear propositions.

Once we have more data from countries in Africa and South Asia and South East Asia, perhaps researchers would be able to fathom the full epidemiology of the corona Covid-19. Also the fact that hydroxyquinine (since cleared for use by the FDA) has been found to be effective in containing the adverse respiratory ill effects of the virus and the lack of clarity over the mismatch between malaria affected regions and the corona pandemic impacted regions worldwide are perplexing, to put it mildly.

The drastic shakedown of prevailing world economy and the stock markets globally are aspects that need a different analysis by specialists .Be that as it may, the vulnerability of large naval aircraft carriers to such an epidemic 'attack' makes the military mind ponder. The Chinese have been evolving their surface-to-surface missile weaponry such as the hypersonic DF-17 to target American aircraft carriers and other naval ships at sea. The Americans apparently have developed a counter to this threat. Virus warfare aimed at the non-operationalization of one or even two premier aircraft carriers in the Pacific would be another ballgame altogether. The urgent need for a corona vaccine has a military dimension now.

(The author is a Retired Group Captain and a Defense Commentator)

Pakistan's coronavirus cases cross 2,000

ISLAMABAD (TIP): The number of coronavirus cases in Pakistan surpassed 2,000 on Wednesday, indicating an upward trend despite efforts by the government to contain the pandemic.

The Ministry of National Health Services said that 105 new patients tested positive for the virus in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of infections to 2,039.

It showed that the largest provinces of Punjab had 708 cases, Sindh 676, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) 253, Balochistan 158, Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) 184, Islamabad 54 and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir 6.

So far, 26 people have died due to the virus and 82 have recovered, while another 12 are in critical condition.

The increase in the number of cases showed that there was little impact of the measures, including partial lockdown, taken so far to reduce the spread of the disease.

Officials in Pakistan are scrambling to contain the disease by appealing to the public to remain inside homes and go out only in cases of emergencies. But there was little impact on the masses and in several cities, people were seen roaming out while security officials were trying to convince them to go back to their places.

Prime Minister Imran Khan would hold a meeting of National Core Committee to discuss steps to contain the deadly virus. He has already announced Rs 1,200 billion package to deal with the economic challenges posed by the coronavirus crisis. — PTI

Pakistan Cabinet approves Rs 1,200 bn relief package as coronavirus cases rise

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan's Cabinet on Tuesday approved a Rs 1,200-billion relief package to deal with the growing coronavirus crisis in the country as COVID-19 cases rose sharply, claiming the lives of 25 people and infecting nearly 1,900.

The package was unveiled by Prime Minister Imran Khan last week and it was formalised on Monday by the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) in its meeting, chaired by Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance Dr Abdul Hafeez Sheikh.

Prime Minister Khan chaired the Cabinet meeting which granted approval to the relief package on Tuesday, his Advisor on Information Firdous Ashiq Awan told the media.

"The Cabinet unanimously approved Rs 1,200-billion coronavirus relief package with the commitment that it help to defeat the virus," said Awan. According to a notification by the government, a Rs 100 billion emergency fund was set up to deal with the impact of the pandemic. It was also agreed to provide 20.2 million people Rs 12,000 on a monthly basis for four months via the 'Ehsaas Kifalat Programme'. PTI

DANIEL PEARL'S 'KILLER' MAY WALK FREE

Pakistan court overturns key accused's death sentence

KARACHI (TIP): Pakistani court on Thursday overturned the death sentence of British-born top al-Qaeda leader Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, who was convicted in the abduction and murder of US journalist Daniel Pearl in Karachi in 2002 in the aftermath of the 9/11 terror attack.

Pearl, the 38-year-old South Asia bureau chief for The Wall Street Journal, was abducted and beheaded while he was in Pakistan investigating a story on the alleged links between the country's powerful spy agency ISI and al-Qaeda.

Sheikh, who was the mastermind behind abduction and killing of Pearl, was arrested from Lahore in February 2002 and sentenced to death five months later by an anti-terrorism court.

Sheikh, along with Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar and Mushtaq Ahmed Zargar, were released by India in 1999 and given safe passage to Afghanistan in exchange for the nearly 150 passengers of hijacked Indian Airlines Flight 814. He was serving prison term in India for



kidnapping of Western tourists in the country.

On Thursday, the Sindh High Court found 46-year-old Sheikh guilty of the lesser charge of kidnapping and commuted his death sentence to seven years in prison. Sheikh has been in jail for the past 18 years. A two-judge Bench headed by Justice Mohammad Karim Khan Agha also acquitted the three others — Fahad Naseem, Salman Saqib and Sheikh Adil — serving life sentences in the case.

"Mockery of justice": Daniel's father

Daniel's parents called the judgment a mockery of justice and demanded that the prosecution in Pakistan should appeal the court verdict. "Anyone with a minimal sense of right and wrong now expects Faiz Shah, prosecutor general of Sindh to do his duty and appeal this reprehensible decision to the Supreme Court of Pakistan," Judea Pearl, Daniel's father tweeted.

The Bench announced the verdict on appeals filed by four convicts 18 years ago. Sheikh's lawyers, Khawaja Naveed and Rai Bashir, told the media that since he had already been in prison for 18 years he could go free immediately. — PTI

18 Nepali Muslims who attended Nizamuddin congregation in Delhi, quarantined in Nepal

KATHMANDU (TIP): Eighteen Nepali Muslims, who recently returned from India after participating in a Tablighi Jamaat congregation in Nizamuddin area in New Delhi, have been identified and kept in a quarantine facility in southern Nepal's Saptari district, authorities said on Wednesday.

Famed for the shrine of the 14th century Sufi mystic Khwaja Nizamuddin Auliya, the Nizamuddin area of New Delhi has emerged as an epicentre for spread of the coronavirus in different parts of India after thousands of people took part in a Tablighi Jamaat congregation from March 1-15.

Indian authorities have launched a nationwide search for participants of the huge religious gathering amid fears that thousands present there could have carried the infection to the length and breadth of the country.

Various nationals, particularly from Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Nepal, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Kyrgyzstan come for Tabligh activities in Delhi.

Nepali authorities on Wednesday said that 18 local Muslims, who recently returned from the Indian capital after participating in the religious gathering, have been quarantined in Saptari district in southern Nepal.



According to spokesperson of Kanchanpur municipality Raj Kumar Shah the India returnees have been quarantined at a newly constructed building of Lakshmi Narayan Secondary School.

Meanwhile, around 400 Indian nationals, who gathered from different parts of Nepal to return to India, have been stranded in Birgunj area in Parsa

due to the closure of the India-Nepal border. According to Parsa's Superintendent of Police (SP) Ganga Panta, the huge mass of Indian citizens heading towards India via border in Parsa have been kept in an education faculty building.

They returned to Birgunj on Tuesday morning after finding that the border was closed in the Indian side. PTI

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Justice Department Files its First Enforcement Action against COVID-19 Fraud

WASHINGTON (TIP): The Department of Justice announced March 22 that it has taken its first action in federal court to combat fraud related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The enforcement action filed in Austin against operators of a fraudulent website follows Attorney General William Barr's recent direction for the department to prioritize the detection, investigation, and prosecution of illegal conduct related to the pandemic.

As detailed in the civil complaint and accompanying court papers filed on Saturday, March 21, 2020, the operators of the website "coronavirusmedicalkit.com" are engaging in a wire fraud scheme seeking to profit from the confusion and widespread fear surrounding COVID-19. Information published on the website claimed to offer consumers access to World Health Organization (WHO) vaccine kits in exchange for a shipping charge of \$4.95, which consumers would pay by entering their credit card information on the website. In fact, there are currently no legitimate COVID-19 vaccines and the WHO is not distributing any such vaccine. In response to the department's request, U.S. District Judge Robert Pitman issued a temporary restraining order requiring that the registrar of the fraudulent website immediately take action to block public access to it.

"The Department of Justice will not tolerate criminal exploitation of this national emergency for personal gain," said Assistant Attorney General Jody Hunt of the Department of Justice's Civil Division. "We will use every resource at the government's disposal to act quickly to shut down these most despicable of scammers, whether they are defrauding consumers, committing identity theft, or delivering malware."

"Attorney General Barr has directed the department to prioritize fraud schemes arising out of the coronavirus emergency," said U.S. Attorney John F. Bash of the Western District of Texas. "We therefore moved very quickly to shut down this scam. We hope in the future that responsible web domain registrars will quickly and effectively shut down websites designed to facilitate these scams. My office will continue to be aggressive in targeting these sorts of despicable frauds for the duration of this emergency."

"At a time when we face such unprecedented



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
JUSTICE

challenges with the COVID-19 crisis, Americans are understandably desperate to find solutions to keep their families safe and healthy," said Special Agent in Charge Christopher Combs of the FBI's San Antonio Field Office. "Fraudsters who seek to profit from their fear and uncertainty, by selling bogus vaccines or cures, not only steal limited resources from our communities, they pose an even greater danger by spreading misinformation and creating confusion. During this difficult time, protecting our communities from these reprehensible fraud schemes will remain one of the FBI's highest priorities."

The United States filed today's announced action to shutter the website immediately while an investigation of the website and its operators continues. In so doing, the government is employing a federal statute that permits federal courts to issue injunctions to prevent harm to potential victims of fraudulent schemes.

The Department of Justice recommends that Americans to take the following precautionary measures to protect themselves from known and emerging scams related to COVID-19:

- Independently verify the identity of any company, charity, or individual that contacts you regarding COVID-19.
- Check the websites and email addresses offering information, products, or services related to COVID-19. Be aware that scammers often employ addresses that differ only slightly from those belonging to the entities they are impersonating. For example, they might use "cdc.com" or "cdc.org" instead of "cdc.gov."
- Be wary of unsolicited emails offering information, supplies, or treatment for COVID-19 or requesting your personal information for medical purposes. Legitimate health authorities will not contact the general public this way.

- Do not click on links or open email attachments from unknown or unverified sources. Doing so could download a virus onto your computer or device.
- Make sure the anti-malware and anti-virus software on your computer is operating and up to date.
- Ignore offers for a COVID-19 vaccine, cure, or treatment. Remember, if a vaccine becomes available, you won't hear about it for the first time through an email, online ad, or unsolicited sales pitch.
- Check online reviews of any company offering COVID-19 products or supplies. Avoid companies whose customers have complained about not receiving items.
- Research any charities or crowdfunding sites soliciting donations in connection with COVID-19 before giving any donation. Remember, an organization may not be legitimate even if it uses words like "CDC" or "government" in its name or has reputable looking seals or logos on its materials. For online resources on donating wisely, visit the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) website.
- Be wary of any business, charity, or individual requesting payments or donations in cash, by wire transfer, gift card, or through the mail. Don't send money through any of these channels.
- Be cautious of "investment opportunities" tied to COVID-19, especially those based on claims that a small company's products or services can help stop the virus. If you decide to invest, carefully research the investment beforehand. For information on how to avoid investment fraud, visit the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) website.

For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19, consumers may visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and WHO websites.

In addition, the public is urged to report suspected fraud schemes related to COVID-19 by calling the National Center for Disaster Fraud (NCDF) hotline (1-866-720-5721) or by e-mailing the NCDF at disaster@leo.gov

Indian American Mother Charged with Murder of 4-Year-Old Son



Ritika Rohatgi Agrawal is charged with the capital murder of her 4-year-old son

HOUSTON, TX (TIP): A 36-year-old Sugar Land woman of India origin is facing a murder charge in connection with the death of her son. Ritika Rohatgi Agrawal is charged with the capital murder of her 4-year-old son, who was found dead in their home in Sugar Land in Texas on March 28. "Sugar Land police and fire-EMS responded to 5200 block of Weatherstone Circle in Gardens of Avalon at 10:40 a.m. A man arrived home and saw blood throughout his house and his 36-year-old wife wandering around with cut wounds to her neck and wrists that appeared to be self-inflicted. Their four-year-old son was found dead upstairs with his throat slit. Ritika Rohatgi Agrawal (DOB 01-09-84) is charged with murder. She woman was transported by ambulance to a hospital" said City of Sugar land spokesman Doug Adolph.

Authorities suspect Ritika Rohatgi Agrawal may be suffering from mental illness.

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USCIS Temporary Office Closure Extended until at least May 3

WASHINGTON (TIP): On March 18, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services temporarily suspended in-person services at its field offices, asylum offices, and application support centers (ASCs) to help slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). USCIS offices will begin to reopen on May 4 unless the public closures are extended further. Employees in these offices are continuing to perform mission-essential services that do not require face-to-face contact with the public.

USCIS will continue to provide limited emergency services. Please call the Contact Center for assistance with emergency services.

USCIS field offices will send notices to applicants and petitioners with scheduled appointments and



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

naturalization ceremonies impacted by the extended temporary closure. USCIS asylum offices will send interview cancellation notices and automatically reschedule asylum interviews. When the interview is rescheduled, asylum applicants will receive a new interview notice with the new time, date and location of the interview. When USCIS again resumes normal operations, USCIS will automatically reschedule ASC appointments due to the temporary office closure. You will receive a new appointment letter in the mail. Individuals who had InfoPass or

other appointments must reschedule through the USCIS Contact Center once field offices are open to the public again. Please check to see if the office in your jurisdiction has been reopened before reaching out to the USCIS Contact Center.

Education and precautions are the strongest tools against infection. Get the latest facts by visiting the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's COVID-19 website. Continue to practice good health habits, refrain from handshakes or hugs as greetings, and wash hands and clean surfaces appropriately.

USCIS will provide further updates as the situation develops and will continue to follow CDC guidance. Please also visit uscis.gov/coronavirus for updates.

Embassy of India Issues Student Hub Advisory

WASHINGTON (TIP): Following the growing cases of COVID-19, US universities have taken measures to shut down on-campus operations and/or move classes online. The Embassy of India/India Student Hub has the following advisory for Indian students who may be impacted by these decisions. Please note that this advisory is based on information available as of 27 March 2020. The WHO, CDC, Government of India Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (for India-specific updates), and your universities are the best sources for the latest information in this rapidly evolving situation. Further India Student Hub updates will be issued as needed.

Please read this advisory carefully. For emergencies, continue to contact the 24x7 Consular Emergency helplines at Embassy or Consulates as per your present location. In addition, to help support Indian students during the COVID-19 crisis, the Embassy of India Student Hub has established a non-emergency Peer Support Line. Details for these are given below:

1. If you are staying on-campus and are asked to vacate, check with your university about retaining on-campus housing. If your petition is not accepted, consult with your university and/or with your network on how to find alternate accommodations.
2. If your university or program is shutting down on-campus services, check with your university or program on how to avail your university's health services, student health insurance, international student services, and any other essential service(s) that may be impacted.
3. The Embassy of India/India Student Hub can provide information on temporary emergency resources. The Embassy has partnered with and is grateful to members of the Indian community who have made these resources available for Indian students in an emergency. During this extraordinary situation created by the pandemic, our commitment remains steadfast to ensure welfare of our students in the best possible manner within available resources and with the support of the US government.
4. The Embassy of India is in touch with the US government, which is monitoring the implications that this evolving situation may have for international students. Please note:
 - The Student and Exchange Visitor Program ('SEVP') has confirmed that international students can temporarily engage in distance-learning, either from within the U.S. or outside the country, in light of COVID-19, without any penalty to their visa status.
 - In addition, for most cases, SEVP noted that the five-month temporary absence rule will not apply for students who remain in Active



status. Read the full SEVP guidance [here](https://www.ice.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2020/COVID-19FAQ.pdf):

- The United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) provides updated information on visa status and CPT/OPT applications/extensions at <https://www.ice.dhs.gov/covid19>.
- If you, a relative, or a friend were admitted on a visa that may be expiring (and were not admitted as an F-1 student for Duration of Status), you may need to take action to extend the authorized stay. We are given to understand that DHS is currently not in a position to offer a blanket extension of visa cases. However, they are working hard to quickly process urgent requests from individuals. We have been asked to advise Indian nationals whose visa status may be expiring (for any reason) to apply online as early as possible through USCIS. You may direct yourselves/family members to <https://www.uscis.gov/visit-united-states/extend-your-stay> for specific information regarding extensions of status for individuals who are unable to depart as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Official campus advisories and your Designated Student Official (DSO) and/or program coordinator can also provide more information or clarification on questions relating to F-1/J-1 students or their dependents.
- 5. Please avoid all non-essential domestic or international travel, as recommended by the WHO and CDC:
 - For official advisories on domestic travel within the US or internationally, consult the US Department of State, US Transportation and Security Administration, and the relevant local and state government websites;
 - Kindly note that India has suspended

all scheduled international commercial passenger flights until 1830 hrs. GMT on 14 April 2020. In addition, all domestic passenger flights within India are also suspended until 14 April 2020. This action has been taken in the interest of public health and safety of all Indian citizens. The latest Government of India travel advisories can be found at the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare website: <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/>;

● Remain in contact with your DSO for information on any possible impact international travel may have on your F-1 or J-1 status.

We again request you to avoid travel for two reasons:

- a. to protect you from exposure to COVID-19, and
- b. to prevent you from being a source of transmission to other people/communities.

We will update the information as soon as commercial flights to India resume. Meanwhile, if you need any support, please do reach out to us using the information below.

6. Please practice social distancing (staying at home as much as possible, except to access essential services) and maintain a distance of at least 2 meters (6 feet) away from other people to minimize the transmission of COVID-19. If you have flu-like symptoms, please self-isolate for a minimum of 14 days. Consult the WHO and CDC websites for further information about the disease, preventative measures, and what to do if you experience any symptoms.

This is an unprecedented situation, but we can successfully manage it by making decisions with a calm mind. Please take prudent health precautions and carefully review information and travel advisories.

To receive the latest Embassy of India Student Hub advisory(s), register here: https://www.indianembassyusa.gov.in/Indian_Students_Registration

Indian American Assembly Member Announces Medical Supply Donation Drive in San Jose



Assembly member Ash Kalra announces Medical Supply Donation Drive in San Jose for Frontline Hospital Staff

SAN JOSE, CA (TIP): Assembly member Ash Kalra (D-San Jose) announced a safety supplies donation drive in response to the countywide shortage of protective equipment for medical workers to protect them against COVID-19.

"Today I am calling on all members of the public, companies, organizations and others to donate needed medical supplies to the Valley Medical Center Foundation," said Assembly member Kalra. "As our first responders, doctors, and nurses risk their safety during the Coronavirus outbreak, they are now lacking the basic tools to do their jobs right, and to do them safely."

"I understand the desire for the public to hold on to many of these items, however, our frontline medical staff need them more than we do," he added. "If you or anyone you know happens to have a surplus of supplies, please consider donating these items. Together, we can do our part to make a difference and protect these unsung heroes who are keeping our communities safe."

Donations can be made to the Valley Medical Center Foundation, which is coordinating public donations of needed medical supplies:

- The Valley Medical Center Foundation is located at 400 Clove Drive in San Jose-located on the campus of the Santa Clara County Valley Medical Center
- Donations are accepted between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. daily
- Specifically, local medical staff need the following new supplies: masks, hand sanitizer, protective goggles and face shields, disinfectant wipes, infrared thermometers, shoe covers, hair covers, and surgical caps. For a complete list of items, please visit <https://vmcfoundation.org>
- Anyone can show up and drop off supplies, which will be put to immediate use by frontline medical staff.



17 COMPANIES ASKED TO HELP MEET 38MN UNIT PPE SHORTFALL

NEW DELHI (TIP): How do you produce millions of coveralls (a key part of personal protective equipment or PPE) that health care workers need when dealing with something as infectious as the coronavirus disease (Covid-19), when, till last month, they were mostly imported?

How do you do so, and quickly, when no one had a design specification till February 27?

For 17 firms that have been tasked with making the coveralls -- Hindustan Times spoke to six of them -- it is a race against time that involves dealing with raw material shortage, workers worried about their safety, and learning to quickly produce under the watchful and anxious eyes of the government.

And for the only laboratory that tests them, it simply means working around the clock.

It's an experience that Tanmay Singhal, a recent graduate of OP Jindal School, didn't anticipate in the first year of joining his father's business. Their Haryana-based firm, Sai Synergy, was a supplier of fire protective gear that was used by oil rig workers in West Asia, till February. That's when it received an SOS from the textile and health ministries of the Government of India. Director of Research and Development in the textiles ministry, Balram Kumar, reached out to the company to attend a meeting.

Source: HT

Third coronavirus case found in Mumbai's Dharavi, Asia's biggest slum

MUMBAI (TIP): A 35-year-old doctor who has a clinic on the main road in Dharavi area of Mumbai tested positive for coronavirus on Thursday, a civic official said.

This is a third Covid-19 case where the patient has a connection with Dharavi, considered to be Asia's biggest slum with a high population density.

An official of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation said a doctor who had a clinic on Dharavi's main road and who was also attached as a surgeon to a prominent private hospital tested positive for the virus.

"The building where he lives will be quarantined and all high-risk contacts will be traced," the BMC official said.

The doctor did not have any travel history, but further details were being probed, he added.

On April 1, a 56-year-old garment shop owner living in a Slum Rehabilitation Authority building in Dharavi became the first person from the area to test positive for coronavirus.

He died on the same evening. On Thursday morning a municipal sweeper who lived in Worli but was posted at Dharavi tested positive.

The BMC has already created containment zones where these two cases were found and restricted the movement of over 2,500 persons in these areas.

Tablighi Jamaat meet turns Covid-19 super spreader

TRACKING THE VIRUS

GLOBAL

Cases **1,000,829** | Deaths **51,356**

INDIA

Cases **2,069** | Deaths **53**



workers, both foreigners as well Indians, indulge in preaching tours or 'Chilla' across the country throughout the year.

Various nationals, particularly from Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Nepal, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Kyrgyzstan come for Tabligh activities.

All such foreign nationals report their arrival at Tablighi Markaz at Banglewali Mosque in Hazrat Nizamuddin, Delhi and then they are detailed for 'Chilla' activities to different parts of the country, the Home Ministry said.

While the Health Ministry said it was not the time to find faults and emphasised on implementation of containment strategies, the arrangement of the congregation, at a time when strict restrictions were in place in Delhi due to coronavirus, invited criticism.

Kejriwal slammed the organisers of the gathering, saying it was "highly irresponsible" on their part to hold such an event at a time when thousands have died in other countries due to the pandemic.

He said his government has already written to Delhi Lt Governor Anil Baijal recommending the

HEALTH WORKERS ATTACKED IN CITIES, 7 HELD IN INDORE

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Madhya Pradesh police arrested seven people on Thursday for allegedly attacking health workers in Indore's Tatt Patti Bakhla area on Wednesday, as several such incidents of attacks on health workers were reported from different parts of the country.

After the incidents, the Central government asked the state police to ensure security of health workers.

The residents of a locality in Indore pelted stones at healthcare workers who went there to screen people in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak. Two female doctors reportedly sustained injuries in the incident.

"We have been visiting the locality for the past three days for the screening of residents. We had information about a person coming in contact with a Covid-19 patient... We were talking to the person (the elderly woman) when, all of a sudden, residents got agitated and attacked us," said one of the doctors.

Health department officials said that the incident happened when the workers sought to take an elderly woman to hospital for her medical examination as she was said to have come in contact with a Covid-19 positive patient.

The locality where this incident took place was Tatt Patti Bakhla area in Indore.

In Bihar, police and medical personnel were attacked by locals in Munger town when they visited a locality to collect samples from people suspected to have contracted coronavirus. Stones were thrown at the quick response team (QRT), comprising policemen and an ambulance carrying medical personnel, when they visited the Hazratganj locality late on Wednesday, said the SHO of Qasim Bazar police station Shailesh Kumar.

registration of an FIR against the organisers and initiated.

The Markaz in a statement said it has not violated any provision of law and offered its premises for setting up a quarantine facility.

World Bank approves USD 1 billion emergency funds for India to tackle Covid-19 outbreak

WASHINGTON (TIP): The World Bank has approved USD 1 billion emergency funding for India to help it tackle the coronavirus pandemic, which has claimed 76 lives and infected 2,500 people in the country.

The World Bank's first set of aid projects, amounting to USD 1.9 billion, will assist 25 countries, and new operations are moving forward in over 40 nations using the fast-track process, the bank said on Thursday.

The largest chunk of the emergency financial assistance has gone to India - USD 1 billion.

"In India, USD 1 billion emergency financing will support better screening, contact tracing, and laboratory diagnostics; procure personal protective equipment; and set up new isolation wards," the World Bank said after its Board of Executive Directors approved the first set of emergency support operations for developing countries around the world, using a dedicated, fast-track facility for COVID-19 response.

In South Asia, the World Bank also approved USD 200 million for Pakistan, USD 100 million for Afghanistan, USD 7.3 million for the Maldives and USD 128.6 million for Sri Lanka.

The World Bank said it was now working to grant up to USD 160 billion over the next 15 months to support measures to tackle the pandemic which will focus on the immediate health consequences and bolster economic recovery.

The broader economic programme will aim to shorten the time to recovery, create conditions for growth, support small and medium enterprises, and help



protect the poor and vulnerable.

There will be a strong poverty focus in these operations, with an emphasis on policy-based financing, and protecting the poorest households and the environment, it said.

"The World Bank Group is taking broad, fast action to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and we already have health response operations moving forward in over 65 countries," said World Bank Group President David Malpass.

"We are working to strengthen (the) developing nations' ability to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and shorten the time to economic and social recovery. The poorest and most vulnerable countries will likely be hit the hardest, and our teams around the world remain focused on country-level and regional solutions to address the ongoing crisis," Malpass said.

According to the bank, USD 100 million will support Afghanistan to slow and limit the spread of COVID-19 through enhanced detection,

surveillance, and laboratory systems, as well as strengthen essential health care delivery and intensive care.

In Pakistan, USD 200 million will support preparedness and emergency response in the health sector and include social protection and education measures to help the poor and vulnerable cope with the immediate impacts of the pandemic, the bank said.

Responding to widespread supply chain disruptions, the World Bank is helping countries access critically needed medical supplies by reaching out to suppliers on behalf of the governments.

The World Bank is encouraging others to provide financial support to developing countries for the COVID-19 health response, said the media statement.

A total of 1,002,159 COVID-19 cases have been reported across more than 175 countries and territories with 51,485 deaths reported so far, according to Johns Hopkins University data.

Born during lockdown, Chhattisgarh twins named Corona and Covid

RAIPUR (TIP): The pandemic caused by a new virus may have brought the world to its knees, but that has not deterred a couple in Chhattisgarh to name their newborn twins as 'Corona' and 'Covid'.

The two words may evoke fear and devastation in minds of others, but for the Raipur-based couple they symbolise triumph over hardships as the twins - a boy and a girl - were born during the ongoing coronavirus-enforced nationwide lockdown which has disrupted normal life.

The names, they said, would remind them about all the hardships they conquered amid the lockdown, ahead of a successful delivery on the intervening night of March 26-27 at a government hospital here.

However, the couple said they might change their decision later and rename their kids.

I was blessed with the twins - a boy and a girl - in the early hours on March 27. We have named them Covid (boy) and



Corona (girl) for now," Preeti Verma, the 27-year-old mother of the newborns, told PTI.

"The delivery happened after facing several difficulties and, therefore, my husband and I wanted to make the day memorable.

"Indeed the virus is dangerous and life-threatening but its outbreak made people focus on sanitation, hygiene and inculcate other good habits. Thus, we thought about these names," she said, giving reasons for their unusual decision.

"When the hospital staff also started calling the babies as Corona and Covid, we finally decided to name them after the pandemic," she said.

The couple, originally from Uttar Pradesh, resides in a rented house in the Purani Basti area of the state capital.

"On late night of March 26, I suddenly experienced severe labour pain and somehow my husband arranged an ambulance operated under 102 Mahtari Express service.

"As no vehicular movement was allowed on roads due to the lockdown, we were stopped by police at various

places but they let us go after noticing my condition," Verma said.

I was wondering what would happen in the hospital as it was midnight, but fortunately doctors and other staff were very cooperative," she said.

"Our relatives, who wanted to reach the hospital, could not make it as bus and train services were stopped due to the lockdown," said Verma, who already has a two-year-old daughter.

The twins were born in Dr BR Ambedkar Memorial Hospital.

Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the hospital, Shubhra Singh, said the mother and the newborns were discharged recently and they were in good health.

As soon as Verma reached the hospital with her husband, arrangements were made to perform a caesarean section on her as it was a complicated case, Singh said.

"Within 45 minutes of their arrival, the delivery was done successfully," the PRO said.

Delhi AIIMS' doctor tests positive for coronavirus

NEW DELHI (TIP): A senior resident doctor of AIIMS, Delhi has tested positive for COVID-19, official sources confirmed on Thursday.

The doctor, from the Physiology Department, has now been admitted to the new private ward of the hospital and all those who had come in contact with him are being screened and advised home-quarantine accordingly.

The family members of the doctor will also be screened and their samples will be tested, official sources said, adding further contact-tracing has been initiated.

The source of the infection is yet to be ascertained but official sources said the doctor does not have any foreign travel history so far.

Two resident doctors of the Centre-run Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi also have tested positive for COVID-19, besides two doctors of two Delhi government-run hospitals who have also tested positive for the coronavirus infection, they said.

One of the Safdarjung Hospital doctors, who is part of the team treating COVID-19 patients at the hospital, is believed to have contracted the disease during the course of duty, the sources had said.

The other medico, a female resident doctor who is a third-year post-graduate student of Biochemistry Department, had recently travelled abroad, they had said.

Both of them showed symptoms of COVID-19 and their test results came out positive two days ago. They are now undergoing treatment at the isolation ward of Safdarjung Hospital.

"All doctors and staff who had come in contact with them have been tested and so far nobody else has been found positive for coronavirus infection," said sources.

At Sardar Patel Hospital and Delhi State Cancer Institute (DSCI) too, a doctor each has tested positive for the coronavirus infection, the sources had said.



Europe's hospitals running out of ICU meds for COVID-19

LONDON (TIP): Nine leading European university hospitals are warning they will run out of essential medicines needed for COVID-19 patients in intensive care in less than two weeks as they are increasingly crushed by the pandemic.

The European University Hospital Alliance said that without countries cooperating to ensure a steady supply of these drugs, doctors and nurses might no longer be able to provide adequate intensive care for people critically ill with the new coronavirus.

In a statement published this week and sent to national governments, the group said that aside from the need for protective gear and ventilators, "the most urgent need now is for the drugs that are necessary for intensive care patients."

They wrote that existing stocks of muscle relaxants, sedatives and painkillers were likely to run out in two days in the hardest-hit hospitals, and in two weeks in others.

The shortage has led some



hospitals to buy alternative drugs or try other doses on patients.

"It is extremely worrying that overworked and often less-experienced nurses and doctors-in-training, drafted to fill the gaps, have to use products and dosages that they are not used to," the group wrote, on behalf of hospitals in Austria, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden and Spain. The hospital

group noted that some governments had reacted to the shortages by refusing to export drugs elsewhere, and warned this would prevent drugs from reaching hospitals in dire need of the medicines.

"No single country in Europe has the production facilities to provide all the drugs (or protective gear or ventilators) needed," they wrote. "Coordinated European action will be of vital importance."

France's coronavirus death toll jumps as nursing homes included

PARIS (TIP): - The coronavirus death count in France surged to nearly 5,400 people on Thursday after the health ministry began including nursing home fatalities in its data.

The pandemic had claimed the lives of 4,503 patients in hospitals by Thursday, up 12% on the previous day's 4,032, said Jerome Salomon, head of the health authority. A provisional tally showed the coronavirus had killed a further 884 people in nursing homes and other care facilities, he added.

This makes for a total of 5,387 lives lost to coronavirus in France - an increase of 1,355 over Wednesday's cumulative total - although data has not yet been collected from all of the country's 7,400 nursing homes.

"We are in France confronting an exceptional epidemic with an unprecedented impact on public health," Salomon told a news conference.

The country's broad lockdown is likely to be extended beyond April 15, Prime Minister Edouard Philippe said on Thursday, extending a confinement order to try and deal with the crisis that began on March 17.

The government was racing to try to ensure it can produce or procure itself certain medications needed to treat coronavirus patients as stocks were running low, Philippe told TF1 TV, echoing concerns across Europe as the pandemic places a huge strain on hospitals in Italy, Spain and elsewhere.

More than two-thirds of all the known nursing home deaths have been registered in France's Grand Est region, which abuts the border with Germany.

It was the first region in France to be overwhelmed by a wave of infections that has rapidly moved west to engulf greater Paris, where hospitals are desperately trying to add intensive care beds to cope with the influx of critically ill patients.

The care sector has called for blanket testing for all staff, with the virus often entering nursing homes through employees. More than 1 million people live in France's care homes.



ECUADOR BUILDS 'SPECIAL CAMP' FOR CORONAVIRUS VICTIMS AS BODIES LIE IN HOMES

QUITO (TIP): Ecuador's government said on Thursday it was building a "special camp" for coronavirus victims in the country's largest city of Guayaquil, where an outbreak has killed over 80 people, with many bodies left at home for days.

President Lenin Moreno said the official total of 120 deaths across the Andean nation, among the highest tallies in Latin America, was "short" as authorities had been unable to keep up with the virus' spread.

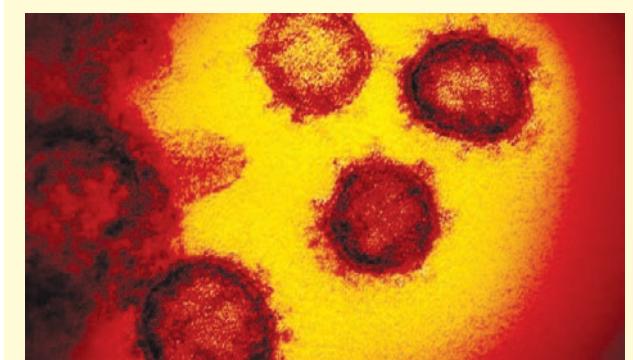
"The reality always exceeds the number of tests and the speed with which we can act," Moreno said in televised comments.

A unit of police officers and soldiers, tasked with burying coronavirus victims, was now collecting as many as 150 bodies a day from homes in Guayaquil, up from 30 several days ago, Moreno said.

Residents in Guayaquil have complained they have no way to dispose of relatives' remains due to strict quarantine and curfew measures designed to prevent spread of the virus. Last week, authorities said they had removed 100 corpses from homes in the port city.

Several locals have taken to social media to appeal for help, posting videos of dead relatives lying in their residences. Others families left bodies in the street for authorities to collect.

Moreno said the government expected the total number of deaths in Guayaquil's surrounding province of Guayas, home to 3.8 million Ecuadoreans, to reach between 2,500 and 3,500. "We're building a special camp for the fallen," he said.



Corona death rate is lower than previously reported, but it's still deadlier than seasonal flu

How many people die after being infected with the novel coronavirus? Fewer than previously calculated, according to a study released Monday, but still more than die from the flu.

The research, published in the medical journal *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*, estimated that about 0.66% of those infected with the virus will die.

That coronavirus death rate, which is lower than earlier estimates, takes into account potentially milder cases that often go undiagnosed -- but it's still far higher than the 0.1% of people who are killed by the flu.

When undetected infections aren't taken into account, the Lancet study found that the coronavirus death rate was 1.38%, which is more consistent with earlier reports.

Early in March, for example, Dr. Anthony Fauci, the director of the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said that "if you just do the math, the math is about 2%."

But he emphasized that the number could go down, saying that "as a group it's going to depend completely on what the factor of asymptomatic cases are."

That's because death rates typically only consider reported coronavirus cases, which tend to be more severe, and thus brought to the attention of health care workers. Asymptomatic cases -- or mild cases -- may not always be counted.

In this study, researchers tried to estimate the true "infection fatality rate." In other words, out of everybody infected -- not just those sick enough to get tested -- how many people will die?

Putin orders non-working month to curb coronavirus

MOSCOW (TIP): President Vladimir Putin on Thursday ordered most Russians to stay off work until the end of the month as part of a partial economic shutdown to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

Speaking in a televised address to the nation on Thursday, Putin said he was extending the non-working policy he ordered earlier for this week to remain in force throughout April. He emphasized that all employees should continue earning their regular salaries during the period.

Putin said some essential industries will keep operating, and grocery stores and pharmacies will remain open.

He said Russia's virus-prevention strategies have bought time and helped slow down the outbreak but also warned that the number of cases will continue climbing.

"The threat remains, and experts believe that the epidemic is yet to reach its peak in the world, including our country," Putin said.

Putin said it would be up to regional authorities to decide which companies and organizations could keep working in their areas depending on the situation.

Earlier this week, the Russian parliament empowered the cabinet to introduce the state of emergency allowing it to tighten restrictions -- an authority that previously had belonged only to the president.

Some Kremlin critics have assailed Putin for stopping short of declaring a nationwide lockdown, opting instead for the ill-defined non-working order.

UP TO 25% OF PEOPLE WITH COVID-19 MAY NOT SHOW SYMPTOMS

A significant portion of COVID-19 patients may never show coronavirus symptoms at all — a key factor aiding the spread of the virus, according to a top U.S. health official.

As many as 25% of people infected with the new coronavirus remain asymptomatic, Dr. Robert Redfield, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, told NPR this week.

"That's important, because now you have individuals that may not have any symptoms that can contribute to transmission," Redfield said.

What's more, even if people do get sick, they may shed the virus up to 48 hours before they show symptoms, Redfield added. "This helps explain how rapidly this virus continues to spread across the country, because we have asymptomatic transmitters and we have individuals who are transmitting 48 hours before they become symptomatic," Redfield said.

Recent studies from other countries also show that asymptomatic transmission of COVID-19 is likely occurring. For example, a study published today (April 1) in the CDC journal



Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report found that, of the more than 150 non-travel related COVID-19 cases in Singapore, 6.4% appeared to involve asymptomatic transmission. In another study, published March 19 in the journal Emerging Infectious Diseases, scientists reviewed data on COVID-19 in China outside of Hubei Province, and found that 12.6% of cases appeared to involve asymptomatic transmission.

In light of this data on

asymptomatic spread, the CDC is "aggressively" reviewing its recommendations on the use of face masks and whether people should wear them if they don't have symptoms, Redfield said. Currently, the agency recommends face masks only for health care providers and people who are sick with COVID-19. Still, there is a concern that such a recommendation could reduce the supply of face masks for health care workers who desperately need them.

Fact check: Are blood type and susceptibility to coronavirus linked?

Outlets have reported that people with type A blood type are more likely to contract the new coronavirus, although many failed to emphasize that the research lacks peer-review, a large sample size and that experts have told the public not to be concerned.

The claim gained popularity through a series of widely shared Facebook posts. Its momentum has continued with Science Focus, MSN, the South Florida Sun Sentinel and local broadcast news outlets in Iowa and Virginia running stories.

The claim is based on new research from a group of medical experts at hospitals and universities in China. The researchers come from an array of institutions, including the National Clinical Research Center for Infectious Diseases, the Renmin Hospital at Wuhan University and the School of Medicine at the Southern University of Science and Technology in China.

The study was published in March on medRxiv, a nonprofit founded by the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, Yale University and BMJ. MedRxiv is a preprint server where researchers share preliminary findings before peer review. The model makes research accessible to other experts without having to wait for the often-lengthy peer review and journal publication process.

Researchers studied 2,173 people from three hospitals in Wuhan and Shenzhen, China, who tested positive for the coronavirus.

Their conclusions showed 37.75% of the sampled people were blood type A, 26.42% were blood type B, 10.03% were blood type AB and 25.80% were blood type O. These data, when compared to the proportions of



blood groups of the public in the region, led researchers to conclude that blood group A was more susceptible to the virus than other blood groups, while blood group O had a lower chance.

But this research has not been peer reviewed or published in a medical or academic journal, which means other experts in the field have not analyzed its research methodology, citations or significance. Its intent is primarily to "generate debate among experts," PolitiFact wrote.

"Preprints are preliminary reports of work that have not been certified by peer review," medRxiv's site reads. "They should not be relied on to guide clinical practice or health-related behavior and should not be reported in news media as established information."

DIARRHEA IS FIRST SIGN OF ILLNESS FOR SOME COVID-19 PATIENTS

Some patients with COVID-19 experience gastrointestinal symptoms, particularly diarrhea, as the first sign of illness, according to a new study.

Among this subset of patients — who have mild disease overall — respiratory symptoms show up only later in the illness, and some never develop respiratory symptoms at all, the authors said.

The findings are important because those without classic symptoms of COVID-19 — such as cough, shortness of breath and fever — may go undiagnosed and could potentially spread the illness to others, the researchers said.

Still, they note that digestive problems are common overall and don't necessarily mean that a person has COVID-19. But doctors should recognize that sudden digestive symptoms in people with a possible COVID-19 contact "should at least prompt consideration of the illness," the authors wrote in their paper, published ahead of print Monday (March 30) in The American Journal of Gastroenterology. "Failure to recognize these patients early and often may lead to unwitting spread of the disease."

The study is not the first to report digestive symptoms as a sign of COVID-19. For example, a study posted March 18 in the same journal found that, among about 200 COVID-19 patients at three hospitals in Wuhan, China, around 50% reported at least one digestive symptom, and 18% reported diarrhea, vomiting or abdominal pain. However, that study and others have tended to focus on patients with severe illness, rather than those with mild disease.

In the new study, the researchers analyzed information from 206 patients at Union Hospital, Tongji Medical College in Wuhan, which was designated as a hospital for COVID-19 patients. To be included in the study, patients needed to have a mild illness, without difficulty breathing or low blood oxygen levels.

Overall, 48 patients (23%) were admitted with digestive symptoms only, 89 (43%) with respiratory symptoms only and 69 (33%) with both respiratory and digestive symptoms.

Among all patients with digestive symptoms (117 patients), about 67 (58%) had diarrhea, and of these, 13 (20%) experienced diarrhea as the first symptom of their illness. Patients' diarrhea lasted from one to 14 days, with an average duration of five days, the report said. About one-third of patients with digestive symptoms never experienced a fever.

Patients with digestive symptoms tended to seek health care later than those with respiratory symptoms, an average of 16 days from the start of their symptoms, compared with 11 days for those with respiratory symptoms, the study found. Those with digestive symptoms also took longer to clear the virus from their body (test negative for COVID-19), taking about 41 days on average, compared with 33 days for those with respiratory symptoms only.

Finally, those with digestive symptoms were much more likely to have the new coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, detected in their stool, with about 73% having positive stool samples, compared with 14% of those with respiratory symptoms only. This finding suggests, but does not definitely confirm, that that virus infects the gastrointestinal tract, the authors said.





THERE IS CONSTANT LEARNING AND UNLEARNING FOR ACTORS: MANISHA

With time and the kind of roles that she is being offered now, actor Manisha Koirala believes she has changed from being spontaneous to methodical in her approach towards acting.

The actor, one of the most popular faces in the 1990s and 2000s films such as *Bombay*, *Khamoshi*, *Dil Se*, says she is enjoying doing something new with the characters she is playing today.

"The roles that I used to do earlier didn't require me to have specific skills or way of doing the role. Today, the roles that I am doing require me to do that so I want to put in that extra hour, extra effort."

"I feel when you are challenged, you push your boundaries and you try to excel in that direction. I love this whole thing of becoming a method actor from spontaneous actor. And if I can bring in the spontaneity and method together that will be great. I love harnessing my skills, I love pushing boundaries," Manisha told PTI in an interview here.

Due to changing styles of storytelling, the 49-year-old actor believes artistes should always be open to any kind of challenge that is thrown at them.

RAVEENA TANDON SPILLS THE BEANS ON HER ROLE IN KGF 2

The Mohra actress Raveena Tandon went live with Pinkvilla on Instagram and shared many interesting insights from her life.

The actress revealed details of her role from the highly anticipated film *KGF: Chapter 2*. This south flick will feature Yash in the lead. Raveena goes on to add that she plays a crucial role in this film and Yash is like the anti-hero, yet the film audience won't be able to make out easily the real side to these characters.

She adds that unless people see the film on the big screen, they won't be able to guess it. As per news reports, the *Bade Miyan Chote Miyan* actress will be essaying the role of a cop in the southern film which is touted to be a high-intensity thriller.

The Yash starrer is the second part of the blockbuster film *KGF*. This film is helmed by ace director Prashanth Neel. On being quizzed about her shoot for *KGF 2*, Raveena says that she luckily wrapped up her portion for the shoot before the lockdown was issued by the government.

Raveena also mentions that the character she played in *Satta* had glimpses of her real personality.

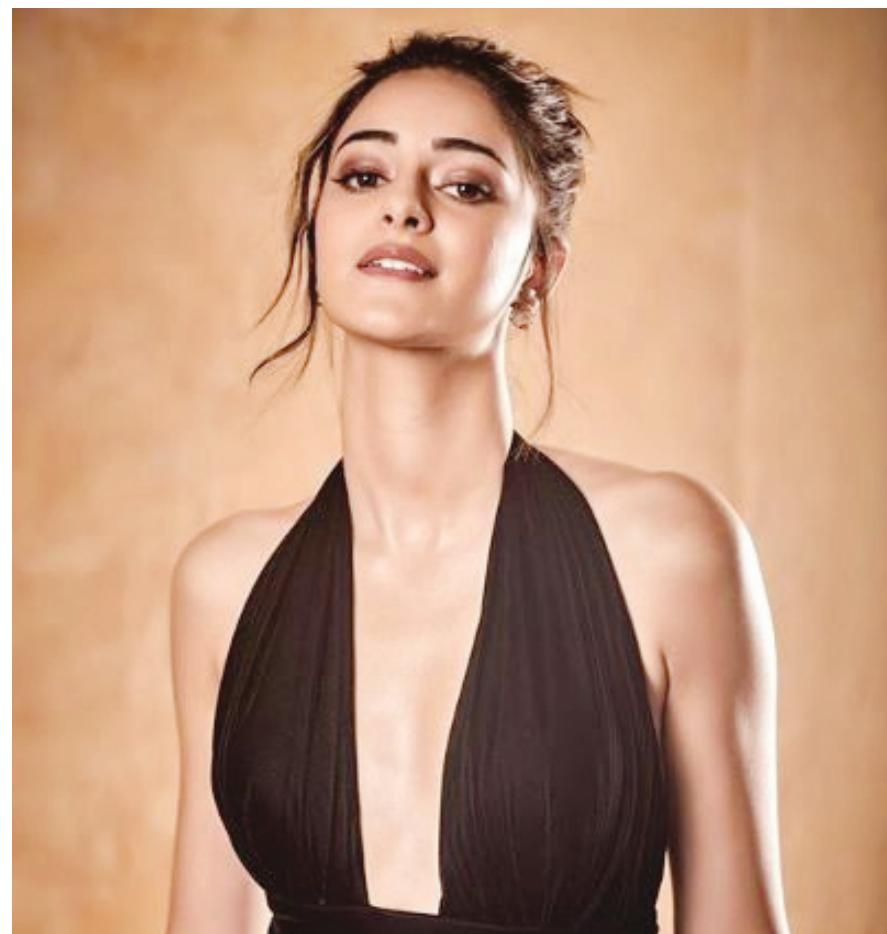


SELF-ISOLATION IS SURREAL, SAYS ANANYA PANDAY

She calls herself a "serial chiller", and actor Ananya Panday seems to be making the most of her time with her sister, Rysa, during the 21-day lockdown. From baking cookies, taking part in *quarantakshri*, to painting, she has her hands full. "It's best to make the most of it since we aren't able to go out," the actor says.

With work taking a backseat, the 21-year-old is missing the sets. "It's a very different time and a surreal feeling for me, because ever since I've started shooting, I've never stayed at home for this long. I've been working back-to-back and never got this long a break. I would take a break from work for not more than three days. But now, it has been more than a week and I'm already missing work. I hope the crisis gets over and I can get back to it soon," she shares.

The shootings of Ananya's upcoming films — *Khaali Peeli* opposite Ishaan Khatter and *Fighter* alongside Vijay Devarakonda — have also got pushed as a result. "It has affected my work and everyone else's as well. The shooting of two of my films has got pushed. Everything is postponed, leading to major losses, but health is more important than anything else," says Panday.

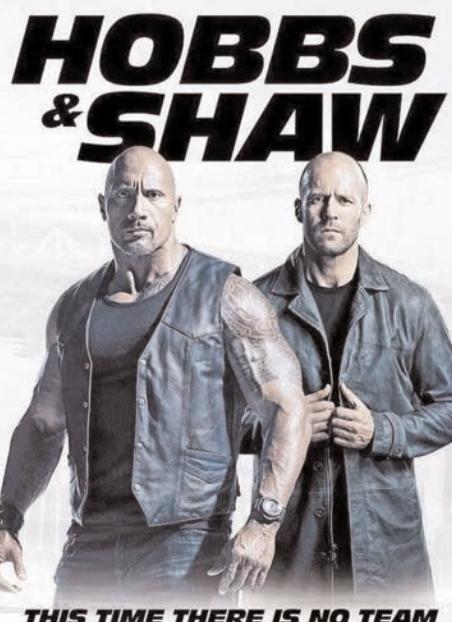


ANUSHKA IS GRATEFUL FOR 'FOOD, WATER AND A ROOF' OVER HER HEAD



Anushka Sharma is trying to spread some positivity amid the national lockdown due to coronavirus outbreak. She is also praying for families who are struggling to get "basic" things.

The *Zero* actor posted a photo of herself with husband Virat Kohli and their pet. Along with it, she wrote, "Every dark cloud had a silver lining. And this time, while it may seem like the worst time and in so many ways it actually is, has also forcefully made us all stop and deal with things we might have been running away from because either we were 'busy' or it was convenient to say we were 'busy'. If this time is respected for what it is, it will enable more light to shine through. This time has also made us all realise what's truly important. For me just having food, water and a roof over my head and the good health of my family seems MOST important. Everything else is a bonus that I bow my head in gratitude for."



HOBBS AND SHAW SEQUEL IN WORKS

Hollywood star Dwayne Johnson has confirmed that the second part of Hobbs & Shaw is in development.

Starring Johnson and Jason Statham, Hobbes & Shaw is the first spin-off from the Fast & Furious series.

The 2019 action film was directed by David Leitch.

Over the weekend, Dwayne Johnson gave an update on Hobbs & Shaw 2 during an Instagram Live Q&A session.

"We are developing now the next film, the next (Hobbs & Shaw) movie, and I'm pretty excited about it. Just gotta figure out the creative right now, and the direction we're going to go," the former professional wrestler said.

Dwayne Johnson also thanked fans for making the first film a "huge success".

Also featuring Idris Elba and Vanessa Kirby, Hobbs & Shaw opened to favourable reviews and grossed over USD 760 million worldwide.

SOPHIE TURNER SHARES HOW SHE AND JOE JONAS ARE QUARANTINING

Sophie Turner revealed how she and husband Joe Jonas are spending their time quarantining amid the coronavirus pandemic during her appearance on Tuesday's episode of TBS' Conan.

"I'm very, very safe. Very, very quarantined. I'm kind of loving it," the actress told host Conan O'Brien.

After admitting that she's an introvert, Turner said that she is comfortable staying isolated at home. "If I could stay at home all day I would, so this is great for me," she said. "I leave the house like once a day anyway to walk my dogs, and then that's it."

Continued Turner, "I see how people are finding it difficult, but I don't understand how people are really struggling to practice social distancing. I'm like, 'All you have to do is stay at home and, like, get drunk.'"

One part of quarantining that Turner said she particularly enjoys is that she doesn't have to get dressed up. The actress then showed O'Brien that she was wearing sweatpants.

While some couples have had a hard time being stuck in their homes all day, Turner said that she and her singer-actor husband haven't gotten sick of each other yet.

"Everything seems to be working out in my favor here because Joe's like a real social butterfly, so I struggle to kind of lock him down and have him



just spend time with me," she said. "It's like prison for him, but it's great for me."

Turner also shared that Jonas has

began performing DJ sets on Instagram Live to pass the time. "He's DJing really, really loudly while I'm trying to read my scripts," she said.

EMILIA CLARKE PROMISES VIRTUAL DINNER DATE IN EXCHANGE FOR COVID-19 DONATION



Game of Thrones star Emilia Clarke has offered a dinner date to people donating money to SameYou, her charity that supports those recovering from brain injuries and strokes, in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

The new initiative by the foundation aims to help the National Health Service, the publicly funded healthcare system of the UK, free up beds for coronavirus patients by helping people recover from brain injuries at home.

In a video shared on Instagram on

Monday, Clarke said 12 donors will be randomly selected from around the world for a virtual dinner with her.

"We'll cook it together and eat it together. And we will discuss lots of things, isolation and fear and also funny videos. And, you know, the fact that I can't really cook. So it's going to be fun," the 33-year-old said in the clip.

Clarke has set the donation amount to 250,000 pounds. The drive is in partnership with the Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital in Massachusetts and the University College London Hospital.

RITA WILSON CALLS HERSELF A COVID-19 SURVIVOR

Actor Rita Wilson called herself a 'COVID 19 survivor' after returning home from quarantine in Australia. Rita who tested positive for the coronavirus alongside husband Tom Hanks in Australia earlier this month in an Instagram post thanked God for both her good health and continued success.

As the couple acclimatised back into normal life in Los Angeles, Rita marked the importance of the date, 29 March, while sharing a series of pictures.

"This date, March 29, represents a time of great happiness. I was on Broadway starring with Larry David in his play Fish In The Dark before finding out I had been diagnosed with breast cancer. March 29 also marks five years of being cancer free after having had a bilateral mastectomy.....One year ago on March 29, I was honoured with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, a street, that as a child, I'd walk on and read all the names of the stars I admired, never believing one day my name would be on one of those stars. And one year ago today, I released my fourth album, Halfway to Home," Rita wrote.

She further added: "All of this would not be possible without good health. So, today, March 29, I am celebrating the beauty of this life, the blessings God has



given, and my continued good health, even now as a Covid-19 survivor. Please take a moment today to acknowledge the amazing creation your bodies are and to thank it for doing so much."

Expressing her gratitude Wilson thanked god, fans, and also the medical professionals who got her through that time.

ReelAbilities Film Fest NY 2020 Goes Virtual

By Mabel Pais

"We feel that these stories still need to be told and that creating community is as important as ever. For the first time ever, we will present the majority of our films, Q+As, and conversations online. We believe this will allow us to advance our mission of accessibility, making our films and conversations available to our community at times when gathering together in person is not possible." - Isaac Zablocki: Director, ReelAbilities Film Festival - New York

"The current coronavirus restrictions are a doorway to new opportunities for us to be even more accessible and reach a wider audience. We offer a chance to connect at a time of solitude by bringing these films into people's homes and allowing further interaction via live streamed Q+As and panels." - Yaara Kedem, Associate Director, ReelAbilities Film Festival - New York

The Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan's 12th Annual ReelAbilities Film Festival: New York, has decided to shift the planned festival from a live public event to a virtual format in partnership with Vimeo Ally, in light of the current COVID-19 recommendations. The festival runs on its planned dates of March 31 to April 6th. The updated virtual festival schedule is online at reelabilities.org/newyork. The festival runs on its planned dates of March 31 to April 6th. The updated virtual festival schedule is online at reelabilities.org/newyork

Isaac Zablocki, the director of ReelAbilities Film Festival: New York said, "We feel that these stories still need to be told and that creating community is as important as ever. For the first time ever, we will present the majority of our films, Q+As, and conversations online. We believe this will allow us to advance our mission of accessibility, making our films and conversations available to our community at times when gathering together in person is not possible."

Films will be available online for 24 hours beginning at the scheduled start time and Q+As with filmmakers and guests will take place after the film's first screening concludes. Films will still be fully accessible, presented with open captions and audio description. Q+As and panels will be broadcast in interactive live stream with captioning.

Yaara Kedem, the associate director of ReelAbilities Film Festival: New York, said, "We will continue to provide a platform to support our filmmakers and phenomenal films and to develop our community at a time in which fewer options are available. Filmmakers who are now experiencing many cancellations of their screenings worldwide have been thrilled with this new direction and are supportive in our efforts to make their films available to ReelAbilities audiences. The current coronavirus restrictions are a doorway to new opportunities for us to be even more accessible and reach a wider audience. We offer a chance to connect at a time of solitude by bringing these films into people's homes and allowing further interaction via live streamed Q+As and panels." Rabbi Joy Levitt, the executive director of the Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan, said, "Because so much of our work at our buildings is about bringing people together, this feels like the right time to think out of the box (quite literally) and serve our community beyond our buildings."

HOW IT WORKS

The films will be available to stream for users who sign up online, based on scheduled screening times. Screenings will be followed by interactive live-streamed



CLOSING NIGHT FILM: BEDLAM

VIRTUAL SCREENING: MON, APR 6, 8:30 PM

Closing Night, Bedlam

Q+As with filmmakers directly after the film screening finishes. Films will then be available for streaming for the following 24 hours. Q+As will be recorded and made available for those who cannot join them live.

FAQs

***Can I share the screening link with others?**

No. Links to films are only for the individual who purchased a ticket. You may not forward or share the link with others.

***If I want to cancel, will I receive a refund for tickets I already purchased?**

If you already purchased a ticket, your ticket is still valid and you will be able to receive a link to the virtual film. If you would like to cancel and receive a refund instead, please email mmagid@mmjccmanhattan.org.

***How much will tickets cost for the virtual film screenings?**

Tickets for virtual film screenings are available at a \$5 general admission price and a \$15 supporter price.

***Will there be a festival pass available for the virtual festival?**

No. You may purchase standalone tickets to films.

***What films and events will take place virtually?**

The full schedule of films and events is available at reelabilities.org/newyork

***Are the virtual screenings available to users located outside the US?**

No. Due to screening rights restrictions, streamed films and conversations will only be accessible to people located within the US territories.

***What events will physically take place?**

None. Events will either take place virtually or will be cancelled. Check the updated schedule at www.reelabilities.org

***How will I receive access to the film?**

You will receive an email link with instructions to access the film after purchasing tickets to a screening. The film will only be available starting at the scheduled start time.

***I won't be able to watch the film at the scheduled start time. Is there a way for me to still watch the film?**

Yes. The streaming links to the films will be available for 24 hours after the initial start time. Q+As will be recorded so that they are available for those who cannot

Photo / JCCManhattan/ReelAbilities-Film-Fest

join them live.

***Will there be a Q+A with filmmakers after the films?**

There will be a Q+A after the first play of the film concludes. Q+As will feature filmmakers and guests with a moderator. Audiences will be able to type in questions and questions will be selected by the moderator. Recorded versions of the Q+A will be available as well.

***Are the films still going to include accessibility aids?**

Yes, all the films will be streamed with open captions and an option for audio description. Q+As will feature live captioning.

***Will screenings and events still take place at venues other than the Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan?**

No. All films and events at other venues will be canceled.

About ReelAbilities Film Festival: New York

ReelAbilities Film Festival is the largest film festival in the world dedicated to promoting awareness and appreciation of the lives, stories, and artistic expressions of people with disabilities. Founded in New York in 2007 by the Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan, the festival presents award-winning films by and about people with disabilities. Post-screening discussions and other engaging programs bring communities virtually together to explore, discuss, embrace, and celebrate the diversity of our shared human experience. The New York festival is the launching pad for an international program and its selections run satellite ReelAbilities festivals in over 20 cities worldwide. Learn more at reelabilities.org/newyork

About the Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan

Together with its community, the Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan creates opportunities for people to connect, grow, and learn with progressive programming within an ever-changing Jewish landscape. The JCC events extend beyond neighborhood boundaries, reaching people at all stages of their lives. Learn more at jccmanhattan.org.

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

Mayor Bill de Blasio Calls for Draft of Essential Medical Personnel

NEW YORK (TIP): As New York City works to quickly quadruple the number of hospital beds throughout the city, Mayor de Blasio, April 2, called on the federal government to institute an essential draft of all private medical personnel to help in the fight against COVID-19. The United States must mobilize a national response to meet the rapidly growing demand for medical personnel - first in New York and then other localities throughout the country.

"Our City faces unprecedented challenges in the weeks ahead," said Mayor Bill de Blasio. "Every ventilator and doctor can save life, which is why we are marshalling every possible resource to our City in record time. But the facts remain the same: the federal government must step up and provide the reinforcements we need. The battle will be long, and we cannot fight it alone."

Citywide as of 6:00 PM on April 2, there are 49,707 positive cases of COVID-19 and 1,562 fatalities. There are 9,343 confirmed cases in the Bronx, 13,290 in Brooklyn, 7,398 in Manhattan, 16,819 in Queens, and 2,822 in Staten Island.

As of 6:00 PM on April 2, there were at least 9,680 people hospitalized. Of those individuals, at least 2,240 were in the ICU.

New Recommendations for Face Covering

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is advising all New Yorkers to cover their noses and mouths using a scarf, bandana, or piece of clothing when in public to reduce the risk of transmission. This recommendation is



"Our City faces unprecedented challenges in the weeks ahead," said Mayor Bill de Blasio

modeled off a new study from the CDC published April 1st, which outlines the possibility of pre-symptomatic COVID-19 transmission in Singapore.

New Yorkers should not use surgical or N95 masks as face covers. Masks must be preserved for health care workers and first responders.

New Yorkers should continue to practice social distancing measures.

Critical Supplies

The City is currently working to dispatch 400 ventilators from the federal stockpile that were distributed by the State. While these ventilators will sustain the City for a short, interim period, a minimum of 2,500-3,000 ventilators must be procured by Sunday to carry the City through the next week. The City still needs a total of 15,000 ventilators. The

City has made a formal request of the federal government, which can be read here.

To preserve the City's supply of ventilators, City hospitals are training staff on how to use BiPap machines, which can keep some patients from requiring a ventilator. If you are willing to donate or sell a ventilator to New York City, please call 833-NYC-0040 or visit NYC.gov/HelpNow.

Health + Hospitals also needs 1,000 nurses, 300 respiratory therapists, and 150 physicians by Sunday, April 5th to adequately treat every COVID-19 patient.

Expanding DOE Meal Hubs to all New Yorkers

To ensure every New York City resident can access nutritious meals, the Department of Education's Meal Hubs

will expand service to include all children and adults across the five boroughs starting on Friday, April 3. Sites will begin grab-and-go adult meal service, serving three meals a day, Monday through Friday. Adults and children can pick up three meals at a time and no adult will be turned away. There is no registration or identification required.

Meal hubs will operate from 7:30 AM-11:30 AM for children and families and 11:30 AM-1:30 PM for adults. Since March 16, the Department of Education's free meals programs have served approximately 1.2 million meals to families and students at over 440 Meal Hubs sites across the city. Meal Hub locations can be found at here or text NYC FOOD to 877-877.

Relief for Small Businesses

The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) opens up Friday, April 3rd. The \$350 billion federal loan program is open to small businesses or nonprofits with fewer than 500 employees. The program is open on a first come, first serve basis. Those who are interested should apply here.

Stay Informed

Over 800,000 New Yorkers have signed up for the City's COVID text notification system to get regular updates on the latest developments with coronavirus in New York City text COVID to 692-692. New Yorkers can text COVIDESP to 692-692 for updates in Spanish. You will receive regular SMS texts with the latest news and developments. If you have any questions on finding medical care call 311.

Face Masks Recommended for New Yorkers Going Out in Public



NEW YORK CITY (TIP): New Yorkers should wear face coverings when they go outside and will be around other people, Mayor Bill de Blasio advised Thursday in his daily briefing on what is being done in the national hotspot for Covid-19 infections. Emphasizing that the coverings need not be a professional surgical mask, de Blasio said scarves and bandanas will suffice. The recommendation came as new reports show asymptomatic transmission of the virus could be more frequent than previously thought.

"What that means is, when you put on that face covering, you're protecting everyone else," de Blasio said. The White House is expected to issue similar guidance nationwide.

Though Americans had previously been told masks were not necessary, that guidance has changed as researchers learned more about the virus. As many as 25% of people with the virus never show symptoms, CDC Director Robert Redfield said earlier this week. New York City health commissioner Oxiris Barbot reflected on the developing guidelines in the press conference Thursday. "It is a message that we have been conveying to New Yorkers over the last couple of weeks, and each time we've given new

guidance, it's another thing that we've needed to get adjusted to," said Barbot, a medical doctor who did her residency in pediatrics. "But I think New Yorkers are resilient and adaptable and people have been rising to the occasion." Barbot said people should ensure that, even with a face covering, they are staying six feet away from each other unless they live together under the same roof. Children should also wear face coverings while outside in the city.

To save professionally made masks for health care workers, de Blasio encouraged New Yorkers to make their own. Recounting a recent conversation with President Trump, the mayor said he emphasized the country is at war.

"This is a wartime dynamic," he said, calling this paradigm shift one that Washington has yet to fully understand. "We're in the middle of a war; we can feel it here in New York City."

De Blasio also called for a kind of national draft of health care workers of any experience level to work on the front lines of the virus fight.

In separate remarks from Albany this morning, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo called his state a microcosm of the rest of the country.

Indian American Student at UVA Develops Coronavirus Tracker



Computer science students Soukarya Ghosh and James Yun are the creators of the public service website TrackCorona

NEW YORK (TIP): TrackCorona, a COVID-19 tracking website developed by two University of Virginia students, James Yun and Soukarya Ghosh, and friends at Virginia Tech and Stanford University, is proving to be a valuable public service for anyone who wants to know more about the development of the pandemic. The website went live in early February with only a smattering of clicks by people who already knew about the site. Now, more than 300,000 people in 193 countries have visited the website about 1.4 million times. "We're averaging more than 40,000 users per day for the last week, with a record 50,000 users on March 12," said Ghosh, a third-year computer science and mathematics major who helped lead development of the site. "We're on trajectory for 50,000 more on the 16th."

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

China's Shenzhen city bans eating cats, dogs

BEIJING (TIP): Shenzhen has become the first Chinese city to ban the sale and consumption of dogs and cats, a move that comes after the Covid outbreak was linked to wildlife meat, prompting authorities to ban the trade and eating of wild animals, a media report said on Thursday.

The new law will come into force on May 1, the BBC report said.

In February, Chinese authorities banned the trade and consumption of wild animals. The move came after it emerged that a wet market in Wuhan could have been the starting point for the outbreak of the new coronavirus, providing the means for the virus to travel from animals to humans.

News of this led the Chinese government to crack down strongly on the trade and on the markets that sold such products.

The pandemic was still raging across the world, posing a test for countries and regions, as the global number of confirmed cases increased to 9,37,567, according to the latest update by the Johns Hopkins University's Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE). — IANS

Red Cross delivers aid to Ukraine

GENEVA (TIP): A planeload of medical supplies for COVID-19 patients and other relief goods has arrived in Ukraine to help people enduring a six-year-old conflict in the country's east, the International Committee of the Red Cross said on Thursday.

Eastern Ukraine, where Russian-backed separatists emerged in 2014, reported its first coronavirus infection on Tuesday and the ICRC said several more cases had been confirmed there since.

The 14 metric tonnes of supplies will go to hospitals and detention centres and serve both sides of the front line in the region, known as the Donbass, where the situation could become "disastrous" given the state of the health system, the ICRC said.

Items such as disinfectant fluids, syringes or IV fluids will help fight Covid-19 in the strife-torn country. — Reuters

Antarctica was home to rainforests 90 million yrs ago

LONDON (TIP): Researchers have unearthed evidence of rainforests near the South Pole 90 million years ago, a finding which suggests that the climate at this time was exceptionally warm with a higher level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere than previously thought. The scientists, including those from Imperial College London in the UK, discovered forest soil pertaining to a time between 145 and 66 million years ago within 900 kilometres of the South Pole. PTI

Spanish jobless claims jump by over 300,000 in March

MADRID (TIP): Spain registered a leap of 302,265 jobless claims in March due to the "extraordinary impact" of the coronavirus pandemic, the labour ministry said on Thursday.

It is reportedly the biggest monthly increase on record in the eurozone's fourth-largest economy, which has been locked down since March 14 to try to curb the spread of the virus.

The pandemic "changed the trend" in unemployment figures for March, after only 2,857 workers filled jobless claims in the first 12 days of the month, the ministry said in a statement.

The services sector recorded the most job losses, with 206,016 jobless claims in a country where tourism accounts for around 12 percent of national output.

Tourism worldwide has been hammered by the pandemic, as governments imposed travel restrictions and airlines grounded scores of flights.

Meanwhile, the number of unemployed in Spain hit 3.54 million in March, the labour ministry said.

Its monthly figure is a different measure from the quarterly unemployment rate, which is based on surveys and stood at 13.8 percent in the



A Spanish flag flutters as a woman wearing a face mask walks in Madrid on April 2. AFP

fourth quarter of 2019, according to national statistics institute INE.

That is the second highest jobless rate in the eurozone after Greece.

Since it imposed the lockdown, Spain has tightened restrictions further, with non-essential workers in the nation of around 47 million people asked to stay at home from March 30.

The limits expire on April 12 but Madrid will likely further extend them as COVID-19 cases continue rising although at a slower pace.

Spain has the world's second-highest death toll after Italy, with the virus so far claiming 9,053 lives, while the number of confirmed cases has passed the 100,000 mark. AFP

Italy urgently seeks safe exit from punishing lockdown

ROME (TIP): Italy's coronavirus epidemic may be slowing, but critics warn the government is falling seriously behind on strategies to lift the punishing nationwide lockdown and reboot the economy.

Nearly 12,500 people have died of the virus so far according to official data.

Despite a slowdown in new death and infection rates the government has extended an economically crippling lockdown until "at least" mid-April over fears of a second wind.

But poverty and unemployment numbers are already skyrocketing. Analysts have warned the eurozone's third-largest economy will suffer its worst recession in decades, contracting six per cent in 2020 should the lockdown last through to May.

"It's horrible to have to choose between putting the economy in a corner or exposing many people to the risk of dying," US expert Paul Romer told Italy's *Fatto Quotidiano* daily Wednesday.

The government needs "a credible plan to revoke the shutdown very soon, while guaranteeing the safety of workers even if the virus is still present," said the co-winner of the 2018 Nobel Prize for Economics.

Italy's business lobby Confindustria said Tuesday each additional week beyond the end of May could see the economy shrink by an additional 0.75



percentage points—billions of euros a week.

Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte told opposition leaders Wednesday: "We must plan a return to normality, and it must be done gradually and must allow everyone, eventually, to return to work safely." But he has yet to publish a blueprint.

Finance Minister Roberto Gualtieri said the recession forecasts were "realistic", but warned against jumping the gun on easing the lockdown, saying

"the more rigorous and efficient we are in combatting the epidemic, the sooner we can restart".

His department was planning economic support measures worth some 500 billion euros, he said in an interview.

According to official figures, just over 100,000 people have been infected in Italy since the epidemic began, but experts say there could be anywhere between 700,000 and six million cases—up to 10 per cent of the population. AFP

UK extends work visas for Indian, foreign doctors

LONDON (TIP): In a relief to foreign doctors, including from India, whose visas were set to expire in October this year, the UK government has extended the deadline by one year amid the country's fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

The UK government on Tuesday confirmed that foreign doctors, including from India, whose visas are set to expire before October this year will get an automatic extension for one year as they battle the coronavirus pandemic for the country's National Health Service (NHS).

The extension, announced by UK Home Secretary Priti Patel, will apply to around 2,800 migrant doctors, nurses and paramedics employed by the NHS whose visa is due to expire before October 1.

"Doctors, nurses and paramedics from all over the world are playing a leading role in the NHS' efforts to tackle coronavirus and save lives. We owe them a great deal of gratitude for all that they do," said Patel. "I don't want them distracted by the visa process. That is why I have automatically extended their visas – free of charge – for a further year," the Indian-origin minister said.

On top of these changes, pre-registered overseas nurses who are currently required to sit their first skills test within three months and to pass the test within eight months, will now have this deadline extended to the end of the year. This will give overseas



Exemptions

The extension to NHS visas will not only be fee-free and automatic but also exempt from the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS).

The free of charge extension will also apply to their family members.

To get more doctors and nurses on the frontline, the restriction on the amount of hours student nurses and doctors can work in the NHS has also been lifted.

nurses more time to pass their exams, whilst they spend the immediate term working on the frontline.

Trainee doctors and nurses will also not be limited by the number of hours they can work in the NHS during term time, the Home Office said.

The latest move could be seen as a sign that the UK government may be having a rethink on the surcharge, hiked from 400 pounds to 624 pounds per year and aimed at boosting NHS funds, being imposed on medics working for the health service. PTI

136-year-old Van Gogh painting stolen from Dutch museum closed by coronavirus

THE HAGUE (TIP): A painting by Dutch master Vincent van Gogh was stolen in an overnight smash-and-grab raid on a museum that was closed to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, police and the museum said Monday.

The Singer Laren museum east of Amsterdam said "The Parsonage Garden at Nuenen in Spring 1884" by the Dutch master was taken in the early hours of Monday. By early afternoon, all that could be seen from the outside of the museum was a large white panel covering a smashed door in the building's glass facade.

Museum General Director Evert van Os said the institution that houses the collection of American couple William and Anna Singer is "angry, shocked, sad" at the theft.

The value of the work, which was on loan from the Groninger Museum in the northern Dutch city of Groningen, was not immediately known. Van Gogh's paintings, when they rarely come up for sale, fetch millions at auction.

Police are investigating the theft.

The 25-by-57-centimeters (10-by-22-



inch) oil on paper painting shows a person standing in a garden surrounded by trees with a church tower in the background.

It dates to a time when the artist had moved back to his family in a rural area of the Netherlands and painted the life he saw there, including his famous work "The Potato Eaters," in mostly somber tones.

Later, he moved to southern France, where he developed a far more colourful, vibrant style of painting as his health

declined before his death in 1890.

Police said in a statement that the thief or thieves smashed a glass door to get into the museum. That set off an alarm that sent officers rushing to the museum but by the time they got there the painting and whoever stole it were gone.

A team including forensics and art theft experts was studying video footage and questioning neighbours. Van Os said the museum's security worked "according to protocol," but he added: "Obviously we can learn from this." AP

19 killed in massive forest fire in China

BEIJING (TIP): Eighteen firefighters and one farm worker died while fighting a massive forest fire in southwest China's Sichuan Province, state-run media reported on Tuesday. The fire started on a local farm at 3.51 pm on Monday and quickly spread to the nearby mountains due to the strong winds. Those killed include 18 firefighters and a local forest farm worker who led the way for the firefighters. They were trapped in the fire due to a sudden change in the wind direction, the report said. PTI

1st heatwave recorded in Antarctica

SYDNEY (TIP): Even the world's coldest continent is not immune to rising global temperatures, with scientists recording the first-ever heatwave event in Antarctica over the 2019-20 summer period.

"Heatwaves are classified as three consecutive days with both extreme maximum and minimum temperatures," University of Wollongong biologist Sharon Robinson explained.

Scientists are concerned about the effect that the heatwave could have on Antarctica's ecology — both positive and negative.

"Most life exists in small ice-free oases in Antarctica, and largely depends on melting snow and ice for their water supply," Australian Antarctic Division applied Antarctic ecologist Dana Bergstrom, said.

"Melted ice flooding can provide additional water to these desert ecosystems, leading to increased growth and reproduction of mosses, lichens, microbes and invertebrates, he said." It is believed that the unusual temperatures were linked to meteorological patterns which occurred in the Southern Hemisphere during spring and summer of 2019. — IANS

Australia pledges \$80 bn wage subsidy

SYDNEY (TIP): Australia will spend A\$130 billion to subsidise the wages of an estimated 6 million people, marking a third tranche of stimulus designed to limit the fallout of the coronavirus pandemic on the country's economy. Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the six months of funding was necessary to ensure businesses were able to retain staff and bounce back when the crisis had passed.

DELICIOUS DETOX WATERS TO BURN BODY FAT

When it comes to slimming down through detoxification, drinking plenty of water comes as the 'evergreen' piece of advice. It is even better to start your day with a glass of lemon water to flush out the toxins and prevent further buildups. But what if your fat burning as well as weight loss procedure becomes a bit more delicious? Well, here some tasty fat-burning detox water recipes for you.

Aloe Vera Detox Drink

An aloe infused drink is highly effective in improving digestion, strengthening the immune system, and supporting detoxification. Scoop the pulp out of a large fresh aloe leaf and add it to two cups of purified water. Also, add the juice of a large lemon. Blend everything well in a blender and enjoy!

Watermelon Detox Water

The best thing about watermelon is that it can nourish our body with essential vitamins and minerals while flushing the toxins out of it. Hence, cut a handful of chunks or slices of watermelon and keep these submerged in a bottle of water for 2-3 hours. The simple detox drink is ready.

Lemon And Ginger Detox

Both lemon and ginger are wonderful natural detox agents. Hence, prepare this infusion by adding the juice of half a lemon and one-inch freshly grated ginger to a bottle of water. Drink it every morning in an empty stomach and you will get rid of unwanted body fat within a few months.

Apple And Cinnamon Detox

This apple-cinnamon concoction is a perfect slimming water with absolutely zero calories. All you need to do is to add a thinly sliced red apple and a couple of cinnamon



sticks to a bottle of distilled water. Keep it in the refrigerator for a couple of hours and you will be good to go.

Pineapple And Sugarcane Detox

Those who have an inclination towards tropical flavor would love this delicious infusion with amazing fat-burning power. Add a cup of fresh pineapple chunks and two medium-sized sugarcane sticks to a jug full of purified water. Let it stay in the fridge for the whole night. Add a few ice cubes before sipping.

Lemon, Mint And Cucumber Detox

Make thin wedges of a small cucumber, slice up a whole lemon, and take a handful of fresh mint leaves. Add all these ingredients to a pitcher full of distilled or spring water and keep it in the refrigerator overnight for seeping. This concoction helps a lot in hydration,

digestion, and detoxification.

Watermelon, Kiwi, And Strawberry Detox

This detox water recipe is a fruity delight. Slice up half of a watermelon, a couple of kiwis, and a handful of strawberries. Add them to a bottle of water and allow the whole thing to sit for 2 to 3 hours inside the refrigerator. Vitamin A and E present in this delicious detox water will eliminate free radicals from your body and eventually flush the toxins out of your colon.

Cucumber, Grapefruit, Lemon, And Lime Detox

This amazing fruity goodness not only helps in burning excess body fat but also makes weight loss faster. Peel and slice half of a fresh cucumber, chop half of a medium-sized grapefruit, cut lemon and lime into thin rings and add all these to a pitcher full of spring water. Let it sit in the fridge for 3-4 hours and you are ready to slim down!

FOOD CORNER



Crispy Fried Chicken Wontons

Ingredients

Chicken - 300 gms, cooked, minced, Onion - 2, large, minced, Spring Onions - 3, minced, green parts only, Egg - 2, separated, egg yolks beaten well, Fish Sauce - 2 tbsp, Sugar - 2 tbsp, Pepper Powder - 1 tsp, Wonton Wrappers - 20 to 25, separated, Oil as required

Method

- Mix the chicken, onions, spring onions, egg white, fish sauce, pepper powder and sugar in a large bowl. Mix well for 4 to 5 minutes or until lightly stiff.
- Separate the wonton wrappers and cut each into triangles. Add 1 or 2 tbsp of the chicken mixture on each triangle. Brush the edges with the egg yolk and place another triangle on top.
- Press the edges and seal completely. Heat oil in a deep frying pan over medium flame. Fry the prepared wontons for 2 to 3 minutes each side or until golden brown and crispy. Remove and drain excess oil.

TANDOORI CHICKEN WRAPS

Ingredients

Tortillas (or Plain Rotis/Naans) - 4, cooked and kept warm, Chicken Breasts - 2, skinless, boneless, cut into small pieces, Plain Yogurt - 2tbsp, Ginger Garlic Paste - 3 tsp, Red Chilli Powder - 4 to 5 tsp (adjust as preferred), Garam Masala Powder - 2 tsp, Coriander Powder - 1/2 tsp, Juice of 1/2, Lime Lettuce as required, torn, Salt as per taste, Black Pepper Powder as per taste, Oil as required

Method

Heat oil in a pan over medium flame. Combine the yogurt, ginger garlic paste, redchilli powder, coriander powder, garam masala powder and lime juice. Mix well. Season with salt and pepper powder. Finally add the chicken pieces and mix everything. Keep aside for 10 to 15 minutes. Then add to the pan and cook, stirring from time to time, for 5 to 10 minutes. Once the chicken is cooked, remove the pan from the flame. Place the warm tortillas (or rotis) on a flat surface. Add some lettuce and top up with some of the chicken mixture and roll it up tightly.

Home remedies to prevent split ends

Say goodbye to expensive salon visits and commercial hair care products and try out these super cheap home remedies

OIL

The protective sheathing that covers your hair and acts as a barrier against mechanical, chemical and environmental damage is actually oil-based. Oil also keeps your hair well nourished and moisturized.

Eggs

Beat one egg with almond or olive oil and honey. Apply this mixture like a hair mask and wash off after half an hour.

Mayonnaise

Wet and towel dry your hair. Apply half a cup of mayo and leave it on for 15-20 minutes. Shampoo and rinse.

Bananas

They are rich in natural oils, potassium, zinc, iron, and vitamins A, C, and E. Once or twice a week, blend together one ripe banana, two tablespoons of curd, a few drops of rose

water and lemon juice. Leave it on for an hour and wash off.

Papaya

Blend a ripe papaya and half cup of curd to get a pulpy paste and apply it as a hair mask for 30 minutes before washing it off.

Cream

Whisk a tablespoon of cream with half cup of milk and apply this mixture to your hair for 15 minutes before rinsing it off.

Honey

Mix a spoonful of honey with some curd and apply this on the tips of your hair. Let this stay on your strands for 20 minutes and rinse it.

Dal

Take black lentils and grind it into a smooth powder. Add a spoon of fenugreek seeds to it and mix this with a cup of curd. Let this stay for two hours and wash it off with a mild shampoo.



START YOUR DAY WITH A TEASPOON OF GHEE ON AN EMPTY STOMACH

There is no doubt that ghee is considered as healthy fat and is often recommended to be consumed raw by drizzling it over hot cooked meals. Ghee enhances the absorption in the small intestine and decreases the acidic pH of our gastrointestinal tract. Cow's ghee is a natural source of antioxidant which eliminates free radicals and inhibits oxidation process.

According to Ayurveda, drinking ghee in the morning on an empty stomach treats the body like rasa, which is a major source of nutrition for every single cell in the body. It also says that ghee improves the process of cell rejuvenation which helps in the healing process of the body. So much so that it even helps in losing weight. The butyric acid and medium-chain triglycerides in ghee help in mobilising stubborn body fats and flushing them out of the body leading to increase in good cholesterol. But one should not go overboard with the consumption.

Here's how you need to start your day with ghee

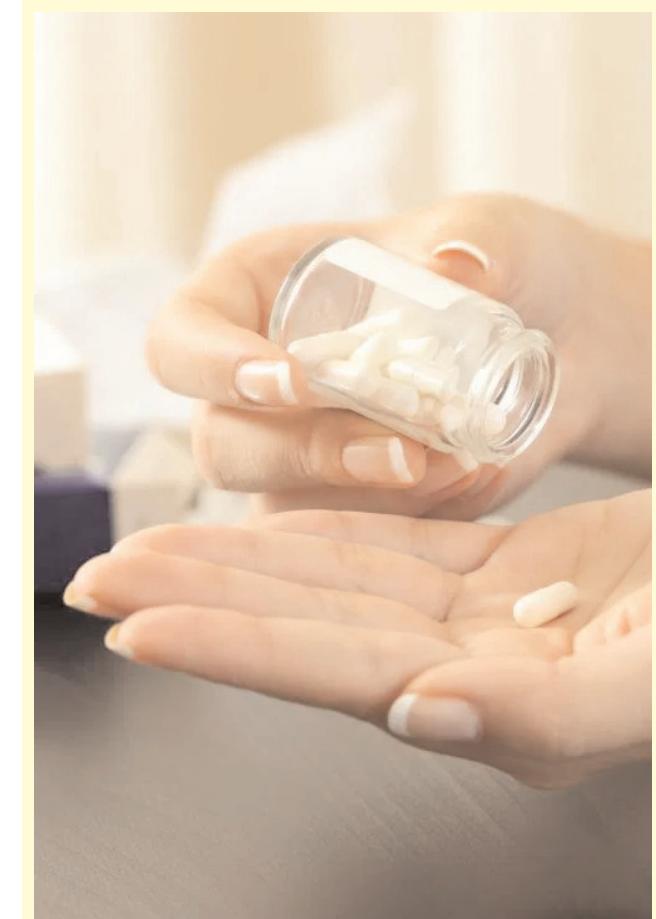
- Consume one teaspoon of cow's ghee with warm water in the morning.
- You can also mix a teaspoon of ghee with raw turmeric and boil it. Consuming this concoction every morning helps improve immunity and cure dry cough.



- One can also grind raw turmeric and one teaspoon ghee and make a morning drink.

Some of the benefits of starting the day with ghee

- It naturally lubricates the joints and promotes the formation of lubricants in the bone joints.
- It acts as a natural moisturiser and helps the skin to glow from within.
- Ghee comes packed with essential amino acids that help in reducing belly fat. The presence of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids help lose body fat.
- Lack of sleep or stress or too much work may end up leaving dark circles around your eyes. Turn to ghee to reduce them in no time. You just need to apply it lightly around the eyes before bedtime.
- Ghee is a super-rich source of fatty acids and antioxidants that makes it an excellent conditioner for dry and frizzy hair.



ASPIRIN DOES NOT LOWER RISK OF ALZHEIMER'S OR DEMENTIA: STUDY

Even though it is believed that baby aspirin administered daily curtails the risk of cardiovascular disease and even aids in delaying cognitive decline, a new report in The New York Times which quotes a study, has come with a newer revelation. It suggests that taking a low-dose aspirin might not prove to be beneficial in lowering the risk of Alzheimer's disease or any other form of dementia in older men and women.

In order to arrive at the result, the study examined 19,114 men and women.

They were above 70 years of age and did not suffer from dementia or any heart disease at the outset. Half among them were asked to take a daily 100-milligram aspirin.

The other half were given a placebo. After following up for five years, checking up on them annually, scientists deduced that there was "no difference between the groups in diagnoses of Alzheimer's disease or mild cognitive impairment".

Even though a decline in cognitive function was noticed, the speed and the gradation of decline in both the groups were similar. No effect was also traced in subgroups like those who were obese, suffered from diabetes or those who smoked.

"If you're 70 or older and healthy, without evidence of cardiovascular disease, it's very difficult to improve on your success. The relatively low risk of dementia in this study was not further lowered with aspirin," Dr Anne B Newman, a professor of epidemiology at the University of Pittsburgh and co-author was quoted as saying.

Eating too much salt can weaken immune system: Study

Eating too much salt in your food can weaken your immune system, a new study suggests, making it difficult for the body to fight bacterial infections.

For the study, researchers from the University Hospital of Bonn fed a high-salt diet to mice and found them to suffer from severe bacterial infections. Human volunteers were also given extra six grams of salt each day—which is about the salt content of two fast-food meals—and they were found to have developed immune deficiencies.

According to World Health Organisation (WHO), people should not consume more than 0.17 ounces of salt per day, which is roughly about one teaspoon of salt.

According to lead author Dr Katarzyna Jobin, University of Würzburg, the body keeps the salt concentration in the blood and in the various organs constant. The additional salt consumed with food is filtered out by kidneys and excreted through urine. The kidneys have a sodium chloride sensor that helps in salt excretion. This sensor causes glucocorticoids to accumulate in the body, restricting the function of common types of immune cells in the body, as reported by Daily Mail.



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SUPER PINK MOON: NASA'S TOP TIPS FOR APRIL SKYWATCHERS

Skywatchers are in for a treat in April when the super pink moon, the biggest supermoon of 2020, lights up the night sky.

The April full moon is the closest supermoon of the year, which means that it is the largest, according to EarthSky. "That's because this full moon more closely coincides with lunar perigee – the moon's closest point to Earth in its monthly orbit – than any other full moon in the year 2020," the website explains.

Supermoons happen when the moon's elliptical orbit brings it to the closest point to the Earth while the moon is full. The phrase was coined in 1979, according to NASA.

The space agency explains that the moon will be at perigee, at 2:08 pm EDT on April 7. The moon will be full at 10:35 pm EDT that day.

"For the best view of this lovely spring Moon, find an open area and watch as the Moon rises just above the horizon, at which point it will appear its biggest and take on a golden hue!" explains the Old Farmer's Almanac, on its website.

The April full moon is known as the pink moon, on account of the herb moss pink, also known as wild ground phlox, according to NASA. In the eastern U.S., the herb moss pink is one of the earliest widespread flowers of Spring, the space agency explains, on its website. "Other names for this Moon include the Sprouting Grass Moon, the Egg Moon, and among coastal tribes the Fish Moon, as this was the time that the shad swam upstream to spawn," it says.

Skygazers recently enjoyed the stunning March full moon, or worm moon, which was also a supermoon.

Seattle techies launch a talent agency for robot actors

Seattle entrepreneurs Forest Gibson and Jared Cheshier today launched The Agency, a new talent agency for robot actors.

The company connects film production studios, event organizers, and other media groups with robots. The plan is to replicate what traditional talent agencies do for human actors and actresses, but instead for robots and "virtual beings." The company's initial "talent" includes a pair of Boston Dynamics robots named Zero and One.

The idea may sound far-fetched. But Gibson assured that it is for real.

"We figured that the idea already sounds crazy enough to be an April Fools joke so we are just embracing the timing," he said.

Gibson and Cheshier are co-founders at Pluto VR, a Seattle virtual reality startup. They have years of media production, gaming, VR/AR development, and marketing experience.

The Agency is part of the Boston Dynamics early adopter program, which helped the firm land a pair of four-legged Spot robots.

Media producers pay The Agency to provide the robots and built out any additional technology needed.

"We handle the logistics of getting the robots on set and into character for their performance," Gibson said. "We then support the media and promotions of the production via social media, red carpet events, and press tours with our talent. This is similar to how media producers would go about casting actors represented by agents."

USING ZOOM WHILE WORKING FROM HOME? HERE ARE THE PRIVACY RISKS TO WATCH OUT

Now that you've finished choosing your custom Zoom background, mercifully sparing your fellow workers-from-home the sight of a growing pile of gym socks behind your desk, you might think you've got a handle on the conference call software du jour. Unfortunately, there are a few other data security considerations to make if you want to hide your dirty laundry.

With the novel coronavirus causing a surge in work-from-home activity, Zoom has quickly become the video meeting app of choice. And with that popularity, privacy risks are extending to a greater number of users. From built-in attention-tracking features to recent upticks in "Zoom-bombing" (where uninvited attendees break into and disrupt meetings), Zoom's security practices have been drawing more attention.

On Monday, those practices drew the scrutiny of New York's Attorney General Letitia James. James's office sent Zoom a letter outlining privacy vulnerability concerns, and asking what steps, if any, the company has put in place to keep users safe, given the increased traffic on its network. By Wednesday, security researchers had uncovered another two bugs that could allow hackers to take control of webcams and microphones on Zoom users' Macs.

Privacy experts have previously expressed concerns about Zoom: In 2019, the video-conferencing software experienced both a webcam hacking scandal, and a bug that allowed snooping users to potentially join video meetings they hadn't been invited to. This month, the Electronic Frontier Foundation cautioned users working from home about the software's onboard privacy features.

Here are some of the privacy vulnerabilities in Zoom that you should watch out for while working remotely.

Tattle-tale

Employers, managers and workers-from-home, beware. Zoom's tattle-tale attention-tracking feature can tell your meeting host if you aren't paying attention to their meticulously-composed visual aids. Whether you're using Zoom's desktop client or mobile app, a meeting host can enable a built-in option which alerts



them if any attendees go more than 30 seconds without Zoom being in focus on their screen.

Cloud snitching

For paid subscribers, Zoom's cloud recording feature can either be a life-saver or a catastrophic faux pas waiting to happen.

If the feature is enabled on the account, a host can record the meeting along with its text transcription and a text file of any active chats in that meeting, and save it to the cloud where it can later be accessed by other authorized users at your company, including people who may have never attended the meeting in question.

Data gossip

By now, you're used to hearing it from the privacy-minded: Don't use Facebook to log in to other sites and software unless you want Facebook to have data on what you're doing. Fair enough. But what to do when Zoom gets caught sending some of your analytics data to Facebook -- whether or not you even have a Facebook account?

NASA finds 'cosmic homicide' in deep space

Astronomers have discovered an "intermediate-mass" black hole that they believe is the "best evidence" of a "cosmic homicide."

The research, published in *The Astrophysical Journal Letters*, shows the black hole is significantly smaller than supermassive black holes that are at the core of large galaxies but still larger than other black holes. It is believed to weigh 50,000 times the mass of the sun.

"Intermediate-mass black holes are very elusive objects, and so it is critical to carefully consider and rule out alternative explanations for each candidate," the study's lead author, Dacheng Lin, said in a statement. "That is what Hubble has allowed us to do for our candidate."

These intermediate-mass black holes are believed to be the "missing link" in black hole evolution. It was discovered thanks to two X-ray observations and NASA's Hubble Space Telescope, which launched in April 1990.

Lin and the other researchers looked at the X-ray source, known as



3XMM J215022.4-055108, and found it was not in the center of a galaxy, which gave them hope it was an elusive IMBH.

"This is much more reliable than using X-ray luminosity alone as typically done before for previous IMBH candidates," Lin added. "The reason why we can use the spectral fits to estimate the IMBH mass for our object is that its spectral evolution showed that it has been in

the thermal spectral state, a state commonly seen and well understood in accreting stellar-mass black holes."

In October 2019, Fox News reported the Milky Way had stolen several dwarf galaxies from the neighboring Large Magellanic Cloud (LMC) galaxy, including the Carina and Fornax, as part of a merger between the two that is still ongoing.

10% global GDP needed to tide over Covid-19 crisis: UN

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Covid-19 crisis is likely to have a profound and negative effect on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change because of which a post-crisis coordination mechanism is vital to ensure that all countries have adequate fiscal space to recover, the March 2020 report of the United Nations stated.

Titled 'Socio-Economic Impact of Covid-19: Shared Responsibility, Global Solidarity', the report offers suggestions on global responses to tackle the pandemic, which included creating a corpus fund of at least 10% of the global GDP, debt restructuring to help fragile economies, and dismantling sanctions and other trade barriers, especially to allow medicinal and related products.

The cost of remittances - a lifeline in the developing world - should be brought as close to zero as possible, the report stated, adding that the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and other international financial institutions will be critical to this endeavour.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by all member states of the UN back in 2015, and aimed at improving the future of countries across several areas, including environment, health care, gender equality, education and



sustainable living by 2030. The Paris Agreement signed in 2016, meanwhile, aims to specifically combat climate change.

According to the report, the pandemic's impact on the environment is likely to be positive in the short term as drastic reduction in economic activity has reduced CO₂ emissions and pollution in many areas.

However, once countries resume economic activity, the report warns of the "significant risk" that nations would be tempted to divert all political capital and limited financial resources away from the

implementation of the SDGs. If this were to happen, the negative impact would be felt across sectors, the UN report warned.

"A hard truth is that we could have been better prepared for this crisis. The MDGs and the SDGs could have put us on track towards a world with access to universal health coverage and quality health care... Instead... most countries are characterised by weak, fragmented health systems that do not ensure the universal access and capacity needed to face the Covid-19 health crisis," the report said.

Source: HT

Gold slips as dollar holds firm; US jobs data awaited

Gold prices edged lower on Thursday as the dollar held firm, while investors awaited key US jobless data amid mounting signs of a recession due to the worsening coronavirus outbreak.

Spot gold fell 0.4 per cent to \$1,584.50 per ounce by 0312 GMT, after rising 1.2 per cent on Wednesday. US gold futures rose 0.4 per cent to \$1,597.20 per ounce.

"It is tracking against the dollar index. But primarily, gold is in consolidation and sideways movement than anything else," said Avtar Sandu, a senior commodities manager at Phillip Futures.

The dollar held overnight gains as investors rushed to the security of the world's most liquid currency given the massive disruption to global trade due to the pandemic.

Factories fell quiet across much of the world in March, with sharp slowdowns in Germany and Japan overshadowing a modest improvement in China, while new orders in the United States slumped to an 11-year low.

The metal is taking cues from other markets in the short term, but "fundamentals are still supportive in the long run" amid quantitative easing and lower interest rates, Sandu said.

Gold is considered an attractive investment during times of political or economic uncertainty. It is highly sensitive to interest rates, as lower rates reduce the opportunity cost of holding the non-yielding bullion.

The World Health Organization's director-general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said on Wednesday that his agency, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund backed debt relief to help developing countries cope with the pandemic's social and economic consequences.

OIL JUMPS AS TRUMP TALKS UP TRUCE HOPES FOR SAUDI-RUSSIA PRICE WAR

SINGAPORE (TIP): Crude oil futures surged on Thursday after US President Donald Trump said he expected Saudi Arabia and Russia to reach a deal soon to end their oil price war and Russian President Vladimir Putin called for a solution to "challenging" oil markets.

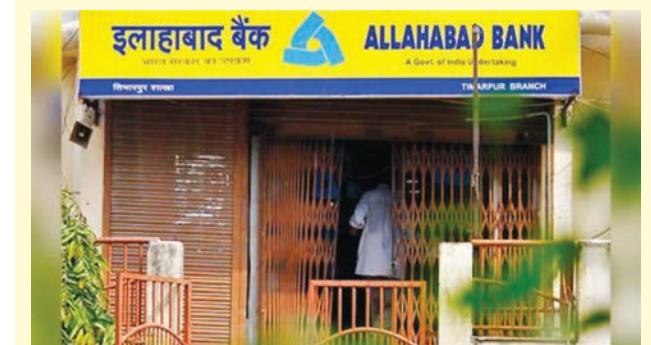
Brent crude futures rose 5.9 per cent, or \$1.46, to \$26.20 as of 0418 GMT, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures were up 4.6 per cent or 94 cents, at \$21.25.

Trump said he had talked recently with the leaders of both Russia and Saudi Arabia and believed the two countries would make a deal to end their price war within a "few days" – lowering production and bringing prices back up.

He also said he would be meeting with oil executives, where he is expected to discuss a range of options to help the industry amid the sharp hit to demand as the coronavirus outbreak has hammered industrial activity and kept cars off the road. Speaking at a government meeting on Wednesday, Putin said that both oil producers and consumers should find a solution that would improve the "challenging" situation of global oil markets.

Some analysts cautioned there is still a long way to go before any output cut agreement is struck.

With markets facing 15 million barrels per day (bpd) of oversupply in the second quarter and storage maxing out in April, extraordinary curtailments of oil supply will be needed in May and June, said Kang Wu, head of Asia analytics at S&P Global Platts.



AFTER MEGA-MERGER, SIX INDIAN BANKS WILL CEASE TO EXIST

NEW DELHI (TIP): The new financial year has seen the merger of six public sector banks into four (the anchor banks) in a bid to make them globally competitive.

As per the government's mega consolidation plan, Oriental Bank of Commerce and United Bank of India will merge into Punjab National Bank (PNB); Syndicate Bank into Canara Bank; Andhra Bank and Corporation Bank into Union Bank of India; and Allahabad Bank into Indian Bank.

The exercise assumes significance as it is taking place at a time when the entire country is under the grip of the Covid-19 outbreak, which has triggered a 21-day lockdown.

Experts said merger at this point of time will not be very smooth and seamless. However, heads of the anchor banks exuded confidence.

"We don't foresee any problem it is going as per the plan. We have reviewed in the light of this situation also. Certain modification in implementation we have done so that there is no disruption for employees and customers. We are ensuring zero disruption," Union Bank of India Managing Director Rajkiran Rai G told news agency PTI.

Following the consolidation, there will be seven large public sector banks (PSBs), and five smaller ones. The PNB will become second largest after the State Bank of India (SBI), Canara Bank fourth, Union Bank of India fifth and Indian Bank seventh biggest public sector lender.

British Airways could suspend 36,000 employees: Report

IAG-owned British Airways is expected to announce a suspension of about 36,000 of its employees, BBC News reported on Wednesday.

The airline has reached a broad deal with the Unite union that will include suspension of jobs of 80% of BA's cabin crew, ground staff, engineers and those working at head office, the news agency reported, adding that no staff were expected to be made redundant. Talks with the union are still ongoing, British Airways said in a brief statement to Reuters.

British Airways had said on Tuesday it was temporarily suspending flights from Gatwick Airport, Britain's second-busiest airport, as the aviation sector reels under the coronavirus crisis.

RBI allows export proceeds to be kept abroad for 15 months

Close on the heels of the repo rate cut and moratorium on term loans, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday allowed exporters to keep their proceeds outside India for 15 months and hiked the Ways and Means Advances (WMA) limit of state governments by 30 per cent to cushion the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown. The central bank has provided relief to the banking sector's capital requirements.

The RBI said the time period for realisation and repatriation of export proceeds made up to or on July 31, 2020 has been extended to 15 months from the date of export. "The measure will enable the exporters to realise their receipts, especially from COVID-19 affected countries within the extended period and also provide greater flexibility to the exporters to negotiate future export contracts with buyers abroad," the RBI said.



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 **011-91-8141234275** www.bejandaruwalla.com

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

Weekly Horoscope April 6 - April 12, 2020

ARIES: Ganesha says you look to gain insights through the study of philosophy, metaphysics and the occult. With more optimism and self-confidence in your life, you are willing to take risks. You may take to gambling or speculation, or you may drop the normal props that have kept you secure all along. You want to expand your consciousness and to experience every facet of the world.

TAURUS: You may take to yoga and meditation or go guru-shopping to get more clarity. You feel the time has come to understand yourself better with regard to the world. Ganesha blesses you. This is a stable phase you make substantial progress. You also want a change from the rut. You need to move away from the mundane world of work and achievement and may decide to travel.

GEMINI: You want to take a long trip for a direct experience of life. You also want to help the less fortunate in the society. You want to help the underdog. You are filled with mercy and compassion. Your life has many turns but they are all profitable. You want to grow into a well-rounded personality and Ganesha says that you are on the right track. You try everything all at once. You are restless for results.

CANCER: The impact of this influence is significant. Various aspects of your life will be transformed. You will encounter new friends and experiences and will be richer for it. There will be positive energy in your life and you will be shown the mirror and made to face yourself. In the beginning you will resist it but the less you resist facing yourself, the better for you.

LEO: Ganesha says all the new experiences will broaden your life and you grow exponentially as a person who matters. You will have arrived at a very significant juncture in life. The work front continues to expand with new ties and collaborations. There is money to be made and expenses also soar. Plug the bucket you may end up spending more than you earn. All in all, a good phase says Ganesha.

VIRGO: You are galloping ahead and this is a period of culmination in your professional and personal life. There are tangible results and you feel good as you bask in accomplishment and applause. You are confident about handling any challenge thrown your way. You do too many things at the same time and could face the danger of overextending yourself. Plan your moves well so that you are not concerned later.

LIBRA: There is new love and you spend happy moments with your paramour without a care in the world. This is a great time to be, says Ganesha. While at work runs smoothly, you sometimes feel that you do not get the recognition that you deserve. Remain humble with your feet placed firmly on the ground. Like has many lessons to teach; do not act arrogant and smug.

SCORPIO: You will be involved in many different aspects of work and will be meeting people from all over the world. These new interactions will broaden your outlook tremendously. You may also travel overseas on a new assignment. The future looks bright with unlimited potential. Ganesha is with you. Your ambitions are at their peak and you will do well, asserts Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS: The period favours travels / meetings / conferences / interviews / trips / more brain power / contacts / communication / correspondence / contracts. You are reaching out in all directions and growing as a person. This is an excellent time for most kinds of relationships. While you meet new people, you also keep in touch with old friends. Be humble and grateful for existence is throwing a number of opportunities your way.

CAPRICORN: Ganesha says that you have the potential to become a truly better person as all influences favour you and help you grow. You will learn new techniques of yoga and meditation and will take to alternative healing as a therapy of choice. But do not be obsessed with health issues. They will sort out on their own. Do not become a hypochondriac. The Moon raises your sensitivities to a sharp, cutting edge.

AQUARIUS: You enter a lucky phase and are helped by strangers and friends alike. You are also constantly looking for opportunities that can benefit you. Your sense of timing is acute and your sensitivity to others is greater than usual. You do well and reap benefits as a result of all this. You make significant gains in your personal and domestic life. You spend lavishly on home improvements and there is a decided upswing in your affairs.

PISCES: You meet new people all the time and if you are less arrogant or ego driven you will learn a lot. This can be a very profitable period but it is all up to you, says Ganesha. If you can change your perspective, you will surmount many roadblocks. This is a steady influence. At this time, you are able to combine breadth of vision with sharp perception and intellect and see very clearly where you are headed.

Birthday Horoscope April 6 - April 12, 2020

APRIL 6: Ganesha says there are no big obstacles to seeking fulfilment to your desires today, although, even in the little things, you may lean toward excess. The one caveat is an unexpected fiscal don't help anyone's mood.

APRIL 7: Tune into your intuitive or psychic awareness for emotional information. Don't get side-tracked by a tiff. Follow your soulful urges.

APRIL 8: You've got discipline for your ambitions, compassion for others' aide, and the ability to late-night think about the deeper agenda for your plan.

APRIL 9: You've got an enthusiastic, positive, confident attitude that attracts good luck and opportunity. Life just expands to even-better proportions.

APRIL 10: Jealousy, envy, or resentment could get in the way of a personal or

business relationship. Fortunately, you know what to say to make things right.

APRIL 11: Look for evening compatibility within the family with one note of dissent. Make a stretch for harmony instead and all will be good.

APRIL 12: If you're looking to set your way during the daytime, try something innovative, and don't cross the lines of consideration to confrontation.

HANUMAN JAYANTI: WORSHIP THE LORD, CONQUER DIFFICULTIES

The holy Hanuman Jayanti or Hanumath Jayanti festival celebrates the birth of Hanuman as per Hindu calendar, one of the prominent heroes of the Indian super epic Ramayana. Hanuman Jayanti is observed in the Chaitra lunar month where a number of spiritual discourses are held in a majority of Hindu temples. This festival is celebrated with immense devotion by Hindus of all hues and in particular by the devotees of Hanuman or Hanuman Bhakts. The different aspects of Hanuman are remembered and worshipped on Hanuman Jayanti festival day.

This year, Hanuman Jayanti falls on Wednesday 8th April, 2020, as per Hindu Panchang.

Lord Hanuman, a dedicated disciple of the Hindu Lord Rama, is worshipped all over the India by the Hindu people for his deep devotion to the god Rama. At the day of Hanuman Jayanti celebration, all the Hanuman temples become full of crowd as people started puja from early morning after a holy bath. Hanuman Jayanti is celebrated with great enthusiasm by the people of Hindu religion as an important festival of the Hindus. It is a great Hindu ritual celebrated in cultural and traditional way.

People worship Lord Hanuman as a symbol of devotion, magical powers, strength and energy. People read Hanuman Chalisa as it has ability to conquer the evil spirits and provide peace to the mind. The devotees of Lord Hanuman visit Hanuman temples at this day after a holy in the early morning, apply red tilak (vermillion) to the foreheads of Hanuman idol, read Hanuman Chalisa, offer Prasad of laddoo, do Aarti by chanting mantras and Aarti songs, make round of the temple and so many rituals. As Lord Hanuman was born to the Vanara community having reddish orange color body, that's why it is seen to all the Hanuman temples having reddish orange colored Hanuman idol. After puja, people apply red Sindur to their own foreheads as a Prasad and distribute laddoo Prasad among people to get blessed with what they have prayed to their God Hanuman.

In the Maharashtra, it is commemorated to the Purnima in the Hindu Lunar month of Chaitra. However, according to other Hindu calendar, it falls on 14th day (chaturdashi) of Ashvin month in the dark fortnight. After puja, Prasad is distributed among people to have full blessings.

In Tamil Nadu and Kerala, it is celebrated in Margazhi month (between December and January) in the belief that Lord Hanuman was born to the amavasya in the Margazhi month. In Odisha, it is celebrated on 1st day in the month of Baisakha (in April). In Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, it is celebrated on 10th day of Vaishaka month in the Krishna Paksha. It is the 41 days long celebration in the Andhra Pradesh which starts from the Chaitra Purnima and ends at 10th days of the Krishna Paksha of Vaishakha month.



Significance of Hanuman Jayanti Celebration

Hanuman Jayanti celebration indicates the balanced coexistence of the whole human fraternity with the nature's incredible creature, Lord Hanuman from Vanara community. People from the Hindu religion worship Lord Hanuman as a divine creature. This celebration has lots of importance to all however Brahmacharis, wrestlers and bodybuilders are specially inclined towards this celebration. There are many names through which Lord Hanuman is famous among his devotees like Bajrangabali, Pavanasuta, Pavankumar, Mahavira, Balibima, Marutsuta, Anjanisut, Sankat Mochan, Anjaneya, Maruti, Rudra and many more.

Hanuman avatar is considered as the 11th Rudra avatar of the Lord Siva with great devotion, strength, knowledge, divine power, bravery, intelligence, spirit for selfless service and etc. He has devoted his life only for his Lord Rama and Mata Sita and never shows his bravery and intelligence without any purpose. The devotees of the Lord Hanuman always pray him for getting blessed with the same for their bright future. He is worshipped in many ways by his devotees; some meditates by repeating his name many times to get power, fame, success and etc in the life whereas some reads the Hanuman Chalisa to get the same.

History behind Celebration of Hanuman Jayanti

Once, a great saint named Angira went

to visit the heaven king, Indra and welcomed there through the dance presented by a damsel named, Punjikstala. However, saint was not used of that type dance and started meditating on his God. After the end of dance, he was asked by the Indra about the performance of dance. He was silent and said that I was in deep meditation to my Almighty because I have no interest in such dance. It was very ashamed to the Indra and damsel; she started disappointing the saint and then cursed by the Angira that "Behold! You shall degrade to earth from Swarg. You will be born as a female monkey in the mountain forests".

She then felt sorry and regretted to the saint then a merciful saint supported her through blessings like, "A great devotee of Paramatma will be born to you. He will forever serve Paramatma". She

became the daughter of Kunjar (king of the monkeys on earth) and got married to the Kapiraj Kesari of the Mount Sumeru. She gave birth to the Hanuman with the help of five divine factors such as curse and blessings of the saint Angira, her prayers, blessings of Lord Shiva, blessings of Vayu deva and Putreshti Yagna's fruit. It is considered that Lord Shiva had to rebirth as a human being on the earth in his 11th Rudra avatar in the form of Hanuman as He could not serve to the Lord Rama by being in His real form.

The whole Vanara community including all the human fraternity was happy and celebrated his birthday with great enthusiasm and joy by dancing, singing and lots of activities. From then, it was started celebrating as a Hanuman Jayanti by his devotees to get strength and wisdom like him.

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



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contd from page I

Coronavirus cases hit 1 million worldwide, deaths pass 52,000

market has ever witnessed, and economists warn unemployment could reach levels not seen since the Depression, as the economic damage piles up around the world.

The bleak news Thursday, April 2, - a record-shattering 6.6 million new unemployment claims on top of last week's unprecedented 3.3 million - came as the competition for scarce ventilators, masks and other protective gear seemed to grow more desperate and deaths mounted with alarming speed in Italy, Spain and New York, the most lethal hot spot in the nation, with nearly 2,400 lives lost.

The mounting economic fallout almost certainly signals the onset of a global recession, with job losses that are likely to dwarf those of the Great Recession more than a decade ago.

Though the tally reported by Johns Hopkins University show 1 million infections, with over 50,000 deaths, the true numbers are believed to be much higher, because of testing shortages, many mild cases that have gone unreported, and suspicions that some countries are covering up the extent of their outbreaks.

With over 220,000 people infected in the U.S. and the death toll topping 5,300, sobering preparations were under way. The Federal Emergency Management Agency asked the Pentagon for 100,000 body bags because of the possibility funeral homes will be overwhelmed, the military said.

The Democratic Party pushed its nominating convention back a month, to mid-August. And federal authorities proposed a \$611,000 fine against the Seattle-area nursing home connected to at least 40 coronavirus deaths, accusing it of infractions that included failure to report and rapidly manage the outbreak.

Elsewhere around the world, the number of people applying for welfare benefits has gone up manifold. In Britain it increased nearly tenfold to almost 1 million in the past couple of weeks. European Union estimates at least a million on the continent lost their jobs over the same period, and say the actual number is probably far higher. Spain alone added over 300,000 to its unemployment rolls in March.

But the job losses there appear to be far smaller than in the U.S. because of Europe's greater social safety nets, including government programs to reduce workers' hours without laying them off, in the hope of bringing them back quickly once the crisis passes.

With its healthcare system in dire shape, Spain reported a record one-day number of deaths, 950, bringing its overall toll to about 10,000, despite signs that the infection rate is slowing.

Italy recorded 760 more deaths, for a total of 13,900, the worst of any country, but new infections continued to level off. Over 10,000 medical personnel in Italy have been infected and 69 doctors have died, authorities said. India, into its second week of nationwide lockdown appears comfortable with the numbers, but in days to come the numbers are feared to go up, notwithstanding government of India's strict enforcement of social distancing. As on April 3 morning, the total number of detected cases reported were 2511, with 69 deaths.

The competition for ventilators, masks and other vital supplies was cutthroat. In New York, Governor Andrew Cuomo warned that the State is quickly running out of breathing machines.

"At the current burn rate, we have enough ventilators for six days. But we need this like now. Not talking about two months, three months, four months," he said, adding that, "We need these materials now."

The Governor has complained that the 50 States are competing against each other for protective gear and breathing machines, or are being outbid by the federal government, in a competition he likened to being on eBay. In France, a top health official in the country's hard-hit eastern region said American officials swooped in at a Chinese airport to spirit away a planeload of masks that France had ordered.

"On the tarmac, the Americans arrive, take out cash and pay three or four times more for our orders, so we really have to fight," Dr. Jean Rottner, an emergency room doctor in Mulhouse, told RTL radio.

Nine leading European university hospitals warned they will run out of essential medicines for COVID-19 patients in intensive care in less than two weeks.

A shipment of nearly 5,900 medical masks that Alabama's Montgomery County received from the U.S. government stockpile was unusable because of dry rot, the emergency management director said. The masks had a 2010 expiration date, according to the city of Montgomery.

President Donald Trump acknowledged on Wednesday, April 1, that the federal stockpile is nearly depleted of the protective equipment needed by doctors and nurses, and some "horrific" days lie ahead. In one of the worst hotspots around the country, Louisiana, deaths climbed to at least 310 and confirmed infections spiked 42% to nearly 9,200, in what Governor John Bel Edwards attributed in part to backlog test results finally coming back from laboratories.

"We want people focused on what they can do about it. Don't be despondent. Don't despair. Don't throw your hands up," he said. "We can determine how bad it gets by whether we comply with the social distancing, the stay-at-home order and all the hygiene we've been promoting." For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. But for others, especially older adults and people with health problems, it can cause severe symptoms like pneumonia. Over 200,000 people worldwide have recovered, according to Johns Hopkins' count.

With large portions of America under lockdown to try to contain the scourge, job losses for the world's biggest economy could double to 20 million, and unemployment could spike to as high as 15% by the end of the month, many economists have said. Unemployment in the U.S. hasn't been that high since the tail end of the Depression, just before the U.S. entered World War II.

Laid-off workers can tap money made available in the \$2.2 trillion rescue measure passed by Congress. It adds \$600 a week to unemployment benefits, extends eligibility to 39 weeks and for the first time wraps in part-timers and workers in the so-called gig economy, such as Uber drivers. Many recently unemployed workers have reported frustrations with jammed phone lines and overloaded websites as they try to apply for unemployment benefits. (With inputs from Agencies)

India's Prime Minister calls upon CM's to Prepare Common Exit Strategy post lockdown

staggered appearance of people after the end of the lockdown while forewarning that the situation of the global Covid-19 pandemic remains far from satisfactory amid speculation of a second wave in some

countries.

In his second interaction through video conference with Chief Ministers after last month's Janata Curfew, the Prime Minister while taking stock of the current situation underscored the importance of coordinated action, need to avoid overlaps in efforts of stakeholders and setting up district-level crisis management groups and district surveillance officers.

Thanking the states for supporting the lockdown decision due to which India had achieved some success in limiting the spread of the disease, he praised them for working together as a team to check the spread of the virus, an official release said.

He appealed to leaders to reach out to community chiefs and social welfare organizations at the state, district, town and block levels to build up a united front based on community approach in the battle against the pandemic. Stressing exit strategy, he asked states to send suggestions since it was important to ensure a staggered re-emergence of the population once the lockdown ended while reiterating the importance of social distancing.

He said in the next few weeks, testing, tracing, isolation and quarantine should remain the areas of focus. Highlighting the necessity of maintaining supply of essential medical products, availability of raw material for manufacture of medicines and medical equipment, he said it was necessary to ensure availability of separate, dedicated hospital facilities for affected patients.

As of Friday, April 3 morning, India reported 2449 cases, with 73 deaths.

Coronavirus Outbreak in New Jersey Accelerates with 537 Deaths

coronavirus and thanked the state troopers and Army Corps of Engineers for their speedy work that they said would save lives.

The 250-bed hospital at the Meadowlands Exposition Center should be ready to take non-COVID-19 patients Monday, said Col. Patrick Callahan, superintendent of the State Police. COVID-19 is the disease caused by the coronavirus.

Murphy called it an "extraordinary effort" to build the hospital. "Of course, this is only the end of the beginning as opposed to the beginning of the end," Murphy said to a room of workers. "God bless you all and thank you for everything you've done to get this going."

Menendez, who led the effort to get the hospital as well as two others under construction, in Edison and Atlantic City, told the workers, "we're hopefully going to save lives."

The field hospital will serve as a "step-down" facility for patients that would otherwise go to area hospitals to alleviate pressure on them. However, Callahan said the field hospital could be ramped up for intensive care use. "It's rudimentary," Callahan said, "but the care will be the same as every hospital in the state of New Jersey."

Rows of one-bed units are set up in blocks inside the exposition center. The beds look similar to Army cots and each has a white curtain for privacy. Murphy, looking inside one of the units, said it looks like a "very basic setup." Workers also outfitted the center with a temporary pharmacy, showers, sinks, toilets, nurse's station and break room for health care workers.

New Jersey, a state of 9 million people, has the second-most cases among U.S. states, after New York.

DISCLAIMER

SERENITY IN THE LAP OF DHAULADHAR

Like other hill stations in North India, Palampur rarely vies for attention with gimmicks and that's where its charm lies. A small town nestled in the lap of the snow-covered Dhauladhar range, Palampur in Himachal Pradesh is a perfect weekend getaway from Delhi and other nearby places. The picturesque natural beauty, tea gardens, deodar forests, gurgling mountain streams, ancient temples, hidden monasteries and warm people welcome you to this heaven. It has something to offer to everyone—amazing landscape and lush green tea gardens for photographers and nature lovers, serene pine forests for those looking for some moments of quietude, old temples and monasteries for religious souls and activities like paragliding and trekking for the adventurous lot. Weather is pleasant throughout the year. Winter months, from November to February, offer amazing views of the beautiful Dhauladhar range covered in snow. You can snow trek to places like Billing and enjoy splendid views of Kangra Valley from up there. And if you want to relax in the pleasant weather away from the crowd and heat the city, visit during summers. With greenery all around, the valley is at its natural best during monsoons. You would need at least 3-4 days to explore popular places to visit in and around Palampur, such as:

SHERABLING MONASTERY

Situated in the foothills of Kangra Valley is Palzung Sherabling Monastic Seat in Upper Bhattu region. A quiet walk through the pine forest with colourful Buddhist prayer flags on the sides of the road takes you to the gompa. The monastery has shrine halls, a monastic college, a school, a library, a museum, an exhibition hall and a dispensary, and all these are nestled deep inside the pine forest. It's like a different world altogether in the middle of serene nature where cheerful kids, youth and



old seem to be celebrating life. There is a small canteen behind the main prayer hall where you can have noodles, thukpa, tea etc. Be there during sunset to enjoy an amazing view, when the golden rays engulf the entire forest, fields and villages.

BAROT

Barot is a small village nestled in the lap of the Himalayas on the banks of the Uhl River and surrounded on both sides by parts of the Dhauladhar range. Around 75 km from Palampur, it's a perfect off-beat getaway for those who want to relax in the middle of serene nature away from the crowd. You can even take a trolley from Jogindernagar to reach here. Spend a day trout fishing, nature walking or just relaxing. You can also visit the former summer palace of Mandi rulers. Barot serves as the gateway to the Nargu Wildlife Sanctuary which is home to a variety of flora and fauna, including goral, Himalayan black bear and pheasants.

BILLING

Billing is a beautiful hilltop from where you get stunning views of Dhauladhar and Kangra Valley. It is also one of the world's best paragliding sites. A picturesque zig-zag uphill route from Bir takes you to Billing. If you are visiting the place during winters, you can snow trek from Bir to Billing. Sitting at a height of 2290 m above sea level, admiring the surroundings and relishing a cup of hot tea in the cold weather are some of the things that be enjoyed here. If you love adventure then go for paragliding, but you need to make requisite arrangements at Bir only.

BAIJNATH

Rediscover history at an ancient Lord Shiva Temple in Baijnath. This 13th-century shrine reflects early medieval north Indian temple architecture known as Nagara style. During the festival of Maha Shivaratri, there is a grand 5-day celebration held at the temple. The whole complex is decorated with marigold

flowers and is thronged by devotees from all over the country. From behind the temple stairs, one can reach Binwa stream. There is a lot that one can do here, such as relaxing on the banks of this mountain stream or picnicking with loved ones.

SOBHA SINGH ART GALLERY

Sardar Sobha Singh, a well-known contemporary painter, started his painting career in Andretta, around 18 km from Palampur. He stayed in this remote village in the foothills of the Himalayas for around 38 years. The place where he stayed and painted has been converted into an art gallery by his adopted daughter Bibi Gurcharan Kaur, and now managed by Gurcharan Kaur's son Hirdaypal Singh. At the art gallery, one can see a range of original works of the artist as well as some of his personal belongings. Sobha Singh Museum, displaying photographs depicting the life of the artist, has been added to the complex recently.

MCLEOD GANJ

McLeod Ganj is a Tibetan establishment where you would love to spend an evening. Popular places to visit here include Tsuglagkhang Complex, Dalai Lama Temple, Tibetan Museum, Tibetan Library and Archives, Tibetan Children's Village, Bhagsu Temple, Bhagsu Falls and Naddi. You can roam around in the market that is full of options that you can buy—funky jewellery, hand-knitted woollens, carpets, shawls, t-shirts and artefacts. There are some awesome restaurants and cafes that serve delicious Chinese, Tibetan and Italian food. If you are looking for a peaceful place to practice yoga, there are some places in the outskirts that offer a serene environment and a lovely view of Kangra Valley and Dhauladhar. McLeod Ganj also is the base for many treks.



Wimbledon cancelled for 1st time since WW-2, back in Jun-Jul 2021

LONDON (TIP): The Wimbledon Championships were cancelled for the first time since World War Two on Wednesday as the coronavirus pandemic struck another blue-ribbon sports event off the calendar and wiped out the entire tennis grasscourt season.

While the decision had looked inevitable for some time, since the virtual shutdown of world sport and the postponement of the Tokyo Olympics, Wimbledon had been one of the few events not to have been officially cancelled or postponed.

But after emergency talks between the various stakeholders over the last few days, the All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC) announced that it was impossible for the grasscourt Grand Slam, scheduled for June 29-July 12, to take place.

"It is with great regret that the main board ... have today decided that The Championships 2020 will be cancelled due to public health concerns linked to the coronavirus epidemic," the AELTC said in a statement.

"The 134th



Championships will instead be staged from June 28 to July 11, 2021."

Following the cancellation of the grasscourt Major, and with the pandemic worsening in Europe and the US, the men's ATP Tour, women's WTA Tour and the International Tennis Federation

extended the suspension of professional tennis for another five weeks to July 18.

"At this time, tournaments taking place from July 13, 2020 onwards are still planning to proceed as per the published schedule," said a joint statement from the governing bodies.

Ben Stokes to race against F1 drivers in virtual GP

En gland cricketer Ben Stokes will test his driving skills against five Formula One drivers, including Ferrari's Charles Leclerc, in the sport's second virtual grand prix this weekend.

The World Cup winning all-rounder will team up with Thai racer Alexander Albon in the Red Bull lineup for his first esports competition.

McLaren's Lando Norris and the Williams pairing of George Russell and Nicholas Latifi will also be competing along with retired British grand prix winner and TV pundit Johnny Herbert.

The virtual race is the second in a new series organised by Formula One to provide some light entertainment in the absence of any real life action due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Norris and Latifi were the only current F1 drivers to compete in the first race.

'Enjoy batting with MS Dhoni, AB de Villiers the most': Virat Kohli



Virat Kohli joined Kevin Pietersen in an informal chat on Instagram on Thursday, with the two cricketers taking the opportunity of being isolated in their homes to talk about various things.

When Pietersen asked Kohli to name his favourite batting partner, Kohli named MS Dhoni and AB de Villiers. "Two people I have enjoyed most batting with, well I like to bat with people who run well and understand my calling. So with MS Dhoni for India and with AB de Villiers otherwise. With AB the partnership just flows. We don't even talk cricket," he said.

Kohli and Pietersen also talked about an unusual moment from 2011, when Kohli picked up his first T20I wicket – off his 0th delivery. Pietersen, his wicket,

was stumped off a wide delivery in this match. Kohli was the first bowler to take a wicket off the zeroth delivery of his T20I career.

Talking about that, Kohli said, "I am the only bowler to have picked up a wicket without bowling a legitimate delivery. It was zero balls and one wicket. You were so embarrassed that you didn't even look at me." Answering a few other questions, some of which Pietersen relayed from fans, Kohli said he would pick Cristiano Ronaldo over Lionel Messi if asked to choose one. He also said he would never shave because he does not look good without a beard. He also said his best cricketing memory is winning the 2011 ICC World Cup and the worst cricketing memory is the horrendous tour of England he had in 2014.



FIFA chief says football will be totally different after coronavirus

Football will be totally different when it eventually resumes after the coronavirus outbreak, the head of global soccer body FIFA Gianni Infantino said on Thursday.

"Football will come back, and when it does, we'll celebrate coming out of a nightmare together," he told the Italian news agency ANSA in an interview.

"There is one lesson, however, that both you and me must have understood: the football that will come after the virus will be totally different... (more) inclusive, more social and more supportive, connected to the individual countries and at the same time more global, less arrogant and more welcoming."

He added: "We will be better, more human and more attentive to true values."

Last week, Infantino told Gazzetta dello Sport that it was the right time to take a step back and reform a sport where fixture lists have become overloaded and financial resources increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few elite clubs.

He suggested there could be "fewer, but more interesting tournaments. Maybe fewer squads, but more balance. Fewer, but more competitive, matches to safeguard the health of the players."

Delhi Shooting World Cup faces cancellation

NEW DELHI (TIP): Pressure is building up on the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) to call off the upcoming shooting World Cup in New Delhi after the cancellation of the Munich edition owing to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Delhi World Cup, originally scheduled to be held from March 15-26, was postponed barely four days before the start of the event. It was then decided to hold the tournament in two parts — rifle and pistol competitions from May 5-12, while shotgun competitions were slated for June 2-9.

However, with the Munich World Cup being cancelled, sources close to the NRAI said the sport's apex body in India is also under pressure to follow suit, considering the uncertainty arising out of the unprecedented health crisis.

"There is pressure, especially after the cancellation in Munich, which was to be held after Delhi. Given that lockdowns are being enforced not just in India, how shooters will prepare for an event like a World Cup now," a source said.

"Going by the views of many associated with the sport in India, the writing is on the wall and the NRAI would do well to announce it now rather than doing it much later," another source added.



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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.

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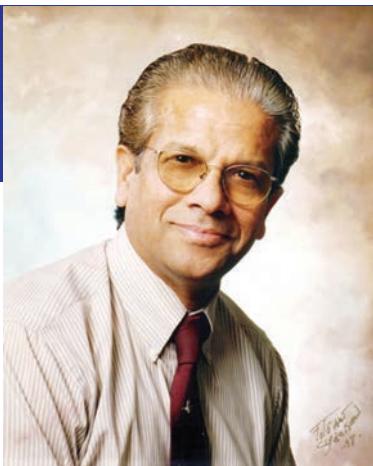


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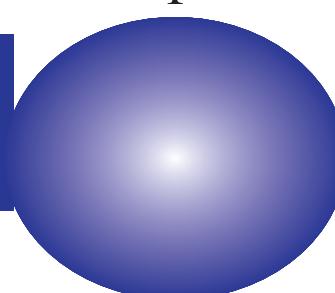


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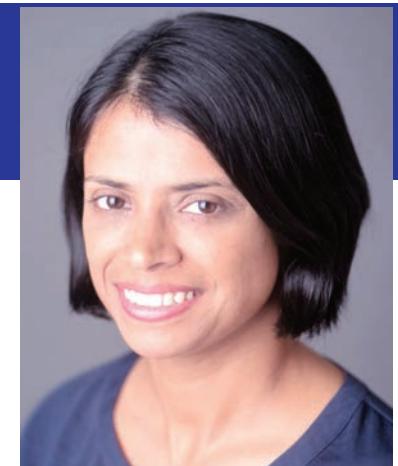
Dr. VK Raju and Dr. Leela Raju of the Eye Foundation of America will be glad to answer any eye related concerns of the readers of The Indian Panorama during this difficult period of Coronavirus onslaught



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