



Confederation of Indian Industry

125 Years: 1895-2020

COVID 19

Updates, Notifications and Advisories

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<http://www.ciicovid19update.in>

News Update

The new revelation of asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic infection in India has sparked concerns.

With mounting evidence that asymptomatic Covid-19 cases are spreading the infection, India's top medical research body is grappling with the problem posed by "silent spreaders" and examining the feasibility of starting 'door-to-door' surveillance to monitor and test older people at high risk who don't have symptoms. Some experts, however, believe this is a costly and unachievable objective. Of 100 people with infection, 80 do not have symptoms," Raman R Gangakhedkar, chief epidemiologist, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) said.

Central PSU of Power Ministry REC steps up relief work amidst lockdown to curb Covid-19 Pandemic

Concerned over the plight of daily wagers, many of them migrants from different parts of India, REC Foundation, the CSR arm of REC Limited, a Navratna CPSE and the country's leading financier of the power-sector projects under the administrative control of Ministry of Power is distributing cooked food, ration, utility packets, masks, sanitizers and even providing shelter during the lockdown benefiting 76,000 daily wagers and their families till date. REC Foundation has already sanctioned funds totaling ₹ 7 crores for these activities and more such funds are already in the pipeline.

Dr Harsh Vardhan launches 'COVID India Seva', an interactive platform for citizen engagement on COVID-19

Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan today launched the COVID India Seva, which provided an interactive platform to establish a direct channel of communication with millions of Indians amid the pandemic. This initiative is aimed at enabling transparent e-governance delivery in real-time and answering citizen queries swiftly, at scale, especially in crisis situations like the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.



Dr. Jitendra Singh commends the yeomen services rendered by Civil Servants in India's fight against COVID-19 on Civil Services Day

Union Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions Dr. Jitendra Singh has commended the yeomen services rendered by Civil Servants in India's fight against COVID-19 to mark the Civil Services Day 2020 through a nation-wide interactive video calling with 25 States and 5 UTs. Calling for greater inter-service camaraderie, citing the successful example of the CARUNA platform which brings together 29 service associations in an endeavour to support natural disasters, Dr. Singh complemented the civil servants for their support to Government's COVID 19 relief operations by offering one day salary to the Prime Minister's Cares Fund. He said that District Collectors have been leading the fight against the COVID 19 pandemic and India's prospects to contain the pandemic rested on the broad shoulders of civil servants.

Functioning of the Benches of the Central Administrative Tribunal will remain suspended till 03.05.2020.

The High Courts are not functioning, and exceptional cases are dealt with through video conferencing. In almost all places, the Benches are located at hotspots. The representatives of Bar have also expressed their difficulty in filing or pursuing the cases in this situation. It has been therefore decided that the functioning of, and hearing in, the Benches of the Central Administrative Tribunal shall remain suspended till 03.05.2020. The feasibility of working on certain days already declared as holidays or vacation shall also be considered once the functioning begins.

Government Launches App Challenge to Develop Zoom Alternative Amid Security Concerns

The Central Government has launched a video conferencing app development challenge for Indian companies with prize money of Rs. 1 crore. The innovation challenge has been introduced at a time when security issues have been highlighted in the popular Zoom video-conferencing app. "Innovation Challenge for Development of Video Conferencing Solution" has been introduced by the government to facilitate Work from Home (WFH) that has become a new normal for crores of people in the country. WFH means that a huge amount of information is being shared online, giving rise to concerns over the privacy of the conversations and control over the app and data shared through the app.

India stalls use of rapid COVID-19 test kits for 2 days after states complain of defective results

Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) today asked states to stop using rapid antibody testing kits for the next two days. ICMR will test the testing kits for accuracy before they give advice on its use. ICMR says it will analyse the testing kits after two states -West Bengal and Rajasthan raised concerns over the validity of their results.

In-house Care-givers of Senior Citizens, Prepaid mobile recharge utilities, Food processing units in urban areas exempt from Lockdown Restrictions to fight COVID-19

Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has issued an order to exempt certain activities under the consolidated revised guidelines regarding the Nationwide lockdown to fight COVID-19. MHA has clarified that categories already allowed in the guidelines issued under the above referred orders which includes:

- Social sector under clause 8(i) include bed side attendants and care givers of senior citizens residing in their homes.
- Public utilities under clause 11(v) include recharge facilities for prepaid mobile connection.
- Supply of essential goods under clause 13(i) include food processing units such as bread factories, milk processing plants, flour mills, dal mills etc. located in urban areas.

However, as specified in the lockdown measures, National COVID-19 Directives and Standard Operating Procedure for social distancing for offices, workshops, factories and establishments must be ensured. It has been communicated to all States to inform the district authorities and field agencies on the above accordingly to avoid ambiguity at the ground level.

Local administrations at district and village levels continue taking various measures to check the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country

Local administrations at district and village levels continue taking various measures to check the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country. Measures include preliminary testing of local people; creating check posts for medical screening of persons entering and leaving the area; regular sanitization of public places and creating quarantine centres.



Shri Dharmendra Pradhan interacts with over 1000 LPG distributors through VC; Asks them to maximise free Ujjwala refills for benefit of poor

Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Steel Shri Dharmendra Pradhan interacted with over 1000 LPG distributors from across the country through video conferencing. He appealed to them to proactively reach out and maximise the delivery of three free LPG cylinders to PMUY beneficiaries under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana announced for the poor to help them fight the battle against the Covid19 pandemic.

TDB approves support for indigenous company for ramping up production of COVID-19 diagnostic kits Real-time PCR based molecular diagnostic kit that screens and detects COVID 19 from samples of flu-like symptoms.

The Technology Development Board (TDB), a statutory body of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), has approved financial support to MyLab Discovery Solutions, Pune, for ramping up production of COVID-19 diagnostic kits they have developed. The company has submitted an application in response to its invitation for proposals for technologically innovative solutions towards fighting COVID-19.

TIFAC explores best methods to revive Indian economy post COVID-19; White paper to strategize revival of post-COVID 19 Indian economy

The Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC), an autonomous technology think tank under the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India, by virtue of its mandate of thinking for future, is preparing a white paper to strategize revival of post-COVID 19 Indian economy. The document would mainly focus on strengthening Make in India initiatives, commercialization of Indigenous technology, developing a technology-driven transparent Public Distribution System (PDS), efficient rural health care delivery, reduction of import, adoption of emerging technology domains like AI, Machine Learning, Data Analytics and many more. It will be soon submitted to the decision-making authorities of the Government

Updates on COVID-19

As part of a pre-emptive, proactive and graded response policy, Government of India is taking several steps along with the States/UTs for prevention, containment and management of COVID-19. These are being regularly reviewed and monitored at the highest level. Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare has written to the Health Departments of all States/UTs to ensure adequate availability of blood in blood banks. The Empowered Committed-4, which is entrusted with Augment Human Resources and capacity Building, has developed the COVID WARRIORS dashboard. The platform provides anytime



anywhere onsite delivery of training material material/modules accessible through any device

Tackling COVID-19 (Coronavirus) with Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is Africa's most water-rich country, yet many of its people have no safe access to this precious resource. Coupled with a lack of access to sanitation and hygiene, this is putting millions of people at greater risk of contracting the coronavirus (COVID-19). The World Bank's rapid response to the threat the pandemic poses in the DRC has a focus on water, sanitation, and hygiene.

South Africa to increase welfare provision over coronavirus -Ramaphosa

South Africa will increase welfare provision to help poor households suffering because of a nationwide lockdown aimed at containing the coronavirus outbreak stated President Cyril Ramaphosa. In a weekly newsletter to the nation, Ramaphosa said the lockdown had revealed “a very sad fault line in our society that reveals how grinding poverty, inequality and unemployment is tearing the fabric of our communities apart”.

Kuwaiti banks to provide SMEs with financing at 2.5% interest

Kuwait's central bank said on Tuesday that banks must provide qualifying small and medium enterprises (SMEs) affected by the coronavirus outbreak with financing at a maximum 2.5 percent interest rate. Kuwait's National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprise Development will provide 80 percent of the SMEs' funding needs at no interest for up to three years, while banks will finance 20 percent and the state will support companies in paying the up to 2.5 percent interest for three years.

More Policies announced to boost China Economy

China announced new debt financing plans and additional rate cuts to alter the quarterly economic contraction in order to limit the effect of novel coronavirus pandemic and ensure that the economy is better paced to recover. The Ministry of Finance announced that it would raise the front-loaded quota of local Government special bonds by another 1 trillion yuan (\$141.3 billion) . Issuance of the increased quota should be finalized by the end of May.



CDC Director warns second wave of coronavirus is likely to be even more devastating

Even as states move ahead with plans to reopen their economies, the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warned that a second wave of the novel coronavirus will be far more dire because it is likely to coincide with the start of flu season. "There's a possibility that the assault of the virus on our nation next winter will actually be even more difficult than the one we just went through," CDC Director Robert Redfield said in an interview to The Washington Post.

Crude Oil price plunges below zero as coronavirus hits demand. Industrial and economic activity is grinding to a halt as governments around the globe extend shutdowns due to the swift spread of the coronavirus.

Oil plunged below zero dollars a barrel as the coronavirus pandemic ravages global economies, threatening to erase an entire decade of demand growth, slashing thousands of jobs and wiping out hundreds of billions of dollars from company valuations. Industrial and economic activity is grinding to a halt as governments around the globe extend shutdowns due to the swift spread of the coronavirus. Oil has faced its own knock-on effects with a market massively oversupplied and nowhere to put physical barrels of crude. An unprecedented output deal by OPEC and allied members a week ago to curb supply is proving too little too late in the face a one third collapse in global demand.

Donald Trump's immigration ban: The proposed executive order is likely to set out immigration restrictions which are unprecedented in US history.

Donald Trump announced that he plans to suspend immigration into the US to protect American jobs and prevent the spread of the "invisible enemy" the coronavirus pandemic. The Executive order that he would sign would temporarily suspend immigration into the United States," the US president said in a tweet. He later clarified at a White House briefing on Tuesday night that the order will apply to foreigners seeking a "green card", which refers to permanent residency status, for a 60-day period.



Central Advisories and Notifications

MNRE extends effective date for implementation of Approved Lists of Models and Manufacturers of Solar PV Modules and Solar PV Cells by six months to 30.09-2020

Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) has recently issued office memorandum extending the effective dates for implementation of Approved Lists of Models & Manufacturers (ALMM) for Solar PV modules and Solar PV cells to 30th September 2020, which was earlier 31.03.2020, due to COVID-19 pandemic.

MNRE Grants Extension for RE Projects considering disruption on account of lockdown due to COVID-19 for a period of 30 Days beyond lockdown; Lockdown due to COVID-19 to be treated as Force Majeure

Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has said that the Renewable Energy implementing agencies may grant extension of time for RE projects, on account of lockdown due to COVID-19, equivalent to the period of lockdown and additional 30 (thirty) days for normalisation after end of such lockdown. In an order issued on 17-4-2020, the Ministry noted that, thus, the extension will be for the period of lockdown plus 30 (thirty) days. This will be a blanket extension and there will be no requirement of case to case examination. There will be no need to ask for any evidence for extension due to lockdown.

Government exempts additional Agricultural and Forestry items, Shops of Educational Books for Students and Shops of Electric Fans from Lockdown Restrictions to fight COVID19; MHA issues SOPs on Sign-on/Sign-off for Indian Seafarers at Indian Ports and their movement

Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has issued an order to exempt certain activities under the consolidated revised guidelines regarding the Nationwide lockdown to fight COVID-19. Within the above mentioned consolidated revised guidelines, Government has exempted additional agricultural and forestry items, shops of educational books for students and shops of electric fans from lockdown restrictions to fight COVID19. Further, MHA has also issued SOPs on sign-on/sign-off for Indian seafarers at Indian ports and their movement for the same. *Relaxations under the above-mentioned items would not be applicable to Hotspots/containment zones. These activities would not be permitted in these zones.*



Ministry of Health & Family Welfare: Guidelines to be followed on detection of suspected or confirmed COVID19 case

The Ministry has issued guidelines to be followed on detection of suspected or confirmed COVID19 case. The guidelines are intended for both (i) COVID-19 healthcare facilities (public and private) which are already receiving or preparing to receive suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients as well as (ii) Non-COVID healthcare facilities.

State Advisories and Notifications

Government of Telangana: Sanction of Rs. 416,66,67,000/- to TSTRANSCO towards tariff subsidy for the month of April, 2020 in favour of Telangana Power Distribution Companies pool account

The State Government has accorded administrative sanction for an amount of Rs.416,66,67,000/- (Rupees Four Hundred Sixteen Crores Sixty-Six Lakhs and Sixty Seven Thousand Only) to TS-TRANSCO towards meeting the expenditure for tariff subsidy for the month of April, 2020.

Government of Punjab: Notification to Factories to operate

The State Government has issued notification directing the factories which have been allowed to operate under the guidelines issued by the State Government and Government of India, total number of hours of work allowed in any day shall be a maximum of 12 hours, instead of a maximum of 9 hours, provided under section 54 of the Factories Act, 1948.

Government of Andhra Pradesh: One-time Special financial assistance to Religious Service Renderers of religious institutions in the state of Andhra Pradesh during lockdown period

Considering the hardship and distress being faced by religious service renderers (Archaks, Imams, Moazzam & Pastors) of various religious institutions, Government of Andhra Pradesh as a measure of relief, decided to extend onetime special financial assistance to religious service renderers. Accordingly, it is decided to extend an amount of Rs.5000/- (Rupees Five Thousand only) as one-time special financial assistance to religious service renderers of religious institutions.(Temples, Masjid & Churches).



Government of Andhra Pradesh: Supply of protective gear equipment to the Police Personnel who are attending the duties of containment of COVID-19 in the State - Sanction and Release an amount of Rs 2.89 Crore (Rupees Two Crore Eighty Nine lakh only) funds under State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF)

The State Government has accorded administrative sanction for an amount of Rs.2,89,00,000/- (Rupees Two Crore and Eighty Nine Lakhs only) to the Director General of Police, Home Department under State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) towards procurement of Personal Protective Equipment, Masks, and Sanitizers for the use of Police Personnel who are attending the duties of COVID-19 in the State.

Government of Tamil Nadu: Guidelines and constitution of a state level and District level technical committee for conducting audit of death due to Severe Acute Respiratory Illness (SARI) including COVID-19 and suspected deaths due to COVID-19

The Director of Public Health and Preventive Medicine has further stated that it is pertinent to audit all the deaths attributed to COVID-19 and ascertain the Medical and Non-Medical Cause of death. It will help to understand the circumstances that lead to death and lapses if any, in prevention and case management. The valuable finding gained in the audit will help to develop strategies for improving the prevention and control measures and also for ensuring appropriate protocol-based management of COVID-19 cases at all levels.

Government of Telangana: Economic Slowdown – Certain Austerity Measures – Further Orders

In view of the further extension of the Lockdown till 7.5.2020 and the continuing drop in tax and non-tax revenues of the State Government, coupled with the need to maintain the expenditure towards the COVID-19 control and relief measures, Government direct that the deferred payment of salaries, wages, remuneration and pensions, shall be continued for the month of April, 2020 (payable in May, 2020), subject to the modification that the deferment shall be @25% in respect of all State Government pensioners other than those belonging to last grade service

Directorate of Industries: Permission grant extended for production activities

Due to extension of lockdown period, Directorate of Industries, Mumbai has extended validity of permissions granted to continue production activities in the respective districts till further orders.

West Bengal - Notification regarding introduction of a new scheme Sneher Paras for migrant workers

The State Government, in order to provide some financial assistance to the migrant workers, who are resident of West Bengal, and who are stranded in different parts of the country, has decided to introduce a new scheme called “Sneher Paras”.

International Advisories and Notifications

Ministry of Trade & Industry, Singapore: Tightened List of Essential Services and Measures for Workplaces Which Remain Open

The Multi-Ministry Taskforce announced that fewer businesses will be permitted to operate during the Circuit Breaker. This will further reduce the number of workers who have to physically go to work to minimise the movement and interaction of people, and curb the spread of COVID-19. Supermarkets and wet markets will continue to operate as per normal during the Circuit Breaker and Extended Circuit Breaker period.

Monetary Authority of Singapore: New Facility at interest rate of 0.1% to help banks and finance companies lower cost of loans to SMEs

The Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) has launched the *MAS SGD Facility for ESG Loans* (the Facility) in partnership with Enterprise Singapore (ESG), to lend Singapore Dollars (SGD) at an interest rate of 0.1% per annum to eligible financial institutions, to support their lending to SMEs under the ESG Loan Schemes. The ESG Loan Schemes comprise the Enhanced Enterprise Financing Scheme - SME Working Capital Loan (EFS-WCL) and the Temporary Bridging Loan Programme (TBLP).

Covid-19 circuit breaker to be extended by one month to June 1: PM Lee

The circuit breaker to choke off the spread of the coronavirus will be extended by another month to June 1, and existing measures will be tightened until May 4, said Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong in his fourth national address on the situation. This means that more workplaces will be closed to further reduce the number of workers keeping essential services going. Some hot spots, such as popular wet markets, remain a problem, as large groups of people continue to congregate there, Mr Lee said. While he noted that the circuit breaker measures have been working, he stressed that Singapore cannot be complacent. He said the number of unlinked cases has not come down, which suggests a "hidden reservoir" of cases in the community.

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