



Confederation of Indian Industry
125 Years: 1895-2020

**UPDATE ON COVID-19
NEWS, ADVISORIES AND NOTIFICATIONS
(1 April 2020)**

News Updates

Minister of Railways and Commerce & Industry Shri Piyush Goyal reviews the preparations of Indian Railways in supplementing national efforts for fighting COVID-19

Minister of Railways and Commerce & Industry Shri Piyush Goyal has directed the officials of Indian Railways to reach out to needy people with food and other assistance to the best of their human abilities and resources. Railway Organizations like IRCTC and RPF are already engaged in distribution of free meals to the needy persons.

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh reviews MoD's efforts to fight COVID-19 Directs all organisations to redouble efforts in assisting civilian authorities

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh today reviewed through video conference the assistance being extended by various organisations of Ministry of Defence to fight COVID-19. He appreciated the efforts being made by various Services, organisations and DPSUs in terms of evacuation, provision of health care in quarantine facilities and research & production of medical equipment such as sanitizers, facemasks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). He directed all the organisations to redouble their efforts and work in close coordination with other ministries/organisations of Central Government in this crucial time.

Covid-19 battle: World Bank offers \$1bn for proposed India project

The World Bank has offered \$1 billion to the Indian government for a proposed India Covid-19 emergency response and health systems preparedness project. This four-year project aims to develop the preparedness of India's health care systems in the time of the pandemic.

Cabinet Secretary meeting with Chief Secretaries / DGPs of all States via Video Conferencing

The States were sensitized about the intensive contact tracing of Tablighi Jamat participants as this has increased the risk of containment efforts of COVID-19. The States were asked to complete the contact tracing process on a war footing. The States were asked to implement the PM Garib Kalyan Yojana within the next week. This will involve large cash transfer to beneficiaries. It should be organized in a staggered manner to ensure social distance.

RBI Moratorium on EMI

Last week, the Reserve Bank of India announced a three-month moratorium on all term loans outstanding as on March 1, 2020, as well as on working capital facilities.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare reviews actions taken and further preparedness on Novel Corona Virus (COVID 19) with Indian Medical Association

Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare chaired a high-level review meeting through Video Conferencing with senior members of Indian Medical Association (IMA) & State branches of Indian Medical Associations to review the preparedness and concerns of medical staff across the country related to COVID-19. The Health Minister stated that the prevention, containment and management of COVID-19 in the country are being monitored at the highest level and various actions have been initiated in collaboration with the States.

PFRDA pledges to contribute to PM-CARES Fund to help fight COVID-19 outbreak

The pension sector regulator Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has pledged to contribute a part of the employee's salary to the Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations (PM CARES) Fund and provide relief measures to the citizens of the country following the global outbreak of novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Coating developed by Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR) may prevent transmission of infection

Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), an autonomous institution under the Department of Science and Technology, has developed a one-step curable anti-microbial coating which, when coated on different surfaces such as textile, plastic and so on could kill a range of virus types including COVID 19.

Indian Railways continues to provide food to needy people during lock down due to COVID-19; Distributes about 1.4 Lakh cooked meals from 28th March

Indian Railways continues to provide bulk cooked food with paper plates for lunch and food packets for dinner to needy people through base kitchens of IRCTC with the help of RPF, GRP, commercial departments

Union HRD Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal chairs a meeting through with all 23 IITs Directors to review the preparedness of Institutions in wake of COVID-19

The Minister expressed his desire and directed all the Institutes to take care of the students, faculty and their family members and the contractual staff in the campus and ensure that they are not facing any problem. Shri Pokhriyal also directed the Institutes to ensure that maximum number of students are covered through online courses. Institutes have been asked to place the courses on SWAYAM / SWAYAM PRABHA and work on credit transfer mechanism.

74 flights operated till date under Lifeline Udan; more than 22 tonnes cargo transported in single day

Under Lifeline Udan initiative of Ministry of Civil Aviation, 74 flights have been operated till date for transporting medical cargo across the country. A total of 37.63 tonnes of cargo has been transported till date out of which more than 22 tonnes has been transported on 31st March 2020.

CIPET carries out significant Community-relief Work

In the wake of COVID-19 pandemic, Central Institute of Plastic Engineering & Technology, a Govt. of India Institute under the Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers is undertaking noble works for the wellbeing of community through its facilities in different states.

PSUs under Department of Fertilizers donate more than 27 crore rupees to PM CARES fund

PSUs under the Department of Fertilizers, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers have donated more than Rs 27 crore to Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and relief in Emergency Situations (PM CARES) fund to fight COVID-19 pandemic.

US Food and Drug Administration: Coronavirus Treatment Acceleration Program (CTAP)

FDA has created a special emergency program for possible therapies, the Coronavirus Treatment Acceleration Program (CTAP). It uses every available method to move new treatments to patients as quickly as possible, while at the same time finding out whether they are helpful or harmful.

China vows to keep exporting protective materials

China pledged continued support to facilitate foreign purchases of protective materials and equipment for combating COVID-19, vowing to maintain the stability of global industrial chains with other countries.

Most electronics firms in China are back at work to revive economy

About 95 percent of China's information technology firms are back at work, especially large-scale firms, an official said on Monday. China will speed up 5G, data center and industrial Internet construction to boost innovation while help the economy rebound

Indexes indicate business picking up

China's manufacturing purchasing managers index stood at 52 in March, up from 35.7 in February, showing a significant, positive change in production and business operations from the previous month

China's small factories stabilised in March after lockdown, private PMI shows

Activity at China's smaller, privately-owned factories strengthened in March, after a weeks-long lockdown due to the coronavirus pandemic, data released on Wednesday showed.

China should drop 2020 GDP target as pandemic stokes uncertainty, says central bank adviser

A prominent adviser to China's central bank has suggested the government drop a specific growth target for 2020 as the coronavirus outbreak has caused unprecedented damage to the economy, shedding light on the deep divide over policy in Beijing.

Coronavirus pandemic expected to slash China's 2020 growth to 2.3 per cent, World Bank warns

The coronavirus pandemic's economic fallout could cause China's growth to come to a standstill while driving 11 million more people in East Asia into poverty, the World Bank warned on Monday.

Coronavirus may cause global food shortages as panic buying and export curbs hit supply

The coronavirus pandemic could seriously disrupt global food supply chains and send prices soaring, especially for those economies with vulnerable supply structures, if major producing countries increase export restrictions, international agencies and food experts have warned.

Ventilator firms are racing to boost production as the pandemic accelerates

Major manufacturers are striking unusual partnerships and sharing designs to rapidly boost production of ventilators for critically ill COVID-19 patients, though it still isn't clear the effort will meet the needs of hospital in the coming weeks.

COVID-19 Testing & Analysis to Flatten the Curve – Kiran Mazumdar Shaw

India needs to promptly start epidemiological data collection and analysis to fine-tune its response to the COVID-19 outbreak, flatten the curve and avoid interventions that may turn out to be unnecessarily costly for the nation. Epidemiological data is very important as it can answer critical questions about how the virus is being transmitted, how many people have been infected with the virus, what is its severity in the Indian populace, and which control measures are working.

COVID-19: India looks at importing PPEs to meet demand

India has started looking at importing Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) kits from China, Singapore and Korea in order to meet its requirements. While government's nodal agency on procurement HLL Lifecare rolled out a tender last week, the government has decided not to wait for the bids to open instead source it from other countries.

UAE issues new remote working directives for private sector within the country

The UAE's Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization has issued a new set of directives for the private sector with regards to its work from home policy which will be enforced with immediate effect. Exempt from this new directive are companies operating in infrastructure, supply, telecommunications, energy, health, education, financial sector, food industry, hospitality, medical industry and cleaning. Under the latest policy, the number of office-based workers must be limited to not more than 30 per cent of the company's workforce.

Saudi Arabia King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center, WHO sign agreement to combat Coronavirus

An Agreement was signed between King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSrelief) with the World Health Organization to combat the coronavirus pandemic. Earlier this month, Saudi Arabia announced a \$10 million grant to the WHO at the directive of Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman in response to the organization's urgent appeal calling on all countries to extend help and support in fighting the pandemic.

Saudi Arabia to finance treatment of all COVID-19 cases in the kingdom

The Saudi Arabian government announced that it will pay for the expenses of medical treatments for all citizens and residents diagnosed with COVID-19, even those in violation of residency and visa laws. King Salman aims to encourage all those with symptoms to get tested and treated, in order to curb the spread of the virus, releasing them of potential financial burdens and prioritizing health.

New law proposed to protect individuals, firms whose contracts have been affected by Covid-19 in Singapore

A new Bill aimed at protecting individuals and companies unable to fulfil their contractual obligations because of the Covid-19 pandemic will be introduced in Parliament next week, the Ministry of Law said on Wednesday. The Covid-19 (Temporary Measures) Bill will, for instance, seek to prevent a hotel or catering firm from forfeiting a deposit when a wedding or business function has been postponed because of the coronavirus outbreak.

Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Department of Health releases List of Private Laboratories to test COVID-19

ICMR has released the List of 51 Private Laboratories to test COVID-19 across 12 States in India.

Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Department of Health releases List of Government Laboratories to test COVID-19

ICMR has released the List of 126 approved and supported (provided diagnostic kits or reagents) across 32 States and Union Territories in India. There are additional 6 laboratories in the pipeline.

CORONAVIRUS- RESEARCH TRACKER : Update as on 01 April 2020

- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has started a new program “Coronavirus Treatment Acceleration Program (CTAP)” to expedite the development of potentially safe and effective life-saving treatments.
- The government is considering temporarily relaxing clinical trial norms as a few pharmaceutical companies are looking to develop a vaccine for the novel coronavirus (Covid-19), which has killed about 40,000 and infected more than 800,000 people around the world.
- The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) said in a notification on Monday that various challenges might arise during the conduct of clinical trials in the wake of the outbreak of Covid-19, which could “lead to difficulties in complete adherence to the approved protocol and regulatory provisions”.
- US and India are discussing prospects of a closer all-round Indo-US partnership in combating Covid, including strengthening global pharmaceutical and healthcare manufacturing and supply chains. India and US would collaborate in developing a vaccine to end the Covid epidemic
- The AYUSH Ministry has decided to invite scientific proposals on therapies and procedures that could restrain the spread of the coronavirus pandemic using the Indian system of medicines.
- Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati are developing two robots which can be deployed in isolation wards for COVID-19 infected cases for delivery of food and medicine to patients and collection of contagious waste.

- India is likely to start manufacturing new serological diagnostic testing kits within the next two months as many advances have been made after the virus was isolated by research agencies as per ICMR.
- IIT Bombay has stepped up its innovation game to help combat the novel coronavirus. One of the latest inventions is a portable UV sanitizer that can sterilize wallets, purses and other small items that are used daily.
- The Marico Innovation Foundation launches the first of its kind grand challenge #Innovate2BeatCOVID. With this dynamic format, Marico Innovation Foundation and A.T.E Chandra Foundation have come together to offer a total grant value of Rs. 2.5 crores.
- Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) has launched 'Break Corona' initiative, to crowdsource ideas, spur innovations and product solutions that would be crucial in the fight against Covid-19. Several startups in the state are already engaged in developing solutions and the platform breakcorona.in would bring together all initiatives to a single point for better coordination.
- Delhi-based PerSapien Innovation has come up with a machine called Airlens Minus Corona (-Corona) to counter the spread of the disease. "Robo Sapien" (a human-like machine) operates on the mechanism of charged/ionised water droplets, which is ionised using the corona discharge.

Central Advisories and Notifications

Ministry of New & Renewable Energy issues office memorandum regarding payment to Renewable Energy Generating Stations during the moratorium provided to Distribution Companies (DISCOMs) by Ministry of Power

The Ministry in its office memorandum has clarified the representations made from Renewable Energy industry related to certain State DISCOMs curtailing RE power partially and others completely terming prevailing situation as Force Majeure condition. In addition, the announcement made in reference to Ministry of Power's instructions providing for a moratorium period to DISCOMs for making payments to electricity generating companies, in view of COVID-19, it has been announced that DISCOMs will be making regular payments to RE companies as per established procedure.

Ministry of New & Renewable Energy: Instructions regarding Invoicing of Renewable Energy supplies.

The Ministry has received submissions from Renewable Energy industry that the present lockdown situation may disrupt the normal process of invoicing of renewable energy supplied by various RE generating stations as physical copies of the invoices after Joint Meter Reading may not be possible. The Ministry has issued instructions regarding such invoicing.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare issues office memorandum on handling public grievances pertaining to COVID-19.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare nominates a Nodal officer to handle public grievances pertaining to COVID-19.

Ministry of Civil Aviation: Demurrage payable to Cargo Terminal Operator by a Consignee or Carrier for utilising storage facility at Terminals for storage of import cargo, goods, unaccompanied baggage, stores, etc. for extended period.

As a step to prioritize and facilitate necessary imports of essential commodities and relief materials and in order to maintain proper supply lines and strengthen the airport operations for their efficient handling, Ministry of Civil Aviation is encouraging the air cargo community to clear the backlog of imported cargo, goods, etc. and remove them from the congested major airports in India immediately. This would require airport operators/ cargo terminal operators to extend their support to the air cargo industry.

Directorate General of Health Services: Revised Guidelines on Clinical Management of COVID-19

Directorate General of Health Services issues revised Guidelines on Clinical Management of COVID-19 intended for clinicians taking care of hospitalised adult and paediatric patients of COVID – 19.

Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions launches National Monitoring Dashboard on COVID-19

Dr. Jitendra Singh, Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions launched Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG)'s National Monitoring Dashboard on COVID 19 Grievances. The National Monitoring Dashboard was developed and implemented at <https://darpg.gov.in> where COVID 19 related grievances received with all Ministries/ Departments and States/ Union Territories are monitored on priority basis by a technical team of DARPG.

Ministry of AYUSH: Recommendations of self-care guidelines for preventive health measures.

Ministry of AYUSH recommends selfcare guidelines for preventive health measures and boosting immunity with special reference to respiratory health.

AYUSH Ministry urges diligence in Covid19 claims and initiates work for scientific and evidence based solutions to fight the Corona virus.

To help stop big claims without evidence support about treatment of COVID 19, the Ministry of AYUSH has initiated steps to curb such claims through creation of awareness. Further, the Ministry also initiated work for scientific evidence based solutions from the AYUSH systems to restrain the spread of the pandemic by setting up a channel to enlist various suggestions and proposals from AYUSH practitioners and AYUSH institutions, and having them examined for viability through a Group of Scientists.

Department of Pharmaceuticals is regularly monitoring distribution and addressing issues of availability, supply & local issues of medicines with the help of other Departments and States/UTs

Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, Government of India is continuously monitoring distribution and addressing issues of availability, supply & related issues of medicines with the help of other Departments and States/UTs. A Central control room has been set up in the Department, which deals with issues related to queries/complaints and messages dealing with COVID19 outbreak as well as coordination of transport and other logistic services related to drugs and medical devices.

Ministry of Rural Development writes to Chief Secretaries of all States and UTs to engage rural unemployed youths trained under Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) in light of spread of COVID-19.

A large number of youth have been trained under “Health Care” sector by Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs) under DDU-GKY. The Ministry suggests all States and UTs to engage them as they will help in augmenting the front line of health workers to treat the current challenge in light of spread of COVID-19.

Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) initiative to spread awareness on COVID-19

To dispel the myths of COVID-19 and provide a basic scientific understanding of the public health measure behind the pandemic, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) has come out with a package of engaging and easy to understand communication materials. Researchers have created a set of multi-lingual resources (YouTube videos) in explaining why social distancing is helpful for tackling viral outbreaks like COVID-19. The resources are based on the original simulations published by Harry Stevens in the Washington Post and are available in nine Indian languages.

State Advisories and Notifications

Government of Andhra Pradesh: Sanction and release of an amount of Rs.1300 Crore to the Commissioner of Rural Development towards sanction of Scale of Assistance to the all BPL Families in the State of Andhra Pradesh

The State Government accord administrative sanction and release of an amount of Rs.1300 Crore to the Commissioner of Rural Development, Andhra Pradesh towards Assistance to the all BPL Families in the State of Andhra Pradesh, whose lives are affected due to LOCKDOWN activity in the State of Andhra Pradesh.

Government of Andhra Pradesh: Release of an amount of Rs.120.90 Crore towards containment and surveillance of COVID-19

The Finance Department issued an amount of Rs.120.90 Crore as additional funds in relaxation of treasury control and quarterly regulations orders pending adjustment of funds from the savings available in demand during the current financial year 2019-2020 towards expenditure for maintenance of quarantine camps by HM&FW department for the treatment of COVID-19.

Government of Andhra Pradesh: Abstract on Payment of Salaries / Wages / Remuneration / Honorarium / Pensions – Deferment of payment

Government, after careful consideration of the situation arising due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the economic consequences of the lock down, the cessation of the revenue inflows and extra burden imposed on the State’s resources to contain the epidemic & to provide relief to the people affected/likely to be affected, has ordered for the deferment of Salaries / Wages /Remuneration /Honorarium / Pensions on gross basis of its employees.

Andhra Pradesh Essential Commodity Services (APECS)- Home Delivery Initiative of CDMA- Government of Andhra Pradesh

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has come out with an APECS mobile application as a bridge to connect people with local Shopkeepers, Grocery stores, Fruits & vegetables vendors, etc to order their essential items online and home delivered.

Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB) issues office orders on extension of validity period of Consent to operate till June end.

In order to keep essential activities such as Hospitals, Steel Plants, Milk Processing Units, Municipal Waste Management Facilities operate uninterrupted during the lockdown period, the GSPCB extends the validity of Consent to operate up to 30 June 2020 of all such units, who

have valid consent to operate up to 31 March 2020 and have applied to the Board for Renewal of Consent to operate.

Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation issues office order on payments of instalments by allottees.

Considering the directions recently given by the Central Government Ministry of Finance and the Reserve Bank of India on the nationwide lockdown, the various allottees of the Corporation may not pay the quarterly instalment payment for the quarter ending March 2020 up to 31 March 2020. If any, interim orders are made to extend the instalment period to June 2020. Accordingly, the interest paid for the deferred payment of interest or penal interest for the late payment of the quarter of March 2020, shall not be applied at present subject to the approval of the Board of the Corporation.

Transport Commissioner, Gujarat State to provide permit to all freight vehicle regardless of passes.

As per the lockdown measures taken by the Government, it was announced earlier that all freight vehicle except those for essential goods were prohibited from movement. However, now the Transport Commissioner of Gujarat has announced that all freight vehicles will be permitted without any differentiation between goods carrier vehicles of essential and non-essential goods. Accordingly, there will be no need to issue pass to goods carrier vehicles and they may make to and fro movement without the pass.

Government of Punjab- Notification of facilities/ hospitals as Isolation Hospital

The State Government has notified the facilities/ hospitals as Isolation Hospitals in the State for COVID-19 patients. These facilities will become operational as and when the occupancy in the earlier notified facilities exceed 50% of the total availability of beds.

Government of Punjab notification on residents returning to State.

The State Government notifies that all bonafide residents of the State of Punjab and those who are returning from other States would be screened and if found asymptomatic will be placed in home quarantine for 14 days and tests will be conducted in Government facilities and health department's protocol for managing such person will be followed.

International Advisories and Notifications

US donates \$6M to Democratic Republic of Congo to fight COVID-19

Officials in Democratic Republic of Congo has said that U.S. government has provided \$6 million in humanitarian funding to the Democratic Republic of Congo to fight COVID-19 pandemic.

Malawi: State of disaster in place due to COVID-19

Malawi Government has declared state of disaster due to COVID-19 pandemic. Authorities have banned public gatherings of more than 100 people, which applies to weddings, funerals, religious congregations, rallies, and government meetings. Security forces have been deployed to enforce the restrictions.

Zimbabwe welcomes UN call for sanctions removal

Government has welcomed recent calls by top United Nations officials for the removal of sanctions on Zimbabwe and other countries in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic that is ravaging the world. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and High Commissioner for Human

Rights Michelle Bachelet last week called on the international community, principally the US, to roll back sanctions imposed on many countries, Zimbabwe being one of them.

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