



Confederation of Indian Industry
125 Years: 1895-2020

**UPDATE ON COVID-19
NEWS, ADVISORIES AND NOTIFICATIONS
(30 March 2020)**

News Updates

PM interacts with Heads of India's Embassies and High Commissions via VC

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi held a videoconference with the Heads of all of India's Embassies and High Commissions worldwide at 1700 hrs today. This conference—the first such event for Indian Missions worldwide—was convened to discuss responses to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Ministry of Corporate Affairs introduces the “Companies Fresh Start Scheme, 2020” and revised the “LLP Settlement Scheme, 2020” to provide relief to law abiding companies and Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs) in the wake of COVID 19

The Fresh Start scheme and modified LLP Settlement Scheme incentivise compliance and reduce compliance burden during the unprecedented public health situation caused by COVID-19. The USP of both the schemes is a one-time waiver of additional filing fees for delayed filings by the companies or LLPs with the Registrar of Companies during the currency of the Schemes, i.e. during the period starting from 1st April, 2020 and ending on 30th September, 2020.

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) amends CIRP Regulations to provide relief in corporate insolvency resolution process due to COVID-19 outbreak

To address this difficulty faced by the lockdown due to COVID-19, IBBI amended the CIRP Regulations to provide that the period of lockdown imposed by the Central Government in the wake of COVID-19 outbreak shall not be counted for the purposes of the time-line for any activity that could not be completed due to the lockdown, in relation to a corporate insolvency resolution process. This would, however, be subject to the overall time-limit provided in the Code.

Oil Marketing Companies announce Ex-Gratia of Rs 5 Lakh for delivery boys and others working in LPG supply chain for covid-19

Oil marketing companies- IOCL, BPCL and HPCL today announced an ex-gratia amount of Rs 5 lakh each, as a one-time special measure, in the unfortunate case of demise of personnel like Show-room Staff, Godown-keepers, Mechanics and Delivery boys, attending duty in the LPG distributorship chain, due to the infection and impact of Covid-19.

Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam Limited (SJVNL) to contribute Rs. 5 Crores to PM CARES Fund

SJVN Limited, a Mini Ratna under administrative control of Ministry of Power, Govt. of India, has decided to donate Rs. 5 crores to Prime Minister's Relief Fund for relief work in combating the impact of COVID-19 pandemic.

Algeria: No Tax returns are now required until 20 April 2020.

The Directorate of General Taxes has announced delays in the monthly Value Added Tax return, 'Declaration G50', for small businesses. This is generally due on the 20th of the month. No returns are now required until 20 April 2020. Other tax returns have also been extended.

Central Bank of Egypt expands industry stimulus package to agriculture companies

The Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) decided to include all agriculture and livestock companies in the EGP 100 billion package initiative for private industrial companies, according to a statement. Companies working in exporting terminals and packaging plants as well as fish, poultry and livestock firms will be included in this stimulus package. However, eligible companies should generate annual revenue ranging from EGP 50 million to EGP 1 billion.

Australia enforces the coronavirus two-person rule on gatherings from midnight

Gatherings in Australia has been restricted to two people in a further attempt to contain the coronavirus pandemic. Authorities would be cracking down on those breaking the two-person rule. Spot fines for individuals and corporations can be issued by police for breaching new public health directions.

CORONAVIRUS- RESEARCH TRACKER: Update as on 30 March 2020:

- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has issued a limited emergency-use authorization for two antimalarial drugs hydroxychloroquine sulfate and chloroquine phosphate to treat those infected with the novel coronavirus. These are oral prescription drugs used primarily to prevent and treat malaria, are both being investigated as potential therapeutics for COVID-19.
- The bacillus Calmette-Guerin, or BCG, shot has been used widely for about 100 years, with a growing appreciation for its off-target benefits. The vaccine is being given to health-care workers in Melbourne to see if it will protect them against the coronavirus.
- CSIR has invited proposals under two schemes for fighting coronavirus. Under the first scheme, proposals can be submitted by Industry/ start-ups for assistive devices for Effective containment of COVID-19. Companies should have been registered in India and with more than 50% Indian shareholding. If the Indian shareholding is less than 50%, the company should have manufacturing facilities in India. Under the second scheme, proposals are invited from CSIR laboratories to develop cost effective, rapid diagnostics to test COVID cases on mass scale. If need be, help from external institutions/ industries may be taken in outsourcing mode.
- IIT Guwahati students develop drones with an automated sprayer to spray disinfectants to sanitise large areas and prevent the spread of COVID-19. The students, who also have a start-up company, RACERFLY, have approached the Assam Government offering to join the fight the coronavirus pandemic with their sprayer system.
- A group of IISc scientists and students have been working to develop a high-quality indigenous ventilator which makes use of sensors and parts sourced from the local automotive and RO water filter industries. The prototype, which has been in development for 14 days, is expected to be completed by the end of April. Professor Banerjee explained that the team has set itself five milestones before the prototype can be deemed complete.

Korea issues advisory for 2-week quarantine for all International arrivals from 1 April, 2020

Health and Welfare Minister Park Neunghoo has advised that all passenger arriving in Korea from abroad from April 1 must undergo two weeks of quarantine regardless of Nationality.

Namibia halts Mining operations to curb spread of Covid-19

Namibia has halted mining and quarrying operations to curb the spread of the Covid-19 outbreak, according to Minister of Mines and Energy Tom Alweendo. The semi-arid southwest African nation is the world's top producer of marine diamonds and the fifth biggest of uranium. While minimal operations and critical maintenance work will be allowed, employers would need to ensure preventative measures such as social distancing are always observed.

South Africa Rand Slumps to Record Low After Moody's Cut to Junk

South Africa's rand plumbed a record low and bond yields soared after the country lost its last investment-grade credit rating, and investors anticipated it may slide deeper into junk as the spread of the coronavirus decimates the economy.

Central Advisories and Notifications

Cargo flights operations for medical supplies to various parts of countries: Ministry of Civil Aviation

The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) is coordinating with State Governments for supply of medical equipment and related essential items needed for protection against and testing of COVID-19. Air India and Alliance Air flights are being operated to carry out the necessary supply operations across the country.

Contribution to PM CARES Fund eligible as CSR Activity: Ministry of Corporate Affairs

The Ministry in its office memorandum clarifies any contribution made to the PM CARES Fund, set up the Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations Fund' (PM CARES Fund) with the primary objective of dealing with any kind of emergency or distress situation such as that posed by COVID 19 pandemic, shall qualify as CSR expenditure under the Companies Act 2013.

Additional measures by Ministry of Home Affairs to deal with large movement of migrants.

In order to deal with movement of large number of migrants, which is a violation to the lockdown measures on maintaining social distance, Home Secretary has written to all Secretaries of Ministries, Departments of Government and Chief Secretaries to take additional measures such as providing arrangements for shelters, food, etc, employers to make payments to workers without any deduction, etc.

Pending compliances, expiry of validity of LoAs, approvals or permissions in the current lockdown in view of COVID-19.

The Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce & Industry has issued orders for relaxation on compliances to be met by units / developers / co-developers of SEZs in view of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for transporting a suspect/ confirmed case of COVID-19: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare issues Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for transporting a suspect/ confirmed case of COVID-19.

One-time relaxation in utilization of District Mineral Foundation (DMF) funds for purchase, of testing, screening and other equipment: Ministry of Mines

The State Government may utilize the funds available under DMF for supplementing and augmenting facilities of medical testing, screening, and other requirements in connection with COVID-19 pandemic as well for treating patients affected with COVID-19.

Ministry of Railways sets up Railway Board Control Cell for information and suggestions between Administration and Public.

To ensure seamless flow of information and suggestions between Railway Administration and general public, Indian Railways has opened a Railway Board Control Cell. Helpline personnel would have updated information, *inter alia*, on issues like refund, State/District/Railway medical facilities, and updated Local/Regional/National Helpline Numbers for Covid-19 detection and aid.

Food Processing Ministry forms Task Force in the wake of Covid-19 to resolve problems of industry.

A dedicated Task Force had been established to resolve all problems being faced by the food processing and ancillary industries during the current Covid-19 lockdown. The Task Force team has received 222 issues out of which 98 have been resolved and rest are under process for resolution.

Indian Railways getting ready to provide medical support to National efforts in fighting COVID 19.

In order to prevent the spread of COVID 19, Indian Railways is making modification of passenger coaches as isolation coaches, equipping the existing Railway Hospitals to meet the COVID needs, earmarking of hospital beds to meet the contingencies, recruitment of additional doctors & paramedics etc.

Government gives benefits to farmers on crop loan repayments due to Covid-19 lockdown: Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare

Ministry extends benefit of 2% Interest Subvention (IS) to Banks and 3% Prompt Repayment Incentive (PRI) to all farmers upto 31st May 2020 for all crop loans upto Rs.3 lakh given by banks due between 1 March and 31 May 2020.

Action against landlords/ house-owners who are asking doctors, healthcare staff to vacate rented residences: Department of Health and Family Welfare.

Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of NCT of Delhi issued orders on strict penalty against landlords/ house-owners who force doctors/ paramedical staff/ healthcare personnel to vacate their rented residences.

State Advisories and Notifications

Government of Punjab advisory regarding operation of Bank branches during curfew in the State.

Government of Punjab in its advisory stated that all Bank branches, ATMs, Banking Correspondents, Cash replenishment agencies, etc shall be operational on 30-31 March 2020. Issuance of passes / other relaxations will be provided from 3 April 2020 onwards and they all should be regulated with skeletal staff.

Priority in processing Bills related to combat COVID-19: Government of West Bengal

Finance department issues memorandum to Treasuries and Pay & Accounts Offices to accept, process and pass the bills related to combating COVID-19 disease and bills related with maintenance of essential services on priority.

Government of Puducherry issues circular on payment of wages to employees/ contract workers, etc.

To avoid any undue hardships to employees/ workers under the prevailing extraordinary circumstances due to COVID-19, Labour department has issued circular that wherever any such kind of employees, contract workers, casual labourers and outsourced staff etc., of Factories / Industries, Shops & Establishments are required to stay at home in view of lockdown due to COVID-19, their absence for duty shall be treated as "ON DUTY" and they should be paid full salary/ wages during these period.

Government of Rajasthan issues orders for exemption of industry category as specified in the orders of Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India

The Government of Rajasthan has issued a notification listing out various industry and services which would come under the Essential Services.

International Advisories and Notifications

Change in timings for Visa and Consular Services: India Taipei Association

Due to outbreak of Corona virus (COVID-19), India Taipei Association announced that they will be open for the Visa and Consular Services only on Monday and Wednesday with effect from Monday, March 30, 2020, until further notice.

National Wages Council 2020/2021 Guidelines: Ministry of Manpower, Singapore

The National Wages Council convened in March 2020 to formulate wage guidelines for the period from 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2021. These 2020/2021 guidelines will supersede the 2019/2020 guidelines with effect from 1 April 2020. The National Wages Council has also called on employers, unions & workers, and the Government to stay united and work together, to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and position Singapore for eventual recovery.

Monetary Authority of Singapore: Monetary Policy Statement- April 2020

This monetary policy stance reflects the primary role of fiscal policy in mitigating the economic impact of COVID-19. The Resilience Budget announced on 26 March, and the earlier Unity Budget, will help to preserve jobs, skills and firms' know-how and capabilities. MAS' money market operations will at the same time provide sufficient liquidity to the financial system. Monetary policy will complement these efforts and ensure price stability over the medium term.

Greek Government extends COVID-19 relief benefits

Greece's New Democracy government is extending financial aid to workers and businesses hit hard by a lockdown aimed at preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus and said the self-employed would also be helped. Finance Minister Christos Staikouras said an 800-million euro (\$886.51 million) package of aid would be given to 1.7 million workers and that businesses won't have to pay debts to the state for four months, reported Kathimerini.

Bahrain response to Coronavirus: Embassy of Bahrain

Embassy of Bahrain, shared highlights on the Kingdom of Bahrain's response to Coronavirus. These highlights includes Royal Directives, measures taken in various sectors like Heath, Education, Public and Private Institution, Economic and precautionary measures.

Criteria for Current Account Transactions in View of the Growing Impact of COVID-19: The Bank of Japan

The Bank of Japan has set that financial institutions that are subject to the capital buffer and liquidity coverage ratio (LCR) requirements under applicable laws and regulations should satisfy these requirements under the rules and criteria for the Bank's operations. These include the criteria for eligibility to hold current accounts at the Bank and to have access to its lending facilities, the criteria for selecting counterparties for the Bank's market operations, and the conditions for eligible counterparties for the Complementary Lending Facility.

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