



Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan passes floor test

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Anti-CAA protesters removed from Shaheen Bagh, other places

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Bangladesh says it will release jailed former PM Khaleda Zia

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Albert Uderzo, a creator of French hero Asterix, dies at 92

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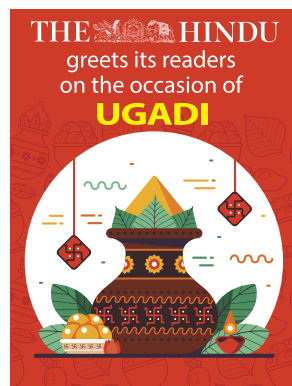


Kejriwal assures regular supply of essential items

NEW DELHI
 Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, in the wake of the 21-day nationwide lockdown announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday evening, sought to assure citizens that the supply of essential items would not be affected. Earlier in the day, he announced that the Delhi government will give ₹5,000 to each construction worker as their livelihood has been affected due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

CITY PAGE 3

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OPPORTUNITIES PAGE 5

PM announces 21-day lockdown as COVID-19 toll touches 10

Govt. allots ₹15,000 crore to beef up infrastructure for treatment of patients

NISTULA HEBBAR
 NEW DELHI

As the death toll from COVID-19 rose to 10, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday announced a 21-day lockdown for the entire country, stating that it was the only way for the country to break the chain of infection. The lockdown will be in effect till April 14.

In a nationwide television broadcast, Mr. Modi said the pandemic was a huge challenge to every country and even countries like the U.S. and Italy, considered to have good health infrastructure, were struggling to control the situation.

"In such a situation we have learnt from the experience of the countries that have managed to get some control over the surge in cases, and these show that a lockdown for a sustained period of time is the only way to break the chain of infection," he said.

India on Tuesday recorded 564 positive cases, with the number of positive patients in Kerala and Maharashtra crossing 100.

Stating that it was the priority of both the Centre and State governments to set up health infrastructure as fast as possible to deal with the pandemic, Mr. Modi said

Staying in

During the "containment" period of 21 days beginning March 25, the following services...

...will remain open

- Shops dealing with food, groceries, fruits and vegetables, dairy products, meat and fish and animal fodder, including ration shops
- Banks, insurance offices & ATMs
- Print and electronic media
- Telecom services (internet, cable, IT enabled services)
- Delivery of food, pharmaceuticals and medical equipment through e-commerce
- Petrol pumps, LPG, petroleum and gas retail and storage outlets
- Power and electricity services

Capital and debt markets notified by SEBI

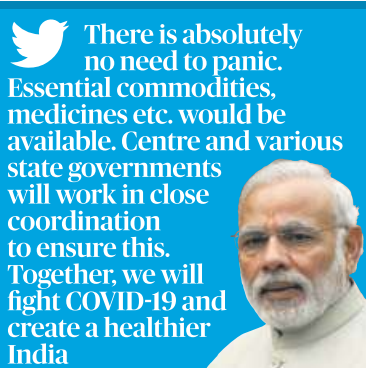
- Cold storage and warehousing
- Private security services

...will be closed

- GOI & State offices, commercial, private establishments, and transport services (exceptions above)
- Educational institutions, places of worship, functions and gatherings without exception
- Funerals - not more than 20 people will be permitted

Violators will be liable for legal action under IPC Sect. 88

Also open are offices of departments such as defence, police, treasury, public utilities, disaster management, power generation & transmission, post offices; State govt. institutions such as police, home guards, fire services, prisons, district administration & treasury, electricity, water sanitation, municipal bodies. All medical establishments will be open. Production units of essential commodities and hotels/lodges which accommodate tourists and stranded persons, emergency staff, air and sea crew will also remain open



Ensure tight surveillance, States told

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI

The Centre warned of an "increasing trend" in COVID-19 cases - 519 active ones by Tuesday evening - in the country and called upon State governments to enhance surveillance and contact testing of those who may have been infected.

Meanwhile, complaints of shortage of Personal Protection Equipment for doctors and health workers poured in from across the country, indicating critical gaps in efforts to contain the pandemic.

In a Twitter post that soon went viral, Kamna Kakkar, a government doctor in Haryana's Rohtak, addressing the Prime Minister's Office, said: "Please don't send me to war without weapons @PMOIndia. Please arrange #PersonalProtective Equipment for us doctors ASAP. We need #N95masks #HazmatSuits to defeat #Corona. Sincerely yours, an Indian Doctor". Following the tweet, the Congress attacked the government over the inadequate supply of equipment.

Enforcing stringent curbs, cases were booked against several people for violating prohibitory orders.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman along with MoS for Finance Anurag Thakur addressing the media on Tuesday. •PTI

Government extends tax deadlines to June 30

ATM withdrawal charges waived

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI

Deadlines for filing income tax and GST returns have been extended to June 30, as part of a slew of relaxations of financial year-end compliance announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday.

The changes had been prompted by the shutdown of large parts of the country in a bid to control the spread of the COVID-19 viral infection, so that taxpayers were not forced to endanger their health in a bid to meet compliance requirements, she said.

Bank account holders would not be charged extra for using a debit card to withdraw money from the ATMs of other banks for the next three months, and charges for not meeting minimum balance requirements would also be waived. Bank charges for digital transactions were al-

so being reduced.

Income tax returns for the financial year 2018-19 can now be filed until June 30, with the interest rate on delayed payments reduced to 9% from 12%. The last date for linking Aadhaar with PAN has also been extended from March 31 to June 30. Other taxpayer compliance deadlines, including for investment in savings instruments or for roll-over benefit of capital gains, under the Income Tax Act and other laws have also been extended.

The deadline for filing GST returns for March, April and May, as well as for opting for the composition scheme, has been extended to June 30 for smaller companies - with less than ₹5 crore aggregate annual turnover - without any interest, late fee or penalty being charged.

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Made in India testing kits

In a major development in the fight against novel coronavirus, Pune-based MyLab has become the first indigenous manufacturer to be approved for deploying its kits for COVID-19 testing. •PAGE 9

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Omar Abdullah released after 232 days in detention

PEERZADA ASHIQ
 SRINAGAR

Former Chief Minister and National Conference (NC) vice-president Omar Abdullah, who was released on Tuesday from a Srinagar sub-jail after 232 days, demanded the release of other detainees in Jammu and Kashmir and

called for a joint fight against COVID-19.

"We face the fight of our lives over the next few weeks and months as we come to terms and work to defeat COVID-19. I will do everything in my individual capacity to help the authorities overcome this challenge and I ap-

peal to all of you to do the same," he said.

Mr. Abdullah was detained on August 5 last ahead of the Centre's decision to revoke J&K's special status and later booked under the Public Safety Act (PSA) and kept in the Hari Niwas sub-jail. Earlier on Tuesday, J&K spokesman Ro-

hit Kansal announced that Mr. Abdullah's detention order had been revoked.

Sporting a long flowing white beard, Mr. Abdullah, who turned 50 in the jail on March 10, called for the release of other detained persons.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

Shri Narendra Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister

Shri B. S. Yediyurappa
Hon'ble Chief Minister

Warm Ugadi Greetings to the people of Karnataka!

I pray before the almighty that the beginning of Sharvari Samvatsara will bring peace and prosperity to the people of Karnataka.

Let the people of Karnataka leave the bitterness behind and carry only sweet memories with them into the New Year.

Karnataka is the land of Sharanas, Santhas, Dasas and hence, the power of evil will not succeed in this land. Thus, I believe that people of the State would overcome the evil COVID-19 and the virus would be wiped out from the state soon.

In the name of the festival, let the people not go for any outdoor celebrations together.

Once again I wish the people of the State a happy Chandramana Ugadi.

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Tokyo Olympics moved to 2021 over virus scare

REUTERS
 TOKYO

The 2020 Tokyo Olympics, originally scheduled to be held from July 24 to August 9, has been postponed to 2021, the first such delay in the Games' 124-year modern history, as the COVID-19 crisis wrecked the last international sporting showpiece meant for this year.

Though a huge blow to Japan, which invested \$12 billion in the run-up, the decision was a relief to thousands of athletes fretting over how to train.

Pressure had been building on the International Olympic Committee and its president Thomas Bach, with some athletes and sporting bodies critical of the time taken to make a seemingly inevitable decision.

MORE REPORTS ON PAGE 17

Medical staff told to vacate their homes

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
 NEW DELHI

Medical staff from across India working with COVID-19 patients appealed to the Union Health Ministry for help on Tuesday stating that they are being harassed, with several of them told to immediately vacate their rented accommodation by landlords because of the fear that they could spread the virus.

DETAILS ON PAGE 2