

IN BRIEF



Railways may produce medical items

**NEW DELHI**  
The Indian Railways is exploring the possibility of manufacturing select essential medical items such as hospital beds, medical trolleys and sanitizers at its various production units. In a communique to general managers at its production units, the Railway Board on Tuesday asked them to "assess the feasibility to manufacture these items in large quantities (as may be required) at short notice. Items identified thus may be communicated to Board along with its likely production rate."

HC asks ICMR to give no discharge instructions

**JAIPUR**  
The Rajasthan High Court on Tuesday directed the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) to consider the issue of discharge of coronavirus-infected persons from hospitals without proper testing and instruct all agencies not to send patients back home unless they were found virus-free. The court said cases had been noticed where the infected persons were hospitalised again after their discharge with a declaration that they were infection-free.

Passengers flock to airport before lockdown

**CHENNAI**  
Hundreds of passengers thronged the Chennai airport in T.N. to leave the city and flight fares went up manifold as the city prepared for a lockdown. Domestic flight operations will be suspended from midnight. As soon as the announcement came, by around 5.30 p.m. on Monday, many rushed to the airport and by midnight, nearly 10,500 people flew out to different destinations and about 8,500 people arrived here. This continued on the whole of Tuesday as well, airport sources said.



**No man's land:** A deserted Sassoon Dock during the lockdown in Mumbai on Tuesday; personnel from the Fire Department disinfecting the KEM Hospital premises in central Mumbai; and an aerial view of Anand Vihar-Kaushambi metro (Delhi-U.P. border), during the lockdown in New Delhi.



Personnel from the Fire Department disinfecting the KEM Hospital premises in central Mumbai; and an aerial view of Anand Vihar-Kaushambi metro (Delhi-U.P. border), during the lockdown in New Delhi.



An aerial view of Anand Vihar-Kaushambi metro (Delhi-U.P. border), during the lockdown in New Delhi.

# Doctors cautious over use of malaria drug as virus preventive

ICMR warns against its unrestricted use

R. PRASAD  
CHENNAI

A day after the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) approved the use of hydroxychloroquine as prophylaxis by healthcare workers taking care of COVID-19 cases and asymptomatic household contacts of confirmed cases, the Council on Tuesday cautioned against the unrestricted use of the drug, stating that "it is still at an experimental stage and is not recommended for public use."

Hydroxychloroquine is an antimalarial drug that is also used for treating rheumatoid arthritis. The ICMR's approval followed a recommendation from its task force for COVID-19.



It is still at an experimental stage, the Council said.

"The recommendation is for empirical use of the drug based on available evidence and is restricted for use by only two categories of people and under strict supervision of a doctor," Director-General of ICMR Balram Bhargava told *The Hindu*. The clarification comes as none of the drug approving agencies across the world,

including the FDA, has cleared the drug for prophylaxis or for treating COVID-19 patients.

The available evidence of the efficacy of the drug is a small study by French researchers involving 26 COVID-19 patients.

The study found "significant" reduction in viral load in over half the number of patients at end of six days of therapy. The results were published on March 17 in the International Journal of Antimicrobial Agents even before the 14-day follow-up was completed.

During a White House press briefing a few days ago, asked if there was any evidence that the drug can be used as a prophylactic or as treatment for COVID-19 patients, Director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Anthony Fauci, said: "The

answer is 'no' as it is [based on] anecdotal evidence."

Despite Dr. Fauci's clarification, two Nigerians are reported to have over-dosed on the drug after hearing U.S. President Donald Trump saying the drug could help treat people with COVID-19. A man in Arizona, U.S., died and his wife was hospitalised after they self-medicated with a home remedy of hydroxychloroquine.

Prof. Gagandeep Kang, executive director of the Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI) in Faridabad, told *The Hindu*: "At this moment there is no evidence available [about its effectiveness]. There are on-going trials. They must have waited for the results. Even the trials are for treating COVID-19 patients and not for prophylaxis."

# How safe are newspapers: WHO clarifies

Likelihood of an infected person contaminating commercial goods is low, it says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

How safe is the newspaper that you get at your doorstep every day? As per the World Health Organisation (WHO), the likelihood of an infected person contaminating commercial goods is low and the risk of catching the virus that causes COVID-19 from a

package that has been moved, travelled, and exposed to different conditions and temperature is also low.

This was WHO's answer to a question on whether it was safe to receive a package from any area where COVID-19 has been reported. Precautions at a personal level

are must, according to K.K. Aggarwal, past national president of the Indian Medical Association.

"Newspapers are like any other item or material. Take clothes for instance or books. Viruses can stay on any surfaces. So what can you do? Wash your hands before and after reading

newspapers or books," he said.

The WHO stresses on cleaning hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or washing with soap and water, and avoid touching eyes, mouth or nose.

Besides this, there is the recommendation for personal distancing as well.

# States must facilitate media outlets to fight fake news: govt.

Ensure smooth supply and distribution chain, says directive

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

In a bid to fight "fake news", rumours and speculation that have been doing the rounds on the social media in connection with the COVID-19 outbreak, the Union Information and Broadcasting Ministry has issued directions to all State governments to facilitate functioning of all print and electronic media outlets.

## COVID-19

In an order issued on Monday, the Ministry has said proper functioning of the media network is essential to create awareness among people, to disseminate important messages and also keep the nation updated on the latest status.



Proper functioning of the media network is essential, the Ministry said.

"False and fake news need to be avoided and good practices need to be promoted and these networks play a pivotal role in ensuring the same," the Ministry said in its directive.

The Ministry orders come in the backdrop of the lock-

down across the country limiting the movement of people and shutting all institutions and offices. Issuing the six-point directive, the Ministry has said all operators and their intermediaries should be permitted to remain operational.

It has urged the State governments to facilitate "smooth supply and distribution chain".

**Provisions facilitated**  
The media facilities should be permitted to be manned by the staff of the service providers.

"The movement of the accredited staff of service providers be permitted; the movement of vehicles carrying media persons and others including provisioning of fuel may kindly be facilitated," the order says.

# CRPF readies 19 quarantine centres

VIJAITA SINGH  
NEW DELHI

The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has readied 19 quarantine centres across the country as COVID-19 spreads rapidly.

The centres have been placed at the disposal of the Ministry of Home Affairs, an official said. The capacity of the isolation wards is around 2,000. They are located in Haryana, Assam, West Bengal, Odisha, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Bihar, Karnataka and Kerala.

The official said around 350 CRPF doctors were sent to these centres, having been trained in treating COVID-19 patients. He said the CRPF had asked its personnel to declare if their family members had recently returned from abroad. "We got to know of 6-7 cases. The families have been quarantined," he said.

# 118 labs ready to test for COVID-19, says ICMR

Number of positive cases touches 564

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The COVID-19 death toll touched 10 on Tuesday with 564 confirmed cases nationwide (522 Indian and 42 foreign nationals); 40 persons have recovered and 1,87,904 are currently under surveillance.

Briefing the press, Joint Secretary, Health Ministry, Lav Agarwal said the Centre has asked the States to ensure adequate, earmarked hospitals and ventilator facilities are made available.

"We are also procuring more ventilators and looking at a prototype made at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) to increase the availability of this essential commodity. The Government is also in talks with personal protection

equipment manufactures to ensure that we have enough and steady supply of these commodities," he said.

Meanwhile, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare Harsh Vardhan, visited National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) Control Room and the testing laboratories on Tuesday.

Dr. R Gangakhedkar, head, epidemiology and communicable diseases, ICMR said that currently 118 laboratories are testing for COVID-19.

"Our capacity to test has gone up to 12,000 samples per day. Also as per our study we have estimated that India may be able to reduce its COVID-19 cases by up to 62% if social distancing and quarantines are strictly observed," he said.

## WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



**Forecast for Wednesday:** Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning, hail and gusty wind very likely at isolated places over Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra and with lightning at isolated places over Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Kerala, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and Delhi.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	...	31.8	18.2	Kozhikode	...	36.8	26.0
Ahmedabad	...	37.7	25.3	Kurnool	...	38.6	24.8
Aizawl	...	25.6	13.7	Lucknow	...	32.7	18.5
Allahabad	...	34.8	19.5	Madurai	...	36.2	25.6
Bengaluru	14.8	34.4	20.8	Mangaluru	...	35.2	25.5
Bhopal	...	36.1	20.4	Mumbai	...	32.0	22.5
Bhubaneswar	...	34.2	20.5	Mysuru	...	35.1	23.0
Chandigarh	...	29.4	18.4	New Delhi	32.2	19.2	...
Chennai	...	33.6	24.0	Patna	...	31.7	...
Coimbatore	...	35.5	24.0	Port Blair	...	32.8	23.8
Dehradun	...	...	...	Puducherry	...	37.8	21.9
Gangtok	13.2	14.3	8.3	Raipur	...	35.4	20.0
Goa	...	00.0	00.0	Ranchi	...	31.2	18.8
Guwahati	...	00.0	00.0	Shillong	0.6	19.2	14.4
Hubbali	...	34.0	21.0	Shimla	0.2	18.2	9.2
Hyderabad	...	34.6	22.4	Srinagar	7.6	11.8	9.6
Imphal	14.2	26.6	12.4	Thiruvananthapuram	...	33.7	25.4
Jaipur	...	29.8	20.7	Tiruchi	...	36.7	24.0
Kochi	...	32.4	25.8	Vijayawada	...	35.1	23.0
Kohima	4.2	20.4	10.7	Visakhapatnam	0.4	32.2	24.2
Kolkata	29.0	32.5	17.1				

**Pollutants in the air you are breathing**  
CITIES SO<sub>2</sub> NO<sub>2</sub> CO PM<sub>2.5</sub> PM<sub>10</sub> AQI  
Ahmedabad 61 48 17 54 100  
Bengaluru 10 48 23 220  
Chennai 06 12 40 65  
Delhi 25 50 14 213 107  
Hyderabad 02 29 23 68  
Kolkata 17 20 64 44 50  
Lucknow 04 24 47 252  
Mumbai 07 18 10 45 100  
Pune 37 13 62 46 44  
Visakhapatnam 18 49 40 67 84

**Air Quality Code:** Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)  
SO<sub>2</sub>: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.  
NO<sub>2</sub>: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.  
CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.  
PM<sub>2.5</sub> & PM<sub>10</sub>: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease.

# Pune lab gets approval for COVID-19 diagnostic kit

Several labs had applied to NIV, Pune, to get their kits vetted

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Pune-based MyLab is the first indigenous manufacturer to be approved for deploying its kits for COVID-19 testing.

"Congratulations to our Biotech innovators first make in India COVID 19 diagnostic kit," Renu Swarup, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology, tweeted. Ms. Swarup also leads the government's Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) that supports biotechnology companies, and MyLab was one of them.

While diagnostic tests for COVID-19 are largely reliant on foreign companies, several labs in India had applied to the National Institute of Virology, Pune, for



MyLab is the first indigenous manufacturer to be approved.

getting their own kits vetted. Written guidelines by the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) require that only diagnostic kits that have been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration or certified by the European Union be allowed to offer commercial tests for

detecting SARS-CoV-2.

However, Director General of ICMR Dr. Balram Bhargava on Monday said those approved by the NIV would be eligible for approval.

The Managing Director of Mylab Discovery Solutions, Hasmukh Rawal, told trade magazine *BioSpectrum India*: "With emphasis on 'Make in India' and support from local and Central governments, COVID-19 kit has been made as per WHO/CDC guidelines. It was developed in a record time".

The immediate action from regulatory bodies (CDSCO/FDA), evaluation centre of ICMR, NIV, BIRAC and the Central and State governments during this national emergency was commendable, he said.

# ECHS allows veterans to stock medicines

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

In view of the measures instituted to contain the spread of COVID-19, including social distancing, the Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) has allowed veterans with lifestyle diseases on long treatment to purchase the required medicines for the month of April at once.

"One time sanction is hereby accorded to reimburse the above expenditure under individual reimbursement of medical claims. The bills for reimbursement to be submitted by veterans after May 15, 2020," a ECHS order stated.

**Prescription based**  
Veterans can purchase all medicines based on the prescription held - prescribed by polyclinics, service hospitals and empanelled hospitals. "This will be implemented with immediate effect till April 30, 2020," it added.

**TIDEL PARK LTD.**  
(PRIDE OF CHENNAI, PEARL OF THE IT WORLD)  
TIDEL provides 1.28 Million sq.ft. of IT space with a state-of-the-art facilities. TIDEL invites applications from eligible candidates for the following position at Chennai on contract basis for Three Years.

**GENERAL MANAGER (FINANCE)**

Qualification : Graduate (full time) with C.A  
Experience : Minimum 10 years working experience in Corporate / Public Sector Organizations after CA.  
Age Limit : 53 Years (as on 01.03.2020)  
Salary : Rs. 1,50,000/- (Consolidated per month) 10% increase in 2nd & 3rd Year  
Period of Contract : 3 years

Apart from Consolidated Salary, the selected candidate will not be eligible for any other pay/allowances/bonus etc. except for Conveyance Allowance. Eligible candidates may send their resumes within 15 days to:

THE MANAGING DIRECTOR  
1 ST Floor, 'A' Block, No.4, Rajiv Gandhi Salai, Taramani, Chennai-600 113. Tel: 044 2254 0500-01  
DIPR/464/DIS/2020 Fax: 044-2254 1744 Email: tidel@vsnl.com Website: www.tidelpark.com

**GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU  
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
TENDER EXTENSION NOTICE**

NIT No. 4-1/2019-20/P&D Circle (Bldg)/Chennai, dated 24.03.2020

The Sealed Tenders invited by the Superintending Engineer, PWD., Planning & Design Circle (Building), Chepak, Chennai - 5 in the NIT No. 4/2019-2020/P&D Circle (Bldg)/Chennai, Dated 25.02.2020 for the work of 1) Conservation and Restoration of the Kuthiravandi Court Building (Old Labour Court) at Coimbatore 2) Conservation and Restoration of the District Court Building (Old Labour Court) at Salem is extended upto 16.04.2020 upto 15.00 hrs due to administrative reasons. The tenders will be opened by the Superintending Engineer on the same day at 15.30 hours.

Date of availability of Tender Schedule : Upto 15.04.2020  
Other Terms and Conditions remain unaltered.

Superintending Engineer, PWD.,  
Planning and Design Circle (Buildings)  
Chepak, Chennai - 600 005.

DIPR/1542/Tender/2020

**National Informatics Centre**  
Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Adv. NIELIT/NIC/2020/2 Dtd 25/03/2020

**ADDENDUM/PUBLIC NOTICE**

**EXTENSION OF LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF RECRUITMENT APPLICATION**

With reference to the advertisement NIELIT/NIC/2020/1 dated 23/2/2020 for recruitment of Scientist 'B' and Scientific / Technical Assistant - "A" in NIC, the last date for submission of Application for the posts is **Extended to 10 April 2020.**

However, the eligibility conditions, cutoff date for age, qualification, experience for applying for the posts shall remain unchanged i.e., 26 March 2020 as per clause 7.3 of detailed advertisement available at : <https://www.calcut.nielit.nic/>

**DIRECTORATE OF BASIC EDUCATION U.P.**  
Vidhya Bhawan, Nishatganj, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226007  
Tel: + 91 - 522 2780384. Email: eprocurementcellup@gmail.com  
Website: www.premnaup.in, www.basiceducationup.com, www.etenderup.nic.in

**Corrigendum for Tender number 2020\_upbed\_432559\_2**  
**PRERNA Digital System Project for Elementary Schools of Uttar Pradesh**

This is for information of all the bidders, bidding for supply, commissioning of Android based Tablet integrated with biometric identification device and related services that the bid submission date has been extended till 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2020 for the tender document (Ref. Tender Notice No. 2020\_UPBED\_432559\_2)

For convenience and clarity, the corrigendum document has been uploaded on the below websites.  
[www.etenderup.nic.in](http://www.etenderup.nic.in), [www.basiceducationup.com](http://www.basiceducationup.com), [www.premnaup.in](http://www.premnaup.in)  
Director of Basic Education

**एनटीपीसी NTPC Limited**  
(A Govt. of India Enterprise)

**CORPORATE ENGINEERING DIVISION, NOIDA**  
**CORRIGENDUM: FOR EXTENSION OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)**

This is in continuation to our notice inviting Expression of Interest (EOI) No.: EOC/PE/CEI/2019-20/AM/EOI/9282/4 for IDENTIFYING VENDORS FOR SUPPLY, INSTALLATION AND COMMISSIONING OF SYSTEMS UNDER ADVANCE ASSET MANAGEMENT (AAM) INITIATIVE, uploaded on www.ntpc-tender.com website on 04/03/2020.

The last date of EOI submission is hereby extended to 24-April-2020. For detailed EOI and documents, please visit at [www.ntpc-tender.com](http://www.ntpc-tender.com) or [www.ntpc.co.in](http://www.ntpc.co.in) or may contact: Manager (PE-C&I), NTPC Limited, 3rd Floor, Engineering Office Complex, A-8A, Sector-24, Noida-201301, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.), India. Tel. No.: +91-120-4948324, +91-120-4946337, +91-120-4948323 E-mail: [anshulagarwal01@ntpc.co.in](mailto:anshulagarwal01@ntpc.co.in), [kuldeep01@ntpc.co.in](mailto:kuldeep01@ntpc.co.in), [giddravileja@ntpc.co.in](mailto:giddravileja@ntpc.co.in)

Registered office: NTPC Bhawan, SCOPE Complex, 7, Institutional Area, Lodi Road, New Delhi-110003. CIN: L40101DL1975GOI007966 Website: [www.ntpc.co.in](http://www.ntpc.co.in)

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