

**VAN GOGH PAINTING STOLEN IN RAID**  
A painting by Vincent van Gogh, 'The Parsonage Garden at Nuenen in Spring 1884', was stolen in an overnight smash-and-grab raid on an Amsterdam museum that was closed to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, police and the museum said Monday

**PANDEMIC WATCH**



Prince Charles

**UNITED KINGDOM**  
**Prince Charles out of isolation, 'in good health'**

London: British heir-to-the-throne Prince Charles, who had tested positive for coronavirus, is out of self-isolation after seven days and is in good health, his spokesman said on Monday. Last week, his Clarence House office revealed that Charles, 71, had been tested after displaying mild symptoms of the virus and had been in self-isolation at his Birkhall home in Scotland where he had continued to work. After consultation with his doctor, he is now out of self-isolation, Clarence House said. He will resume meetings and take exercise in accordance with government and medical guidelines.

**NEW ZEALAND**  
**Site to report lockdown rule flouting crashes**

Wellington: New Zealanders have become so keen to report their neighbours for breaking lockdown rules that police on Monday said a website dedicated to addressing the issue crashed soon after going live. The South Pacific nation is in the midst of a four-week COVID-19 lockdown, with residents under orders to stay at home or remain at least two metres (6.5 feet) apart if they must go outside. "We've had 4,200 reports of people believing others weren't complying," Police commissioner Mike Bush said.

**BELGIUM**  
**Toll passes 500, with 12,000 cases**

Brussels: Belgium's death toll from the novel coronavirus passed the 500 mark on Monday, with almost 12,000 cases detected since the start of the epidemic. Health authorities in the country of 11.4 million said 513 COVID-19 deaths had been recorded and 11,899 cases confirmed by laboratory tests. But officials said the rise in admissions to hospital and to intensive care units had slowed slightly over the previous 24 hours. "We're not at the peak, but at what we call the inflection point..." said Emmanuel Andre, spokesman.

**ISRAEL**  
**Netanyahu in quarantine**

Jerusalem: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said on Monday that he will enter quarantine after an aide on Knesset affairs tested positive for coronavirus. Netanyahu's office said the step was a precaution and is being taken even before the epidemiological investigation has been concluded. Haretz newspaper reported, Israel is under total lockdown with people not allowed to even walk beyond 100 metres from their homes and have been generally advised to go out only to stock up food. So far, 4,347 Israelis have tested positive for the coronavirus.

# Keeping toll to 1 lakh would be good job: Trump

## Peak US death rate likely in two weeks, says Trump, deaths worldwide exceed 35,000

## Spain overtakes China's case count

**AGENCIES**  
MARCH 30

FACED WITH the grim prospect that 200,000 Americans could die even with aggressive action to slow the spread of the coronavirus, President Trump extended the guidelines on avoiding nonessential travel, staying away from work, visiting bars and restaurants and gathering in groups of more than 10 for at least another month.



US President Donald Trump with members of the coronavirus task force, Dr Anthony Fauci and Dr Deborah Birx at the White House. AP

"We can expect that by June 1, we will be well on our way to recovery," Trump said on Sunday evening. "We think by June 1. A lot of great things will be happening."

More than 700,000 cases of the coronavirus have been officially declared around the world since the start of the pandemic, according to a tally on Monday based on official sources. Over 35,000 people have died, as per the AFP tally.

The total number of confirmed coronavirus cases in the US stood at 143,025 and 2,509 people have died in the country, according to data from Johns Hopkins University.

Assuring his countrymen that he expects the United States to be on its way to recovery by June 1, Trump told reporters at a televised White

House news conference that he had to extend the social distancing measures till April 30, based on the advice from his two top public health advisors and members of the White House Task Force on Coronavirus: Dr Deborah Bix and Dr Anthony Fauci.

"They demonstrate that the mitigation measures we are putting in place may significantly reduce the number of new infections and ultimately the number of fatalities.

"I want the American people to know that your selfless inspiring and valiant efforts are saving countless lives. You are making a difference. The modeling estimates that the peak and death rate is likely to hit in two weeks," Trump said during his second Rose Garden press conference on the coronavirus outbreak.

Trump predicted his decision would save hundreds of thousands of lives, in an apparent moving of the political goalposts

**New York toll crosses 1,000**

New York: New York Governor Andrew M Cuomo delivered a grim assessment of the coronavirus pandemic engulfing the state on Sunday, as he reported that 237 people had died in the state since the day before.

"I don't think there's any way to look at those numbers," Cuomo said, "without seeing thousands of people pass away."

By Sunday night, the statewide death toll was more than 1,000, according to figures from data compiled by *The New York Times*.

Cuomo's bleak message came as Mayor Bill de Blasio warned that New York City had only about a week's worth of medical supplies.

"We have enough supplies to get to a week from today, with the exception of ventilators — we're going to need at least several hundred more ventilators very quickly," de Blasio said on CNN.

The mayor said the city was also facing a critical shortage of medical personnel and that he made a direct request to President Trump to send more military and civilian doctors and nurses from around the country. NYT

**CLARA-LAEILA LAUDETTE & NATHAN ALLEN**  
MADRID, MARCH 30

SPAIN OVERTOOK China's total number of coronavirus cases on Monday but business leaders and regional authorities criticised the government's decision to further restrict the movement of people and keep non-essential workers at home until mid-April.

An overnight death toll of 812 people brought total fatalities in Spain to 7,340, while the number of infections rose by 8% to 85,195 on Monday, against 81,470 in China, where the disease originated at the end of 2019.

Health emergency chief Fernando Simon, who has been holding daily briefings on the epidemic, has tested positive for the virus, his deputy said.

Maria Jose Sierra, who replaced Simon, said the daily infection increase had slowed since the introduction of lockdown measures to 12% on average since March 25 from around 20% in the March 15-25 period.

As Spain awoke to its third week of a nationwide lockdown — the strictest yet — flags flew at half-mast in the capital and the surrounding region, which has been the epicentre of the epidemic. The government said it was imposing caps on funeral

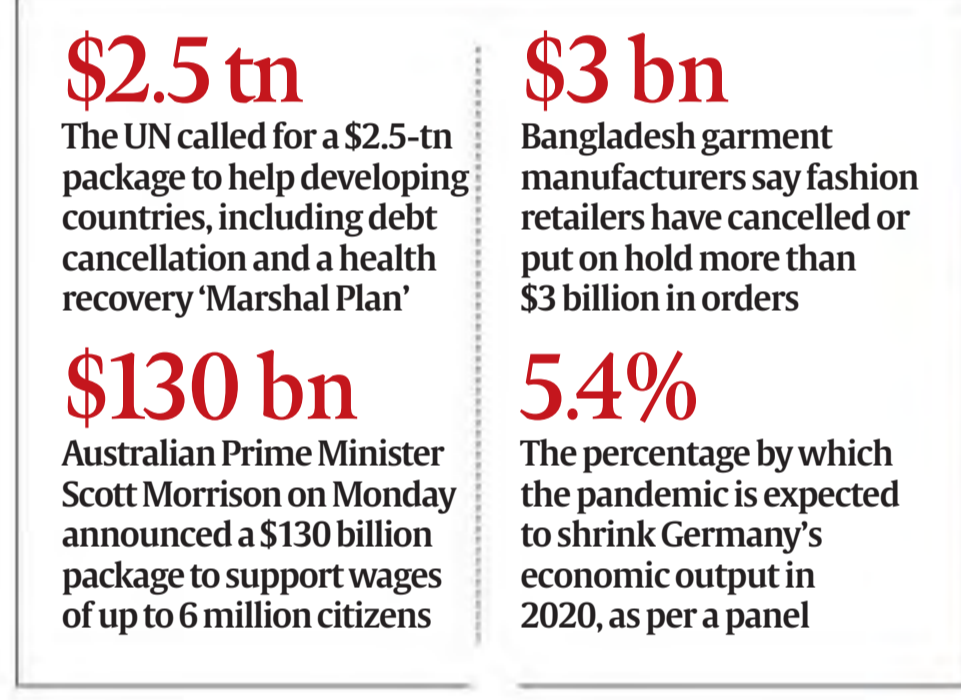
**EXPLAINED**  
**E**  
**Pushback from industry**

IN ANOTHER sign of the fine line to tread between combating the outbreak and preserving the economy and employment. Business leaders in Spain have already criticised the move to extend the lockdown and ban on non-essential sectors. As per reports, the complaint has to do with inducing a social crisis in a country that has the second-highest unemployment rate in Europe. Grocery chains are some of the few to buck this trend, with many hiring workers to cope with demand.

prices, following reports that undertakers were taking advantage of increased demand.

The first batch of medical supplies requested by Spain from NATO's disaster coordination centre arrived from the Czech Republic by plane on Sunday evening. REUTERS

**COVID-19 PANDEMIC: FOUR KEY FIGURES**



## China building makeshift hospital for Pakistan to treat COVID-19 patients

China, WHICH has sent medical teams and supplies to Pakistan where coronavirus cases are increasing steadily, said on Monday that it was building a makeshift hospital there to treat COVID-19 patients.

The number of cases in Pakistan reached 1,664 while the death toll stood at 18, health officials said on Monday, underlining that local transmission of the deadly COVID-19 is increasing.

"Recently, the pandemic is also spreading in Pakistan. We totally relate to what they are experiencing," China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying told a media briefing here.

"The Chinese government has donated supplies such as testing kits, masks, protective suits and ventilators to Pakistan. And we will also help Pakistan to set up adhoc makeshift hospital.

China had built two major makeshift hospitals with 2,300 bed capacity in Wuhan in early February at the height of the coronavirus outbreak in the city.

Hua said China has invited Pakistan to attend the video conference on COVID-19 and a medical expert team is in Islamabad.

On Saturday, a special plane from China carrying a team of eight medical experts and relief assistance arrived in Pakistan.

Besides airlifting supplies, China also sent medical supplies to Pakistan through the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir to fight the steadily increasing coronavirus case there.

A truck full of five ventilators, 2,000 safety apparel, 20,000 medical masks and 24,000 nucleic acid testing kits were sent from Khunjab Pass to the Gilgit-Baltistan region, according to official media here. PTI



## AMID PANDEMIC, BLAST IN KABUL

A damaged vehicle is removed from the site of a bomb explosion in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Monday. Taliban attacks in the north and south have killed at least 11 Afghan soldiers and policemen, as per officials. AP

## Brazil economy can't stop, says Bolsonaro

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
SAO PAULO, MARCH 30

BRAZIL'S FAR-RIGHT President Jair Bolsonaro on Sunday flouted his government's social distancing guidelines against the spread of the coronavirus by mixing with supporters on the streets of Brasilia and urging them to keep the economy going.

"What I have been hearing from people is that they want to work," the president told a street vendor in one of several videos posted on his Twitter account.

"What I have said from the die of the disease, you starve," the vendor is seen telling Bolsonaro, who responds: "You're not going to die!"

In another video, the president calls for a "return to normality," questioning quarantine measures imposed by governors and some mayors across the country. "If it continues like this, with the amount of unemployment what we will have later is a very serious problem that will take years to be resolved," he said of the isolation measures.

"Brazil cannot stop or we'll turn into Venezuela," Bolsonaro later told reporters.

**TWITTER BAN**

**TWO TWEETS** by Jair Bolsonaro in which he questioned quarantine measures were removed Sunday, on the grounds that they violated the rules. Twitter explained that it recently expanded its rules on managing content that contradicted public health information from official sources and could put people at risk

In Brasilia, Monday. Reuters

beginning is that 'we are going to be careful, the over-65s stay at home,' he said.

"We just can't stand still, there is fear because if you don't

## Virus could lead to over 10,000 deaths, warns Iran

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
TEHRAN, MARCH 30

THE NUMBER of declared infections in Iran topped 40,000 Monday, as the government warned the outbreak could run for several more months and cost over 10,000 lives.

With the tally climbing, President Hassan Rouhani stood accused of failing to take prompt action by some of his political opponents. The row came as a report by Iran's anti-coronavirus committee said the country may struggle until at least early summer.

Parviz Karami, who published the study on Instagram, said 11,000 people would die in case of "medium government intervention", including measures already taken by Iran.

Potential fatalities could drop to 7,700 with "maximum" intervention, such as banning movement inside cities and imposing quarantines, he said.

Health ministry spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour said Monday another 117 people had died and 3,186 new cases had been confirmed, raising the total to more than 41,000.



At a cemetery outside Tehran, Iran, Monday. AP

## 'THEY WON'T HAVE EXPERIENCED THE CRISIS AS WE DID... SO FOR THEM IT WILL BE QUITE A SURPRISE'

# Leagues under the sea, submariners likely unaware of outbreak

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
LE PECQ (FRANCE), MARCH 30

OFA world in coronavirus turmoil, they may know little or nothing.

Submariners stealthily cruising the ocean depths, purposefully shielded from worldly worries to encourage undivided focus on their top-secret missions of nuclear deterrence, may be among the last pockets of people anywhere who are still blissfully unaware of how the pandemic is turning life upside down.

Mariners aboard ballistic submarines are habitually spared bad news while underwater to avoid undermining their morale, say current and former officers who served aboard France's nuclear-armed subs.

So any crews that left port before the virus spread are likely being kept in the dark about the extent of the rapidly unfurling crisis by their commanders until their return, they say.

"They won't know," said retired Admiral Dominique Salles, who commanded the French ballistic submarine squadron from 2003-2006. "The boys need to be completely available



French submarine missions last 60 to 70 days. AP/FILE

only be told of the pandemic as they head back to port, in the final two days of their mission.

"Those who are at sea don't need this information," said Salles, who also commanded the nuclear-armed French submarine "L'Inflexible".

"The commander, I think, is doubtless informed about what is happening. I don't think he'll have all the details," he said.

The French navy won't divulge what has or hasn't been said to submarine crews. Nor will it say whether any of the four French ballistic submarines, laden with 16 missiles that each can carry six nuclear warheads, left harbour before France instituted a nationwide lockdown on March 17.

"Because the deterrent is wrapped in a bubble of protection and confidentiality, it is impossible to know whether the crews are informed or not of this situation," French navy spokesman Lt Cmdr Olivier Ribard said.

French submarine missions last 60 to 70 days, with about 110 crew members aboard. So a crew that left at the end of February wouldn't be expected back before the end of April. In that case, they will return to a world changed by the pandemic.

On March 1, France had just 130 confirmed COVID-19 cases and two deaths. In under a month, those numbers have surged past 2,600 dead and over 40,000 sickened.

For submariners, the return to land could be a shock.

"They won't have experienced the crisis as we did, with a bit of fear, the lockdown. So for them it will be quite a surprise. They will learn the history, but it will be a history that is related to them," said a serving officer who was the doctor on the ballistic submarine "Le Triomphant".