COVID-19 toll rises to 11 in Punjab

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

One more COVID-19 patient died in Punjab on Friday, taking the tally to 11, according to a State government statement.

The health department said one patient, hailing from Jalandhar, who tested positive, died on April 10. As many as 21 new cases were reported from the State, taking the total of COVID-19 positive cases to 151, it added.

The government, meanwhile, has made it mandatory for the people to wear masks in public places to check the spread of the virus.

Health Director Avneet Kaur said anyone coming out of their homes for official or other essential work would have to wear a cloth or triple-layer mask, violation of which would be punishable under the law.

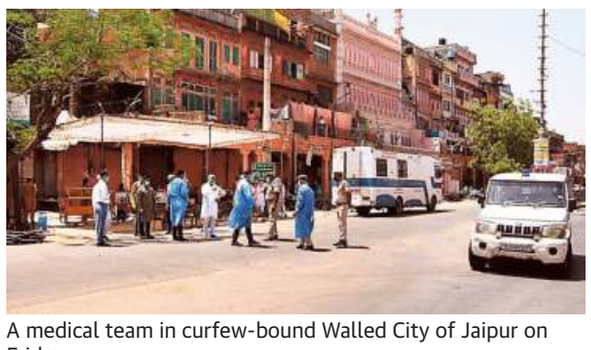
Rajasthan announces financial assistance for 'corona warriors'

The Centre had announced a ₹50 lakh insurance cover for front-line health workers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

In a major decision to help out "corona warriors", the Congress government in Rajasthan on Friday announced a financial assistance of ₹50 lakh to the next of kin on the death of an employee performing the duties for controlling the COVID-19 pandemic. The Centre had earlier announced a ₹50 lakh insurance cover solely for the frontline health workers.

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said the State government had expanded the purview of assistance to include regular and contractual employees as well as those getting honorarium for their work. The provision will cover all municipal and health workers, home guards, civil defence staff, Anganwadi centre workers and accredited social health activists.



A medical team in curfew-bound Walled City of Jaipur on Friday. ▪ ROHIT JAIN PARAS

Mr. Gehlot said at a video-conferencing with trade and industry representatives here that the State government would take an "appropriate decision" on lifting the lockdown while taking into account the issue of saving people's lives. He said traders were playing an important role in maintaining the supply chain of essential commodities.

The State government also imposed a ban on spitting at public places after chewing of betel leaf, gutka and tobacco products to contain the spread of COVID-19. A notification of Medical & Health Department stated that this act would invite penal action under Section 188 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant) of Indian Penal Code.

Additional Chief Secretary (Medical & Health) Rohit Kumar Singh said police officers performing duty in the curfew-bound areas, where COVID-19 positive cases had been detected, would be given measured doses of hydroxychloroquine for protection against infection. This had been recommended by the National Task Force for COVID-19, he said.

The number of COVID-19 positive cases in the State soared to 520 on Friday with 57 more cases detected in eight districts as well the Army's facilities.

Virus halts J&K's 'Durbar move' for the first time in 144 years

23 new cases reported in the Union Territory on Friday

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

For the first time in 144 years, the J&K administration has decided to halt the annual shifting of the capital, called 'Durbar move', from Jammu to Srinagar in J&K due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, as 23 fresh positive cases pushed the total in the Union Territory to 207.

"In view of the extraordinary circumstances due to COVID-19 pandemic, the Civil Secretariat at Jammu shall continue to remain functional and the 'Durbar move' employees shall work on 'as is where is' basis. It will allow Kashmir-based staff to work from Srinagar and Jammu-based staff shall work from Jammu," said an order issued by the General Administration Department in Jammu.

Introduced by Dogra monarch Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1872, the 'Durbar move' would see shifting of the Civil Secretariat in summers from Jammu to Srinagar and in winters from Srinagar to Jammu. In January 1987, the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had asked then Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah to stop the practice. However, the 'Durbar move' was continued to allow it to at as a bridge between two diverse cultures of the Kashmir Valley and the Jammu region.

Sanitation drive

Meanwhile, the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) has been directed to carry out extensive sanitation and fumigation drives in the Civil Secretariat in Srinagar, where the offices will open after six month break on May 4.

The J&K administration decision to halt the 'Durbar Move' comes as COVID-19 cases shows an upward trend in the Union Territory. Jammu & Kashmir on Friday crossed the 200 mark, with 23 more samples testing positive.

"The total positive cases in J&K is 207, as 23 more cases were reported. Jammu has 39 and Kashmir 168 such cases," said J&K government spokesperson Rohit Kansal.

Among the fresh cases are seven non-local members of the Tabligi Jamaat, who were in touch with a Chattabal man who has already tested positive for COVID-19.

Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar, Shahid Iqbal Choudhary said that detection of eight more positive cases in Srinagar should not panic locals. "This is a classic tracing success story," he said.

'Not all soldiers carry weapons, some carry stethoscopes'

Dealing with COVID-19 has brought back the nobility of the profession, say doctors in Indore

SIDHARTH YADAV
BHOPAL

Just before entering the COVID-19 ward, Gaurav Jain double checks his personal protective equipment (PPE) – the mask is set, check. The gloves are in place, check. The face shield is intact, check.

"Of course at some level we are scared too," said Dr. Jain, a second-year junior resident of the Department of Respiratory Medicine at the Sri Aurobindo Medical College and Postgraduate Institute, Indore, one of the COVID-19 hospitals treating 125 patients. "Doctors may run out of equipment, but we are never going to run out of love and compassion we are receiving from everyone now."

Doctors at the Sri Aurobindo Medical College and Postgraduate Institute, Indore. ▪ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

When the stream of cases trickled in around March-end, the department's doctors, including junior residents, were caught unawares. "We didn't expect it. Many of us don't have that kind of skill. We are learning every day," said Dr. Jain, who belongs to Gwalior district. He felt insecure: "We didn't know how to handle it. "

The junior most resident, Jyoti Jaiswal, 26, was thrilled to take on a greater responsibility of being at the frontline. "Seniors have my back. They've said if I have doubts during night duty, when there are no consultants, I could call them any time," said Dr. Jaiswal.

Eventually, as different departments of the hospital teamed up and divided responsibilities, it eased some pressure. Others can screen patients, start treatment based on the protocol and check oxygen levels.

"Whereas we can guide treatment. Even miniscule contributions count. It's teamwork after all. Not all soldiers carry weapons, some carry stethoscope," said Dr. Jain.

"Dealing with COVID-19 has brought back the nobility of the profession which was clouded in professionalism. It has given back the profession its lost charm. We are getting to fulfil our dream of serving humanity," said Ravi Dosi, 39, who heads the department, and is faced with an employee refusing to return to hospital fearing infection these days.

'Scared for our families'

Dr. Dosi admitted not a single day went by when he wasn't scared, but not for himself. "We are more scared for our families. At times, you see patients pass away on ventilators in seconds and have nightmares of the same happening to you. How devastating it will be for our families. But we have to remain optimistic."

Odisha to scale up testing

Advanced facility will test about 1,000 samples per day

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BHUBANESWAR

Odisha is all set to scale up COVID-19 testing with the Regional Medical Research Centre (RMRC), Bhubaneswar, readying an advanced testing facility to test about 1,000 samples a day.

The machine - Cobas 6800 - is a high-throughput machine having automated platform to carry out faster and effective testing of samples to detect COVID-19, according to Sanghamitra Pati, Director of RMRC.

"RMRC, Bhubaneswar, is one of the two centres in the country to have this testing equipment. With this, we can increase our testing capacity from current 300 to 1,000 samples per day by next week," Dr. Pati said on Friday.

With the Cobas 6800 set to be used for testing, the Odisha government has announced it will screen about two lakh people, including a large number of migrant labourers who would return to the State in future, said State Director of Medical Education and Training C.B.K. Mohanty.

Migrant workers

"We are concerned about the migrant workers who are under tremendous mental stress to reach their homes. The government wants them to be with their families instead of sending them to quarantine facilities," said Dr. Mohanty.

"The faster screening will dispel mistrust in the mind of their fellow villagers. Those who will be found negative in testing will be allowed to enter their villages," he added.

The government was strictly following the guidelines specified by the Indian Council of Medical Research to enhance COVID-19 testing, clarified Sanjay Kumar Singh, Secretary, Information & Public Relations Department.

At present, RMRC, Bhubaneswar, AIIMS Bhubaneswar and SCB Medical College & Hospital at Cuttack are carrying put COVID-190 tests. MKCG Medical College & Hospital, Berhampur. and Institute of Life Sciences, Bhubaneswar. have already been authorised to commence testing soon.

With the passing of Shanti Hiranand, the Begum Akhtar era is formally over

She was our last tangible link to the legendary artiste

SALEEM KIDWAI

With the passing of singer Shanti Hiranand (1932-2020), early on Friday morning after a brief illness, an era, first shaken to its core by the passing of Begum Akhtar in 1974, finally comes to an end. For nearly five decades, almost single-handedly Shanti Hiranand kept the music of her legendary Ustad alive. With her gone, so has our last tangible link to Begum Akhtar. For nearly five decades Shantiji performed and recorded ghazals, dadras and thumris in the tradition of Begum Akhtar but also diligently taught it to many who wanted to be a part of the great singer's tradition. Shantiji taught music almost until the last months of her life.

Shantiji was born in Lucknow into a forward-looking business family which encouraged education and did not frown on her interest in music and even enrolled her in Bhatkhande Music Institute at the age of six or seven. She moved to Lahore briefly with her parents where she first recorded for radio. After Partition, she returned to

OBITUARY

Lucknow and continued to sing for the radio. Around this time Begum Akhtar, after her brief retirement from music, had formally returned to recording for All India Radio.

In 1952, an official at the radio station suggested to the young Shanti that perhaps

Shanti Hiranand

she could learn from Begum Akhtar. In her memoir *Begum Akhtar: The Story of My Ammi*, Shantiji recalls this first meeting. Without an appointment, she had taken a rickshaw and turned up at Begum Akhtar's house and after a brief wait was granted an audience where a harmonium was forwarded towards her for an impromptu audition. She sang a bhajan in raag pilu.

She admits, "I had no idea what raag pilu was. I had just learnt the bhajan as one would learn any filmi song. Since I was performing on the radio at the time, I was used to the radio station sending me a song set to a particular tune and I would just go and record them. I also did a lot of choral singing. I had a high-pitched voice and I could sing loudly." Begum Akhtar complimented her and asked her what she wanted to learn from her. Shanti didn't know what to say because as she admits, "I had no idea about her music or what I wanted to learn from her."

This fortuitous meeting led to classes from the next day onwards. Soon she had practically moved in with her teacher because Begum Akhtar, whimsical as she was, would teach only when she was in the mood. Soon Shanti was an appendage of the family. She was joined by another student, Anjali Banerji, and Begum Akhtar did what no other female artiste has done before - marked them as formal students and herself as a formal Ustad by conducting a ganda-bandh ceremony.

Begum Akhtar, being the tempestuous person she was, tested this guru-shishya relationship hard and it goes to Shantiji's credit that she was never found wanting and stayed unquestionably loyal to her Ammi till her end. She never said a word that could be considered disrespectful of her Ustad though there is still today an audience hungry for salacious details of her Ustad's life, and many egged her to tell tales.

She went even beyond keeping her mouth shut. She saw to it that the place which is the final resting place of her guru lived up, even if minimally, to the stature of the artiste she was. Along with keeping Begum Akhtar's music alive, this will be to the eternal credit of Shanti Hiranand.

The Begum Akhtar era is formally over. As Shanti sang in her first recording, a Shakeel Badayuni ghazal:

Fasana e shab e gham khatm hone wala hai
'Shakeel' chand sitaron men ji nahin lagta.

(The story of the night of grief is about to end
'Shakeel', the heart is no longer distracted by the moon or the stars.)

Saleem Kidwai is a Lucknow-based historian and author.

HC order on vehicle use partially modified

Relief for senior citizens, doctors

CORRESPONDENT
CUTTACK

In a partial modification of its Thursday's order on the use of two-wheelers during the ongoing nationwide lockdown, the Orissa High Court on Friday made it clear that only "senior citizens" and "handicapped persons" are allowed to use their vehicles to go to marketplaces for the purchase of essential items like vegetables, fruits, grocery items and medicines.

"The police authorities shall also give relaxation in mobility of doctors and health workers on production of their identification and certificates," said a Division Bench of the High Court comprising acting Chief Justice Kumari Sanju Panda and Justice Biswanath Rath on Friday following an appeal made by the State government seeking a clarification on the High Court's Thursday order.

The High Court on Thursday had diluted the government's blanket ban on use of vehicles, saying that the government should first come out with a composite plan on availability of essential commodities locally before imposing a ban on the use of vehicles. The court had also restrained the police from collecting fines from vehicle users until the third count of default.

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Court Notice
In the Court of Sh. Jagmeet Singh, Civil Judge (Jr. Divn.), Dera Bassi.
CNR No. -PBSAB0-001047-2019
Pending For. 17.4.2020
Dena Bank ..... Plaintiff.
Versus
M/S Ess Ess Paper Udyog ...Defendants.
Notice To. Defendant 1 and 2
1- M/s Ess Ess Paper Udyog Prop. Sachin Wadhwa Shed No 1 and 2, Rural Industrial Estate, Behind FDI, Near ITI Banur, Distt SAS Nagar Mohali.
2- Sachin Wadhwa s/o Sadanand Wadhwa r/o L-34, GH-94, PGI Society Sector 20, Panchkula.
In above titled case the respondent could not be served. It is ordered that the respondents should appear in person or through counsel on 17.4.2020 at 10:00AM.
For details logon to https://www.highcourtchd.gov.in/?trs=districtnotice&district=mohali
Civil Judge (Jr. Divn.), Dera Bassi.

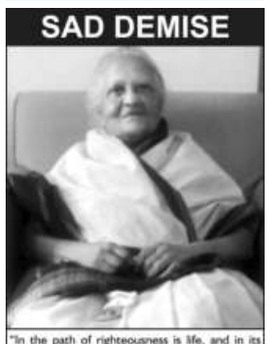
PUBLIC NOTICE

I, SMT. Sudarshan gupta, W/O Late Sh. L. C. Gupta, R/O:– D 596, street no 9, bhajanpura, delhi–110053, debarring my son Mr. Neeraj Gupta and Vandana Jain(his foresaid wife) from all my moveable and immovable assets from today (09/04/2020) onwards with my own consent because of violent behavior of Vandana Jain. I'll not be responsible or concerned for their future actions.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

SAD DEMISE



"In the path of righteousness is life, and in its pathway, there is no death" - Proverbs 12:28
Our beloved Mother and Grandmother,
Mrs.Elizabeth "Kochumol" Zachariah (97 years),
wife of late Col.J.P. Zachariah, passed away peacefully on 10th April 2020, at her residence in Bengaluru.
Deeply Mourned by
John, George, Alexander, Prem, Vandana, Meera, Smitha, Michael, Ajay, Preeti, Priya, Kaveri, Vir & Yohan
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Institutions offer emotional support to youngsters

They are coming up with helpline facilities so that the affected can reach out to experts on time

BISHWANATH GHOSH
KOLKATA

Recognising that the lockdown due to COVID-19 could be taking an emotional toll on youngsters and children, institutions in West Bengal are coming up with helpline facilities so that the affected can reach out to experts.

The University of Calcutta, West Bengal Commission for Protection of Child Rights and Maheshtala College are some of the institutions that have roped in mental health professionals and counsellors to address problems of the young in the face of an unprecedented global crisis.

"My students and their parents are extremely anxious about the future. They come from economically disadvantaged background and they are unable to comprehend what's going on. One girl asked me the other day, 'Ma'am, are we all going to die?' Another girl asked me, 'Will life ever be normal again for us?' They are undergoing immense stress and it is important we talk to them," said Dr. Rumpa Das, principal of Maheshtala College.

Children hold a picture of Jesus Christ on the occasion of Good Friday in Kolkata on Friday. ▪ PTI

The college has not only formed a core team to counsel students, parents and non-teaching staff but has also tied up with an organisation called Samabyathi Emotional Support Group to extend help to the needy.

On Wednesday, the University of Calcutta also issued a notification that the departments of psychology and applied psychology would provide free counselling services to all students of the university. It listed the names and numbers of the professors who could be reached at a specified time in a day or week.

But it is the children that are probably among the worst-hit by the nationwide lockdown, unable to comprehend why their routines have suddenly been disrupted and why there is restriction on going out of home.

The West Bengal Commission for Protection of Child Rights has offered helpline numbers so that parents can reach out to experts about guidance on how to deal with children undergoing stress due to the lockdown. Last week, it circulated a list of 17 experts – including psychiatrists, paediatricians and counsellors – who can be reached at specified times of the day.

"Small children are unable to understand what exactly is the matter – why are they not going to school, why they cannot go out to play? They can sense something is the matter but they don't know what exactly it is. In such situations children can turn cranky and need attention," said Dr. Nilanjana Sanyal, a practising psychoanalyst who is on the panel of experts.

"Normally, this time of the year adults can be overheard planning holidays, but this year there is no such planning – everything looks uncertain. This is likely to add to the stress," said Dr. Sanyal.

"The idea behind the helpline numbers," she said, "is to create awareness among parents. First of all, they must take [the lockdown] as an opportunity to spend more time with their children, which many are unable to otherwise. This is a good time for mental bonding."

'Engage children'

"Secondly, parents should accommodate them and engage them. These two things are very important. Suppose a mother is cooking, she can always make the child participate in the process in a small way. If nothing else, she can lift the child and get it to stir [an under-preparation dish] with a ladle. The child will feel it is contributing [to the cooking]," Dr. Sanyal said.