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Chief Minister, Haryana

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Health Department, Haryana

"We have started Tele Medicine Consultation Services for the people of Haryana so that they can avail health services and ask about their health problems especially during lockdown period"



## NEARBY



### Migrants in Haryana worry about rent, wages

**KASAN**  
Migrant workers from Bihar living in Kasan village, which abuts the Manesar industrial township in Haryana, are living in fear of losing their jobs. Most of them have already seen pay cuts due to the lockdown. "It is better if the government sends us to our villages," said Ramesh, 47. Their future is locked in with the lockdown.

NEWS PAGE 11

### 22 new cases in city, 9 from Nizamuddin centre

**NEW DELHI**  
Twenty-two new COVID-19 cases were reported in Delhi on Monday, taking the total number to 525. Of the new cases, nine are from the centre run by the Tablighi Jamaat in Nizamuddin. A total of 329 people from the centre have tested positive for COVID-19 in Delhi so far. Seven people have died of the infection, 19 have been discharged, and 498 are still in hospitals in the city.

CITY PAGE 2

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## Modi seeks Ministers' views on calibrated exit from lockdown

PM also sought ideas from them on steps to bolster domestic manufacture

**NISTULA HEBBAR**  
NEW DELHI

After an interaction with Chief Ministers via a video-conference last week, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday sought suggestions from his Council of Ministers for a calibrated exit from the 21-day lockdown, imposed from March 25 to contain the COVID-19 outbreak.

He also sought measures to bolster domestic manufacturing as the pandemic had brought home the fact that essential goods manufacture within the country is very important.

Mr. Modi asked the Ministers to coordinate with the district authorities for not just harvesting and procuring agricultural produce but also preparing business continuity plans to address the

### COVID-19

economic situation once the containment ends.

At a meeting of the Council of Ministers, just before a first-ever Cabinet meeting via videoconference, he asked for the suggestions, leaving no doubt in anyone's mind that any rollback of the lockdown on April 14 will be in a very calibrated manner. "Prime Minister Modi

### Charting the way forward

A look at some of the ideas discussed by the PM and Council of Ministers:

- Promote **Make in India**, as COVID-19 has shown the importance of domestic manufacture
- Co-ordination between Ministers and district authorities to come up with **micro-level plans** for harvest and procurement of farm produce
- Promote ideas such as **"truck aggregation"**, similar to cab aggregation in urban areas, to transport farm produce to markets



Looking ahead: Prime Minister Modi interacting with Union Ministers in New Delhi on Monday. ■ ANI

- Formulation of various **business continuity plans** for ministries in readiness for lifting of lockdown
- Encourage people to download the **Aarogya Setu app** devised by the government to track and disburse information on COVID-19

asked all of us for suggestions, including after speaking to district-level officials and stakeholders on how the rollback of the lockdown could be effected without a huge impact on positive cases," said a minister who was at the meeting.

"Actually, the calculations of our peak cases and its timing are now awry as they have to factor in the Tablighi Jamaat cases, which are still being followed up," he added.

"The peak, which was supposed to have manifested itself this week has now been pushed to the next week or more because we

are still tracking the contact chain of the Tablighi Jamaat cases," the source said but pointed out that the PM did not mention these issues.

"We were asked to think in terms of micro plans for districts and specifically focus on the harvest season now on as well as how best procurement can be done from farmers. He spoke about coming up with innovative ideas for getting the harvest to the *mandis* for sale, like starting a "truck aggregator" system just like a cab aggregator system in urban areas," the source said.

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## MPLADS suspended; PM, MPs to take 30% salary cut

The saved amount will go to fund to combat COVID-19

**DAMINI NATH**  
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Monday approved a 30% cut in the salaries of all Members of Parliament and a two-year suspension of the MP Local Area Development (MPLAD) scheme so that the amount saved can go to the Consolidated Fund of India to fight COVID-19, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said on Monday.

Addressing a press conference after a Cabinet meeting, Mr. Javadekar said the Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved an ordinance to amend the Salaries, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament Act, 1954, to cut the salaries of MPs by 30%.

He said all MPs, including the Prime Minister and his Council of Ministers, would take the salary cut for financial year 2020-2021. In addition, the Cabinet had decided to suspend the MPLAD funds for 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. Many MPs had already pledged to use their MPLAD funds, ₹5 crore a year, for efforts to combat the coronavirus pandemic.

"All MPs were feeling that charity begins at home. Therefore, we have decided on an ordinance... Many MPs

All MPs were feeling that charity begins at home. Therefore, we have decided on an ordinance... Many MPs had contributed their MPLAD funds for COVID-19-related measures. So, instead of piecemeal efforts, a comprehensive decision was taken to suspend MPLADS for two years

**PRAKASH JAVADEKAR**,  
Information and Broadcasting Minister



had contributed their MPLAD funds for COVID-19 related measures. So, instead of piecemeal efforts, a comprehensive decision was taken to suspend MPLADS for two years," he said, adding that the amount saved from the scheme would be ₹7,900 crore.

Mr. Javadekar said President Ram Nath Kovind and Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu, as well as all Governors, had decided of their own volition to take a 30% salary cut. All the amount saved would go to the Consolidated Fund of India.

When asked about how much would be saved from the MPs' salary cut, he said: "It's not about the amount, it's about the message it sends to the country about the will of MPs."

Later, government spokesperson K.S. Dhatwalia clarified via a tweet that only the MPs' salaries would be cut, not allowances or the

pensions of ex-mps. According to the Act, as amended in April 2018, MPs are entitled to a monthly salary of ₹1 lakh, apart from various allowances.

### Congress reaction

Reacting to the Cabinet decisions, Congress spokesperson Randeep Singh Surjewala said in a tweet that the Congress supported the salary cut for MPs. However, suspending the MPLAD scheme would undermine the role of MPs, he observed.

"Dear PM, INC supports the salary cut for MPs! Please note that MPLAD is meant to execute developmental works in the constituency. Suspending it is a huge disservice to the constituents & will undermine the role & functions of MP," he tweeted.

OPPN. SLAMS SUSPENSION OF MPLAD SCHEME PAGE 8

## 'Karnataka refused to lift blockade'

**KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL**  
NEW DELHI

Kerala on Monday informed the Supreme Court that Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa had "openly declared" that the blockade imposed by his government on the inter-State border will not be removed in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Kerala, in an affidavit, said the CM's declaration came despite a SC order on April 3 to the two States and the Centre to formulate a mechanism by which patients from Kerala, in dire need of medical care, and flow of essential food and medicines are not blocked at the border by the Karnataka authorities. A Bench led by Justice L. Nageswara Rao is scheduled to hear the issue via video conferencing on April 7.

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## Thorough wash



Long fight: Fire fighters using fogging machines to disinfect an area in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The State has so far reported 144 COVID-19 cases, including 115 active ones. Eighteen people have recovered, while eleven have died. ■ VIJAY SONEJI

## 47% of patients below 40, says govt.

Maharashtra reports 21 deaths in past 24 hours; 704 new cases nationwide

**BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN**  
NEW DELHI

India has registered the largest single-day rise in COVID-19 cases and deaths in the past 24 hours with 704 new cases and over 30 deaths reported. The tally on Monday stood at 4,281 confirmed cases and 111 deaths, according to the Union Health Ministry.

According to reports from State Health Departments, the number of confirmed cases nationwide was 4,664, with 4,164 active cases.

The death toll rose to 141 since Sunday, while 359 persons had been discharged after recovery. The highest number of active cases were reported from Maharashtra at 868, with 52 deaths – 21 in the past 24 hours.

Andhra Pradesh reported two more deaths, while Punjab, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh reported one fatality each.



Fear factor: A painting to raise awareness about COVID-19 on Cuddalore Road in Puducherry. ■ S.S. KUMAR

Giving a break up of the data so far at the daily press briefing, Joint Secretary in the Union Health Ministry Lav Agarwal said, 76% of the confirmed cases were male and 24% female; 47% were below 40 years of age, 34% between 40 to 60 years and 19% above 60 years.

In terms of fatalities, 73% of the victims were male, Mr. Agarwal said. In terms of age, 63% were above the age of 60, 30% between 40 and 60 years and 7% below 40 years.

The official added that as of now, 86% of those who succumbed to the disease ex-

hibited pre-existing health problems, including diabetes, chronic kidney issues and heart related problems.

"With 19% confirmed cases among the elderly, and 63% deaths observed among them, elderly people form a high risk population, Mr. Agarwal pointed out.

"Further, with 37% deaths reported from people below 60 years, approximately 86% of deaths amongst people with co-morbidities indicate that young people with co-morbidities are also at high risk," he said.

Meanwhile, 52 staff members of a private hospital in Mumbai, including nurses, doctors and others, tested positive for the disease on Monday.

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MORE REPORTS ON PAGES 5, 8, 9, 10 & 11

U.S., U.K. FACE HARD TIME AS DEATHS SPIKE PAGE 12

## Pench tiger death raises COVID-19 fears

NTCA mulls test after a big cat tested positive for the virus in a U.S. zoo

**JACOB KOSHY**  
NEW DELHI

The spectre of COVID-19 has made its appearance in one of India's most storied tiger reserves. The death of a 10-year-old ailing male tiger, in the Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR) – the country's most prominent reserve – that succumbed to a "respiratory illness" last Saturday would have been a routine affair.

But a report of a confirmed COVID-19 infection in a tiger at the Bronx Zoo, in New York, United States and advisories by divisions of the Environment Ministry that deal



The tiger succumbed to a 'respiratory illness'. ■ REPRESENTATIONAL PHOTO

with the protection of the cats in zoos, as well as in Tiger Reserves has officials in the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) – the

organisation that manages the protection of India's 3,000-odd tigers – puzzling on whether the tiger should be tested for the novel coronavirus disease.

The people who handled the dead tiger and were involved in its post-mortem would be tested for the infection, PTR Field Director, Vikram Singh Parihar told *The Hindu*. The viscera samples collected as part of the standard protocol have been preserved and will be sent to the veterinary research college in Jabalpur as well as the Indian Veterinary Research Insti-

tute, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh. "The animal came to the pond frequently for water possibly because it was running a high fever. We gave him antibiotics on Friday but that didn't show much improvement. Finally, it died on Saturday morning. We still don't have a confirmed cause of death," he said.

Swabs from the throat and nose to test for rhinotracheitis, a viral infection that afflicts cats and causes respiratory illness were collected, an official at NTCA, Delhi, said.

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## Rumours fuel attacks on minority community

COVID-19 fear, anger behind attack on family in Gurugram, man in Bawana

**ASHOK KUMAR SAURABH TRIVEDI**  
GURUGRAM, NEW DELHI

In two separate incidents, a Muslim family was attacked by some youths in Gurugram minutes after the 9 p.m. lights-out on Sunday, while a 30-year-old man from the community was thrashed by a group of men in Harewali village in Bawana in outer-north Delhi over suspicion that he was part of a "conspiracy" to spread COVID-19.

Atif Warsi, the complainant from Gurugram, alleged that around 9.15 p.m., four persons, including his neigh-

bours Sonu and Bhutta, climbed up the stairs to his house and accused his family of shooting a video of them. They allegedly abused Mr. Warsi's mother and threatened them to leave the locality. A little later, Sonu returned and allegedly hit Mr. Warsi and his cousin Mubeen Khan with bricks. Mr. Warsi's father then made a PCR call and rushed the two to Civil Hospital in Sector 10.

A case has been registered on charges of promoting enmity on grounds of religion and criminal intimidation and six persons have been ar-

rested, said the police.

In Harewali village, three residents – Naveen, Prashant and Pramod – have been arrested and sent to judicial custody for allegedly beating up a man, Shamsad Ali, who had returned home after spending 45 days at a religious gathering in Raisen district, Madhya Pradesh.

Mr. Ali tried to reach the village by hiding inside a truck transporting vegetables. The truck was inspected at Azadpur market and he was detained. Mr. Ali was released after a medical screening. "When Ali reached the

village, some miscreants spread a rumour that he was a part of a group planning to spread COVID-19 in the village. He was held by some youths and taken to a farm on the outskirts and thrashed," a police officer said.

The incident took place on Sunday afternoon and was recorded by one of the accused on his mobile phone.

In yet another incident, four persons were arrested in Gurugram for allegedly opening fire outside Jama Masjid in Dhankot village.

MORE REPORTS ON PAGES 2 & 3