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Virus puts U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson in intensive care  
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## NEARBY



**Indore surpasses Delhi, Mumbai in death rate**  
BHOPL  
With deaths due to COVID-19 spiralling in Indore, the case fatality rate in the city touched 8.6% on Tuesday, arguably the highest for any city, even ahead of Mumbai and Delhi which had recorded thrice the number of cases.  
NORTH & EAST • PAGE 4

**Bihar to take action against 198 doctors**  
PATNA  
The Bihar government is all set to take action against 198 doctors who were found absent from duty on different dates. The State Health Department had earlier cancelled all leaves, except maternity and study leave, for doctors and healthcare personnel till April 30.  
NEWS • PAGE 9

**Delhi reports two more deaths, 51 new cases**  
NEW DELHI  
Two deaths and 51 new COVID-19 cases were reported in Delhi on Tuesday. The toll now stands at nine with the total number of cases reaching 576. Four of the new cases are from the Tablighi Jamaat centre in Nizamuddin. So far, 333 people from the centre have tested positive in Delhi.  
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# Govt. mulls lockdown extension amid requests from the States

Many States have appealed for its continuation in the face of rise in COVID cases

**NISTULA HEBBAR  
VIJAYTA SINGH  
NEW DELHI**  
The Union government on Tuesday indicated that it was actively considering an extension of the 21-day nationwide lockdown that began on March 25 and is due to end on April 14, as many States have openly appealed for its continuation as the number of COVID-19 cases continue to rise.

While Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhara Rao had requested Prime Minister Narendra Modi to extend the lockdown on Monday, Chief Minister Shivraj

**Lives of people are more important. We can tolerate lockdown. We can resurrect the economy later on but can't bring back lives of people**  
SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN  
Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister

**I am for the lockdown of the country furthermore after April 15. We can recover from economic problem but we cannot recover the lives of the people**  
K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO, Telangana Chief Minister



**We cannot withdraw the lockdown immediately. It has to be done in a phased manner, that is what I feel**  
ASHOK GEHLOT  
Rajasthan CM

**I feel that people have got used to the lockdown. We should take advantage of that and deal conservatively with the question of lifting the lockdown**  
T.S. SINGH DEO  
Chhattisgarh Health Minister

**Re-use masks, AIIMS staff told**

The AIIMS medical staff have been asked to reuse protective equipment. A circular said they will be provided with only five N-95 masks each for 20 days. The masks are to be disinfected and re-used at least four times each. ▶ PAGE 9

**Kerala panel for phased reversal**

The time is not yet ripe for the "full withdrawal of the lockdown" and it should be gradual and phased to ensure that the case load is always kept below the capacity of the healthcare system to deal with it, a Kerala task force has said. ▶ PAGE 5

**'Beware of cyberattacks'**

The International Criminal Police Organization has warned member countries that cybercriminals were attempting to target hospitals and institutions on the front lines of the fight against COVID-19 with ransomware. ▶ PAGE 10

## COVID-19

Singh Chouhan of Madhya Pradesh on Tuesday echoed the plea.

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot also called for a phased withdrawal of the lockdown, saying that saving lives was important.

In an interview to *The Hindu*, Chhattisgarh Health Minister T.S. Singh Deo said, "I feel people have got used to the lockdown. We should take advantage of that and deal conservatively with the question of lifting the lockdown. Certainly, borders of States should remain closed

although activities within districts are on to some extent. A conservative estimate and looking at the expected spike in cases, we must go for another 14 days of lockdown at least."

Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh is understood to have con-

veyed to the Prime Minister during a videoconference last week that the lockdown should not be lifted all of a sudden and that it should be done in three to four phases. "There should be a partial lifting in a graded and calibrated manner. Allow farmers to harvest their crops but

keep schools and colleges closed. Allow scooters and two-wheelers to ply first," a senior Punjab government official said.

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**U.S. TOLL CROSSES 11,000** ▶ PAGE 12

## Schools, colleges may remain closed till May 15

Nationwide COVID-19 toll touches 124

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI**  
The Union Health Ministry on Tuesday said the country has registered 13 deaths and 508 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, taking the total death toll to 124 with 4,789 cases nationwide.

A total of 326 persons have recovered from the infection, Joint Secretary in the Union Health Ministry Lav Agrawal said at the daily press briefing.

Amid calls from the States on the need for a calibrated lifting of the lockdown, a meeting of the Group of Ministers on COVID-19, chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, recommended that the closure of all educational institutions and restrictions on all religious activities having public participation be extended till May 15, irrespective of the government decision, official sources said.

The recommendation came as State Health Departments reported 20 more deaths, taking the nationwide toll to 165, with 5,126 confirmed cases.

Maharashtra reported 12 more deaths, taking the tally of the deceased so far to 64, with 1,018 confirmed cases. Four more deaths were reported from Gujarat, while Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Jammu & Kashmir and Tamil Nadu reported one death since Monday.

In Rajasthan, which saw the number of active cases touching 283 with 24 new cases, Health Minister Raghu Sharma said the government had decided to step up screening in hotspots using rapid testing kits. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said that one lakh random rapid anti-body tests would be conducted in the city's hotspots.

(With PTI inputs)

## A battle won



All smiles: Manmohan Singh, 73, a COVID-19 patient, being discharged after complete recovery at the Lok Nayak Hospital in New Delhi on Tuesday. • R.V. MOORTHY

## Kerala-Karnataka border row sorted out, Centre informs SC

'Agreement has been reached on protocol to allow patients'

**LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI**  
The Supreme Court on Tuesday disposed of a bunch of petitions concerning the Kerala-Karnataka border sealing case after the Union government informed that a consensus had been worked out to allow patients requiring urgent medical treatment to cross the Talapadi border and access hospitals in Mangaluru.

Appearing before a Bench led by Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said a meeting was held among the Union Home Secretary and the Chief Secretaries of the

States to amicably resolve the crisis. An agreement had been reached on the parameters and protocol for allowing patients into Karnataka.

On April 3, the court ordered the Centre, Kerala and Karnataka to confer immediately and "formulate parameters for passage of patients for urgent medical treatment at the border at Talapadi". The court then listed the case on April 7.

The April 3 order was based on petitions highlighting how Karnataka had enforced a blockade which, the court was informed, had resulted in deaths as ambulances bound for Mangaluru

were not being permitted to cross the border. The petitions asked the court to intervene to facilitate free movement of vehicles carrying persons who need urgent medical treatment across the border.

Karnataka argued that the blockade was put in place in the interest of public health. The situation regarding coronavirus was "really dire". Kerala was the "worst-affected" State in the country, with nearly 194 coronavirus cases. In this, Kasaragod, adjoining Karnataka, was the "worst-affected" district of Kerala with over 100 positive cases, it said.

## IRCTC suspends bookings of three trains till April 30

Passengers will be fully refunded

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI**  
The Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has cancelled bookings for three "corporate trains" operated by it till April 30. Earlier, the bookings were suspended only till the 21-day nationwide lockdown, that is, April 14.

The three trains are Kashi Mahalak Express (between Varanasi and Indore), the Lucknow-New Delhi Tejas Express and the Ahmedabad-Mumbai Tejas Express. An IRCTC official said that travellers who had already made their bookings on these trains will be fully refunded.



The Lucknow-New Delhi Tejas Express is one of the trains suspended.

The move comes amid reports that the Centre is considering extending the lockdown to check the spread of COVID-19 following requests from State governments.

## Delhi's '5T' war against virus

From mass testing to 24x7 tracking, CM spells out his plan

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI**  
Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday announced a "5T plan" created by his government to contain COVID-19 spread in Delhi. These five Ts are testing, tracing, treatment, teamwork and tracking-monitoring.

"All the nations which remained a step ahead of COVID-19 have managed to control it. I have been in touch with various experts and doctors and we have formulated a five-point plan to deal with the situation in Delhi," the Chief Minister said.

The first T is testing, which when done on a mass scale enables the actual data of people affected by novel coronavirus. "Like South Korea, we will be testing on a large

scale. We have ordered testing for around 50,000 people and rapid testing rounds for 1 lakh people which will begin from Friday," he said.

Through rapid testing, the government will also be able to identify COVID-19 hotspots and take necessary action, said Mr. Kejriwal.

The second T is tracing, which involves identifying and quarantining people who have come in contact with infected persons. "We are taking the help of police to trace whether the people who have been advised to self-quarantine are actually doing it or not. For this, we have given 27,702 contact numbers to the police through which they are tracking their movement," he said.

The third component, he

said, is treatment. The LNJP and GB Pant hospitals had been declared primary hospitals for COVID-19 treatment with 1,500 and 500 beds respectively. While the Rajiv Gandhi hospital has 450 beds, 2,450 beds are available in government hospitals and 450 beds at private ones.

The fourth element of the five-point plan is teamwork and collective efforts are being made to fight the virus. All State governments, he said, must learn from each other and work together.

The fifth T, he said, is tracking and monitoring. "It is my responsibility to ensure that all these measures are in place and all the systems are functioning smoothly. I am tracking and monitoring all these things 24x7," he said.

## Mehbooba leaves jail, detained at home now

Regional parties call for her release

**PEERZADA ASHIQ  
SRINAGAR**  
Former Chief Minister and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti was shifted from a Srinagar sub-jail to her official residence, also declared a sub-jail, on Tuesday to put her under house arrest.

"In exercise of the powers conferred by Clause (b) of Section 2 of the Prisoners Act, 1990, the government hereby declares Fairview, Gupkar Road, Srinagar as subsidiary jail," an order issued by Principal Secretary to the J&K government Shaheen Kabra said.

Fairview is the official residence of Ms. Mufti, who was arrested on August 5, 2019, as part of a crackdown ahead of the withdrawal of J&K's special status. She was booked under the Public Safety Act on February 6 and has been in solitary confinement for more than eight months.



Mehbooba Mufti

Several regional parties, including the National Conference (NC), JK Peoples Movement (JKPM) and JK Apni Party (JKAP), had asked the Centre to release Ms. Mufti.

"Ms. Mufti must be set free. Shifting her home while continuing to keep her detained is a cop-out," said NC vice-president Omar Abdullah, who was released from detention late last month.

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