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BJP PRESIDENT CONNECTS WITH 3.5 LAKH PARTY WORKERS VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE DURING LOCKDOWN



PM EXHORTED THE CITIZENS TO FOLLOW SEVEN STEPS IN THEIR FIGHT AGAINST CORONA PANDEMIC

- First, to take special care of the elderly, especially those who have chronic disease.
- Second to completely adhere to the 'Lakshman Rekha' of Lockdown and Social Distancing; use homemade face-covers and masks without fail.
- Third to follow the instructions issued by AYUSH ministry to enhance immunity.
- Fourth to download the Arogya Setu Mobile App to help prevent the spread of corona infection. Inspire others to download the app as well.
- Fifth to take care of poor families; to fulfil their food requirements.
- Sixth to be compassionate towards the people who work in every individual business or industry. Do not deprive them of their livelihood.
- Seventh to pay utmost respect to our nation's Corona Warriors – our doctors and nurses, sanitation workers and police force.

INDIA FIGHTS AGAINST COVID-19

'JAAN BHI, JAHAAN BHI'



BJP National President Shri JP Nadda hoisting party flag at his residence, New Delhi on the occasion of Party's Foundation Day 06 April



BJP National President Shri JP Nadda paying floral tribute to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar on his Jayanti in New Delhi



BJP National President Shri JP Nadda lighting Diyas at 9 PM for 9 Minutes for unity against COVID19 at his residence, New Delhi



BJP National President Shri JP Nadda interacting with BJP National Office Bearers via video conferencing



Union Minister Shri Amit Shah paying floral tributes to Bharat Mata, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee and Pt. Deendayal Upadhyay on the 40th foundation day of Bharatiya Janata Party at his residence in New Delhi.

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EXTENSION OF LOCKDOWN TILL 3RD MAY

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twitter

@narendramodi



Greetings to all fellow @BJP4India Karyakartas on the Sthapana Diwas of the Party. Tributes to all those who have toiled hard to build the Party for decades, due to which BJP has got the opportunity to serve crores of Indians across our nation's length and breadth. #BJPat40

@amitshah

Modi government is leaving no stone unturned in this fight against COVID-19, ensuring minimum disruption in people's lives while planning for a strong and stable India in days ahead. Steps taken by RBI today, to boost Indian economy, further reinforce PM @narendramodi's vision.



@nitingadkari



Thank You @nsitharaman Ji and the Income Tax Department for bringing relief to 8.2 lakh small businesses by granting them income tax refunds of worth RS. 5204 crores. Our government has always been proactive in dealing with the corona crisis and this historic step would be a further boost to the economy.

facebook

Our Hon PM @narendramodi Ji is leading the fight against COVID-19 from the front. "बसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्" is the core of India n values and Hon Modi Ji is taking this concept ahead by lending support to other nations in these trying times. The whole world is looking towards him.



— **Jagat Prakash Nadda**

Pleased to witness this silent movement of humanity flowing across the nation. Compassionate #Corona Warriors fighting tirelessly to help overcome and defeat this insurmountable adversity faced by mother India!



— **Om Prakash (Om ji) Mathur**

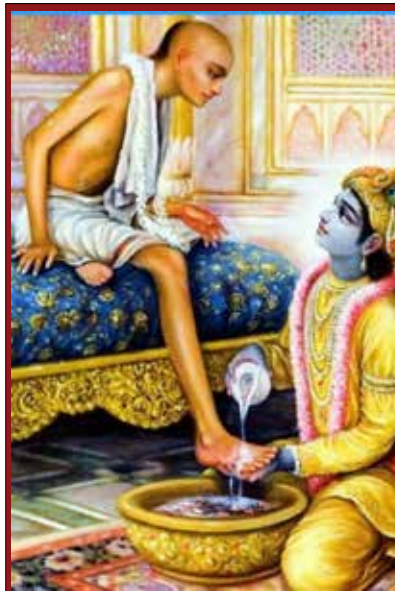
When @narendramodi says review on April 20 , it has feedback of sound scientific & analytical thinking by a vast group & understanding of nation's psyche. JAAN & JAHAN will both be together taken care of.. That's the outcome of holistic thinking. #IndiaFightsCorona



— **B L Santhosh**

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM CORONA VIRUS; FOLLOW THESE STEPS

- Stay away from huge gatherings as much possible.
- Wash your hands properly with soap.
- Avoid touching your face, nose and mouth repeatedly.
- Get yourself checked at nearest hospitals if you are frequently coughing or sneezing.
- While sneezing and coughing make sure droplets do not fall on others.
- Wear masks, gloves and try to maintain distance from other people.
- If you wear masks, then adjust it only with clean hands.
- Avoid handshakes and start greeting others with 'Namaste'.



Kamal Sandesh Parivar

wishes a very happy

AKSHAYA TRITIYA

(26 APRIL)

to all of its readers

TIME TO INTENSIFY FIGHT AGAINST COVID 19 PANDEMIC

In the dynamic and determined leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi India is valiantly waging a war against the Covid19 pandemic unitedly. So far, the nation has been able to contain the large-scale spread of Covid19 pandemic in the country and has been able to create widespread awareness about the kind of threat posed by it to the humanity. As the world witnesses with amazement the way the entire country observes the call for clanging thalis or lighting a lamp on the appeal of the world's most popular leader Shri Narendra Modi, the people in India have shown rare unity in the fight against the Covid 19 pandemic. In witnessing such unique spectacles in a country like India, the second largest in the world in terms of population and as huge as it is diverse; one can only salute to the united will and solidarity of the Indian people who want to emerge victorious out of this pandemic which has even hit many developed countries very hard. There is no doubt that the people have created an unparallel record by overwhelmingly responding to the appeal for lockdown and observing it strictly in almost entire country.

The countrywide lockdown which was announced by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for 21 days starting from 24th April 2020 midnight had to be extended upto 3rd May 2020 now. Although the nation responded with strong determination and discipline, the lapses in certain part of the country have further prolonged the period of lockdown. The only solace has been that the cases have not grown exponentially as per the apprehensions of various experts, but the linear progression of cases has necessitated further caution and continuance of preventive measures. There is no doubt that the fight against Covid 19 is going to be a prolonged one and even after the immediate challenge is met, there is a need for a long period of caution and preparedness.

IT IS TO BE NOTED THAT IN THIS PERIOD OF EXTREME CRISIS THE GOVERNMENT HAS RESPONDED WITH A LARGE NUMBER OF RELIEF MEASURES FOR THE POOR AND NEEDY SECTION OF THE POPULATION. THE RELIEF PACKAGE ANNOUNCED BY THE FINANCE MINISTER SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN AND RBI WILL CERTAINLY ADDRESS THE IMMEDIATE NEEDS OF A LARGE SECTION OF THE POPULATION.

It is to be noted that in this period of extreme crisis the government has responded with a large number of relief measures for the poor and needy section of the population. The relief package announced by the Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman and RBI will certainly address the immediate needs of a large section of the population. The supply of ration, gas cylinder along with cash to vulnerable section of the society for three months will definitely ease pressure from a large number of people. In addition to this, various state governments, welfare groups, philanthropists, individuals from private and corporate sectors and a large number of volunteers and social and cultural groups have come forward to help the needy in the hour of extreme crisis. The people have also come forward to donate generously to

the PM CARES fund on the appeal of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi showing that the spirit of service and compassion rules the mind and heart of every Indian. The BJP Karyakartas are also organising massive relief works across the country providing food and various reliefs to the people while donating to the PM Cares fund on the appeal of BJP National President Shri JP Nadda. Entire country appears to be standing united in the war against Covid 19 pandemic.

The Covid 19 pandemic has gripped the entire world and many developed countries including US and many European countries are struggling hard to contain the crisis emanating out of it. Apart from loss of human lives, it has created untold miseries and various hardships to the people in the wake of lockdown necessary for containing the pandemic. India has hitherto been able to stop the pandemic from getting out of control but any lapse anywhere in the country may lead the nation to huge crisis. The time has come to redeem the pledge to defeat the Covid 19 pandemic and stand by the entire humanity in this war. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi India has proved its commitment towards the service of humanity by providing crucial help to many countries in this time of crisis while continuing to commit itself in the fight against this pandemic in the days to come. Time has come to intensify the fight against Covid 19 pandemic.

 shivshakti@kamalsandesh.org

**INDIA FIGHTS AGAINST COVID-19:
PM ADDRESSES NATION FOR 4TH TIME**

EXTENSION OF LOCKDOWN TILL 3RD MAY: MODI



- **HIGH RISK AREAS AND HOTSPOTS TO BE UNDER CONSTANT VIGIL**
- **EASE OF CERTAIN RESTRICTIONS IN LOW RISK AREAS FROM 20 APRIL**
- **DETAILED GUIDELINES TO BE ISSUED BY THE UNION GOVERNMENT**
- **PM SEEKS SUPPORT FOR SEVEN THINGS INCLUDING TAKING CARE OF ELDERLY AND ADHERING TO SOCIAL DISTANCING AND LOCKDOWN**

The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 14 April, 2020 announced the extension of lockdown till 3rd May, 2020. The earlier 21 day lockdown is ending on the 14th of April 2020.

Addressing the Nation in combating the spread of the corona virus, PM said the extension of lockdown was decided keeping in mind suggestions from many states, experts and the people. He requested people to continue maintaining vigil and to adhere to social distancing during this lockdown.

Prime Minister also suggested that those areas which are of low risk may be permitted to open up for certain specific activities from 20th April 2020.

PM Shri Modi said, "Until 20th April, every town, every police station, every district, every state will be evaluated on how much the lockdown is being followed. Areas that succeed in this litmus test, those which will not be in the hot-spot category, and will have less likelihood to turn into a hot-spot maybe allowed to open up select necessary activities from 20th April".

"However, permissions will be withdrawn immediately if lockdown rules are broken and if there is threat of spread of Coronavirus" he cautioned. A detailed guideline will be issued by the Government tomorrow in this regard.

The Easing of restrictions in the low risk areas is being done keeping in mind the difficulties being faced by the poor and daily wage earners, he said.

"Those who earn daily, make ends meet with daily income, they are my family. One of my top-most priorities is to reduce the difficulties in their lives. The government has made every possible effort to help them through Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Yojna. Their interests have also been taken care of while making the new guidelines" he said.

Paying tributes to Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar, on his birth anniversary today, Shri Narendra Modi said, "I am well aware of the problems you have faced -some for food, some for movement from place to place, and others for staying away from homes and families. However, for the sake of your country, you are fulfilling your duties like a disciplined soldier. This is the power of 'We, the People of India' that our constitution talks about."

Shri Narendra Modi mentioned that India had been pro-active even before a single case of COVID -19 surfaced in the country. He said, the screening of the international passengers, 14 day mandatory isolation of the international travellers, shutting of malls, clubs, gyms were taken at very early stages. Prime Minister

said India also proactively went into a nation wide lock down which was ending on the 14th April.

Compared to other Covid affected World's big & powerful countries, he said, India is in a very well managed situation.

"A month, month and a half ago, several countries had been at par with India in terms of Corona infection. But today, Corona cases in those countries are 25 to 30 times than that of India. Thousands of people have tragically died in those countries. Had India not adopted a holistic and integrated approach, taking quick and decisive action; the situation in India today would have been completely different", he said.

Prime Minister said India has benefitted from Lockdown. He said notwithstanding the economic travails being faced, it is clearly the correct path as it protected so many lives in the country.

"From an economic only point of view, it undoubtedly looks costly right now; but measured against the lives of Indian citizens, there is no comparison itself. The path that India has taken within our limited resources has become a topic of discussion in the entire world today", he said.

He assured the country that there are ample reserves of medicines, food and other essential goods. Prime Minister also assured that the health infrastructure is being further strengthened.

"From having only one testing lab for Coronavirus in

January, we now have more than 220 functional testing labs. Global experience shows that 1,500-1,600 beds are required for every 10,000 patients. In India, we have arranged more than 1 Lakh beds today. Not only this, there are more than 600 hospitals which are dedicated for Covid treatment. As we speak, these facilities are being increased even more rapidly" he said.

SHRI NARENDRA MODI EXHORTED THE CITIZENS TO FOLLOW SEVEN STEPS IN THEIR FIGHT AGAINST THE PANDEMIC.

- First, to take special care of the elderly, especially those who have chronic disease.
- Second to completely adhere to the 'Lakshman Rekha' of Lockdown and Social Distancing; use homemade face-covers and masks without fail.
- Third to follow the instructions issued by AYUSH ministry to enhance immunity.
- Fourth to download the Arogya Setu Mobile App to help prevent the spread of corona infection. Inspire others to download the app as well.
- Fifth to take care of poor families; to fulfil their food requirements.
- Sixth to be compassionate towards the people who work in every individual business or industry. Do not deprive them of their livelihood.
- Seventh to pay utmost respect to our nation's Corona Warriors – our doctors and nurses, sanitation workers and police force. ■

WHO PRAISES PM MODI'S 'TIMELY AND TOUGH' DECISION ON CORONA LOCKDOWN 2.0

The World Health Organisation (WHO) on 14 April, 2020 praised the Narendra Modi government's "timely and tough" decision to extend the coronavirus lockdown across India to another three weeks till May 03. "World Health Organization commends India's timely and tough actions to stop COVID19. It may be early to talk about results in numbers, but a six-week nationwide lock down to facilitate effective physical distancing, coupled with expansion of core public health measures such as detection, isolation and tracing contact of COVID19 positive people, would go a long way in arresting the virus spread," the Regional Director, WHO, said in a statement issued in New Delhi.

She said that despite huge and multiple challenges, India has been demonstrating unwavering commitment in its fight against the pandemic. "In these testing times, the action lies as much with the communities as with the authorities and the health workforce. It is indeed time for each and every one to contribute their best and together beat the virus," the WHO official said.

WHO executive director J Ryan had earlier praised India's tremendous capacity in fighting corona saying that it led the world in eradicating two pandemics - small-pox and polio. While announcing his decision to extend the 21-day lockdown till May 3, PM Shri Modi said that when compared to other Covid affected big countries, India is now in a better position.



PM INTERACTS WITH CMS TO TACKLING COVID-19

EFFORT OF CENTRE AND STATES DEFINITELY HELPED REDUCE THE IMPACT OF COVID-19: PM

P rime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on April 11, 2020 interacted with Chief Ministers of all states via video conferencing to strategize ahead for tackling COVID-19. This was the third such interaction of the Prime Minister with the Chief Ministers, the earlier ones had been held on 2nd April and 20th March, 2020.

Prime Minister observed that the combined effort of the Centre and the States has definitely helped reduce the impact of COVID-19 but since the situation is rapidly evolving, constant vigilance is paramount. He emphasized the criticality of coming 3-4 weeks for determining the impact of the steps taken till now to contain the virus, adding that teamwork is the key to facing the challenge.

Shri Modi categorically assured that India has adequate supplies of essential medicines and said that measures are being taken to ensure availability of protective gear and critical equipment for all front-line workers. He also gave a stern message against black marketing and hoarding. Condemning and expressing distress at the instances of attacks on the doctors and medical staff, and at incidents of misbehavior with students from North-East and

Kashmir, Prime Minister underlined that such cases need to be dealt with firmly. He also spoke about the need to curb Lockdown violations and ensure that social distancing is followed.

Talking about the Exit Plan from Lockdown, Prime Minister said that there seems to be a consensus amongst the states on extension of Lockdown by another two weeks. He underlined that the motto of the government earlier was 'jaan hai to jahaan hai' but now is 'jaan bhi jahaan bhi'.

Shri Modi talked about strengthening healthcare infrastructure and reaching out to patients through tele-medicine. He also suggested that direct marketing for farm produce can be incentivised to prevent crowding in mandis, for which model APMC laws should be reformed swiftly. Such steps will help farmers sell products at their doorstep.

Prime Minister also spoke about popularizing the Aarogya Setu app to ensure downloads in greater numbers. He referred to how South Korea and Singapore got success in contact tracing. Based on those experiences, India has made its own effort through the app which will be an essential tool in India's fight against the pandemic, he said. He also

referred to the possibility of the app being an e-pass which could subsequently facilitate travel from one place to another.

Talking about the economic challenges, Prime Minister Shri Modi said that the crisis is an opportunity to become self-reliant and turn the nation into an economic powerhouse.

The Chief Ministers provided feedback about the COVID positive cases in their respective states, steps taken by them to maintain social distancing, ramp up healthcare infrastructure, mitigate difficulties of migrants and maintain supply of essentials. The Chief Ministers suggested that Lockdown should be extended by two weeks. They also sought financial and fiscal assistance from the Centre to boost their resources in this fight against the pandemic.

The interaction was also attended by Union Home Minister, Defence Minister, Health Minister, Principal Secretary, Cabinet Secretary and other senior officials of Government of India.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MEETING

- Chief Ministers suggest extension of Lockdown by two weeks
- Our mantra earlier was 'jaan hai to jahaan hai' but now is 'jaan bhi jahaan bhi said PM
- 3-4 weeks critical to determine impact of steps taken till now to curb spread of the virus the PM said.
- PM suggests specific measures for agriculture and allied sector including modification of APMC laws to facilitate sale of farm produce.
- 'Aarogya Setu' app is an essential tool in our fight against COVID-19, can subsequently act as e-pass to facilitate travel said the PM.
- He condemns attacks on health professionals and incidents of misbehavior with students from North-East and Kashmir.
- PM assures that the country has adequate supplies of essential medicines; gives a stern message against black marketing and hoarding. ■

CENTRE OFFERS BIG RELIEF TO FARMERS AND FISHERIES

The Centre on 16 April, 2020 kept all agri-related activities under exempted categories for the lockdown and expanded them to include inland fisheries after allowing marine fishery operations to resume recently.

In addition, it sent an advisory to all states to utilise funds under the water resources ministry's Jal Jeevan Mission to mitigate drinking water requirements of residents in both rural and urban areas, including of those residing in shelter homes.

The exemptions in agriculture, fisheries and livestock sectors were devised keeping in view the feedback the agriculture ministry received from the ground. Since the lockdown period coincides with peak harvest season, the home ministry put all related activities as well as procurement operations under the exempted categories with conditions that these should be continued while adhering to social distancing and other hygiene practices.

The move on fisheries came in the backdrop of demands from the sector as lakhs of fishermen had been out of work ever since the lockdown was imposed last month. In fact, a number of marine fishermen were out in the sea for fishing when the lockdown order came. They all subsequently got stranded on arriving back at the coast because they did not have any logistics to sell their catch or even go to their villages.

As for procurement, Nafed has procured 1,24,125 metric tonnes of pulses and oilseeds on minimum support price, worth over Rs 606 crore, during the lockdown. "This has benefited 91,710 farmers," said the agriculture ministry which had allowed procurement of gram and mustard under central price support schemes in 13 states. The procurement of wheat, on the other hand, was started in Punjab on Wednesday with more states promising to come on board to ensure the operations by April 20.

PM INTERACTS WITH OPPOSITION LEADERS



‘ENTIRE COUNTRY IS STANDING UNITED BEHIND THE PM’: OPPOSITION LEADERS

P rime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on April 08, 2020 interacted with floor leaders of political parties in Parliament, via video conference. Prime Minister said that the entire world is currently facing the grave challenge of COVID-19, adding that the present situation is an epoch changing event in mankind's history and we must evolve to counter its impact. He praised the efforts of state governments working together with the Centre in this fight against the pandemic. He noted that the country has witnessed constructive and positive politics through the coming together of all sections of polity to present a united front in this battle. He also praised the sense of belonging, discipline, dedication and commitment with which each and every citizen is contributing in this endeavour, be it in following social distancing, Janta Curfew or the Lockdown.

Shri Narendra Modi underlined the impact of the emerging situation, as witnessed in the resource constraints. Yet, India has been among the few nations to control the pace of spread of the virus till now. He also warned that the situation keeps changing continuously and one needs to maintain vigil at all times.

The Prime Minister underlined that the situation in the country is akin to a ‘social emergency’. The country has been forced to take tough decisions, and must continue to remain vigilant. He said that several state governments, district administrations and experts have asked for extension of the phase of Lockdown.

He noted that in these changing circumstances, the country should simultaneously try to bring about a change in its work culture and working style. He said that the priority of the government is saving each and every life. He added that the country is facing serious economic challenges as a result of COVID-19, and the government is committed to overcoming them.

Top officials of the Government of India gave detailed presentations on steps being taken to meet the emerging challenges, including status of distribution of benefits under PM Garib Kalyan Yojana.

The leaders thanked the Prime Minister for the meeting, appreciated the timely measures taken by him and said that the entire country is standing united behind him during the crisis. They talked about boosting the health and morale of the healthcare workers, ramping up testing facilities,

the need to assist smaller states and UTs and tackling the challenges of hunger and malnutrition. They also spoke about economic and other policy measures to boost the country's capability in this battle against the pandemic. Suggestions were given by the leaders on extending the Lockdown and on a phased exit after Lockdown ends.

Prime Minister thanked the leaders for their

constructive suggestions and feedback, adding that their commitment to assist the government in this battle reaffirms the democratic foundations of the country and the spirit of cooperative federalism.

Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, senior officials of Government of India and leaders of political parties from across the country participated in the interaction. ■

Government brings ordinance to 'Save health workers and other corona warriors'

- **NOW ATTACK ON HEALTH WORKERS IS A COGNIZABLE AND NON-BAILABLE OFFENCE**
- **UPTO 7 YEARS IN JAIL FOR ATTACKING**
- **FOR PROPERTY DAMAGE, GUILTY WILL PAY A FINE OF DOUBLE THE MARKET RATE**

The central government on 22 April, 2020 brought in an ordinance under which any person who attacks a health worker who is treating Covid-19 cases can be jailed for a maximum of seven years. The ordinance was brought in to amend the century old Epidemic Act.

Addressing a press conference, Union Minister Shri Prakash Javdekar said the ordinance has been brought in to "save health workers and other corona warriors". Under the new law, attack on health workers is a cognizable and non-bailable offence. For timely action, the ordinance stipulates a period of 30 days under which investigation on attack against health workers must be completed. It says the verdict in such cases should be delivered within one year.

The ordinance awards the following punishments: Normal cases: Jail term: 3 months to 5 years Fine: Rs 50,000 to Rs 2 lakh. Serious cases: Jail term: 6 months to 7 years Fine: Rs 1 lakh to Rs 7 lakh. In case damage is caused to the vehicles and clinics of health workers, the guilty will be made to pay a fine which is double the market rate of the property damaged.

This move comes a day after the Indian Medical



Association demanded the Centre to bring in a law on urgent basis to protect medical professionals from attack on duty. This demand was amid rising incidents of violence against healthcare workers on the frontline of the fight against Covid-19.

Welcoming the decision the IMA said the COVID-19 has only made us acutely aware of our helplessness against mindless abuse and violence. Stigma and social boycott are everywhere. Harassment by administration is nothing but violence by the state. Our legitimate needs for safe workplaces have to be met and the central has now done its, the association added. ■

Modi Govt makes COVID-19 testing, treatment FREE for 50 crore PMJAY beneficiaries

The Narendra Modi Government has decided to make the testing and treatment for COVID-19 available under Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PM JAY). The testing and treatment of COVID -19 is already available for free in the public facilities. Now, more than 50 crore citizens, eligible under the Government of India's health assurance scheme will be able to avail free testing through private labs and treatment for COVID-19 in empanelled hospitals, the National Health Authority (NHA) said in a statement on 04 April, 2020.

The statement further said that the empanelled hospitals can use their own authorised testing facilities or tie-up with an authorized testing facility. These tests would be carried out as per the protocol set by Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) and by private labs approved/registered by ICMR. Similarly, treatment of COVID-19 by private hospitals will be covered under AB-PMJAY.

Commenting on the initiative, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare said, "In this unprecedented crisis we have to very actively involve the private sector as a key partner and stakeholder in the fight against COVID-19. Making testing and treatment available under Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY will significantly expand our capacities by including private sector hospitals and labs and mitigate the adverse impact of this catastrophic illness on the poor."

The Central government's decision comes with the objective to increase the supply of testing and treatment facilities and increase access to them by roping in the private sector through AB-



PM JAY scheme.

As per the ICMR guidelines for COVID-19 testing by private laboratories in India, the test is to be conducted by laboratory which has NABL accreditation for real-time PCR assay for RNA virus. Laboratory test should be only offered when prescribed by a qualified physician for COVID-19 testing.

The NHA said that this decision will also help attract more private sector players for providing testing and treatment for COVID-19.

Active private sector involvement will be critical in case there is a surge in the number of COVID-19 patient that need care. States are in the process of enlisting private sector hospitals that can be converted into COVID-19 ONLY hospitals.

Information on symptoms, testing and treatment for COVID-19 can be accessed from the website of the MoHFW and by calling the national COVID-19 helpline 1075.

NHA is the apex agency of the Government of India responsible for the design, roll-out, implementation and management of Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PM JAY) across the country.



MINISTERS SHOULD REMAIN IN TOUCH WITH STATE AND DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION: PM

P rime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on April 06, 2020 interacted with the Central Ministers via video conference.

Prime Minister appreciated the leadership of the Ministers and said that the continuous feedback provided by them has been effective in strategizing for tackling COVID-19. He said it is imperative that the leaders communicate exhaustively with the state and district administration, especially in the districts which are hotspots for the pandemic, to be apprised of the ground situation and also provide solutions to the emerging problems. It is also important to ensure there is no crowding at PDS centres, maintain effective monitoring, take action on complaints and prevent black marketing and rise in prices of essentials, he said.

Shri Narendra Modi said that welfare of farmers is of high importance. He also said that the government would provide all possible help to farmers in the harvesting season. In this regard, he suggested harnessing technology and encouraging exploration of innovative solutions like using 'truck aggregators' to connect farmers with mandis, on the lines of app based cab services. He also underlined the need to devise a strategy to ensure procurement of tribal products so that the source of income source of the indigenous tribal populace remains intact.

Prime Minister stressed on the importance of monitoring continuously and ensuring that the benefits of PM Garib Kalyan Yojana keep reaching the intended beneficiaries in a seamless manner. He added that planning should incorporate the possibility of further spread of the virus. There should be continuous monitoring to maintain timelines of production of essential medicines and protection equipment. Micro level-planning is essential to maintain supply lines and availability of essentials.

Stating that lockdown measures and social distancing must go hand in hand, Shri Narendra Modi said that it is essential to strategize for the emergent conditions once lockdown ends. He asked the Ministers to prepare a list of ten major decisions and ten priority areas of focus once lockdown ends, while exhorting them to identify and implement pending reforms in their Ministries. While mentioning that due to the emergent challenges, the country needs to lessen its dependence on other nations, he asked all departments to maintain an objective index on how their work will promote Make in India.

Talking about the impact of COVID-19 on the economy, Prime Minister said that the government must work on war-footing to mitigate the impact, adding that the Ministries should prepare a Business Continuity Plan. He noted that a graded plan to slowly open

departments where hotspots aren't existing should be made, adding that the crisis offers an opportunity to become self-dependent in the medical sector. Highlighting the impact on India's exports, he asked the Ministers to submit actionable suggestions on boosting manufacturing and exports and ensure that new sectors and countries are added in India's export net. Prime Minister also asked the Ministers to popularize the Aarogya Setu app in the rural areas and grass root institutions to further spread information and awareness about the pandemic.

The Ministers praised the initiative of #9pm9minute, saying that people from all corners of the country

THE MINISTERS PRAISED THE INITIATIVE OF #9PM9MINUTE, SAYING THAT PEOPLE FROM ALL CORNERS OF THE COUNTRY PARTICIPATED IN IT, BRINGING TOGETHER THE ENTIRE POPULACE IN THE BATTLE AGAINST THE PANDEMIC.

challenges.

Union Ministers of Government of India, Principal Secretary, Cabinet Secretary and other senior officials of Government of India participated in the interaction. ■

participated in it, bringing together the entire populace in the battle against the pandemic. They apprised the Prime Minister about efforts to tackle difficulties faced by migrant labour, preventing misuse of social media to create panic, maintenance of supply lines of essentials, issues faced by front line workers and efforts to mitigate them.

Top officials of the Government of India gave detailed presentations on steps being taken to meet the emerging

PM NARENDRA MODI LIGHTS UP LAMP AT HIS RESIDENCE

PM Shri Narendra Modi lit a lamp after turning off all lights at his residence in New Delhi on 5 April, 2020. Shri Modi, during his address to the nation earlier, had appealed to the citizens to switch off lights for nine minutes at 9 PM to show solidarity in the fight against Coronavirus.



PM REVIEWS COUNTRYWIDE PREPAREDNESS REGARDING AVAILABILITY OF HEALTH FACILITIES

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi chaired a joint meeting of the Empowered Groups constituted for planning and ensuring implementation of COVID-19 response activities in the country on 04 April, 2020.

In a series of tweets, PM Shri wrote that he reviewed countrywide preparedness regarding availability of hospitals, proper isolation and quarantine facilities as well as disease surveillance, testing and critical care training and also directed the concerned groups and officials to ensure sufficient production, procurement and availability of all essential medical equipment such as PPEs, masks, gloves and ventilators.

@narendramodi

Reviewed countrywide preparedness regarding availability of hospitals, proper isolation and quarantine facilities as well as disease surveillance, testing and critical care training.





‘SPORTSPERSONS MUST BOOST THE MORALE OF THE NATION’

P rime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on April 03, 2020 interacted with eminent sportspersons via video conference. Prime Minister said that COVID-19 is an adversary of the entire humanity and the gravity of the situation can be ascertained from the fact that for the first time since World War II, the Olympics has been postponed. Several other prominent international sporting events like Wimbledon and domestic sporting events like Indian Premier League for cricket have been shifted as well due to the challenges created by the pandemic.

Shri Narendra Modi praised the sportspersons for bringing glory to the nation through stellar performances on the field. Now they have a very important role to play in boosting the morale of the nation as well as spreading the message of social distancing along with asking people to continuously follow advisories given during lockdown. He underlined that the traits learnt in sports training viz the ability to face challenges, self-discipline, positivity and self-belief are the essential tools to combat the spread of the virus.

Prime Minister asked them to include the following

five points in their message to people: ‘sankalp’ to fight the pandemic, ‘sanyam’ to follow social distancing, ‘sakaratomakta’ to maintain positivity, ‘samman’ to respect the frontline soldiers in this battle including the medical fraternity, the police personnel etc and ‘sahyog’ at personal level as well as at national level through contribution to PM-CARES fund. He also asked them to highlight the importance of both physical and mental fitness and also popularize guidelines released by AYUSH Ministry.

The sportspersons praised the leadership of the Prime Minister in this challenging time. They also thanked him for ensuring that the frontline health care workers and police personnel involved in this battle get the respect they truly deserve for their selfless service. They talked about the importance of discipline, mental strength, following a fitness regimen and taking steps to boost immunity.

Shri Narendra Modi mentioned that it is imperative India emerges victorious in this battle against the pandemic and expressed confidence in pro-active participation by the sportspersons in this battle.

More than 40 top sportspersons from across

disciplines including Bharat Ratna Shri Sachin Tendulkar, BCCI President Shri Sourav Ganguly, Women's Hockey team captain Ms. Rani Rampal, ace badminton player Ms. PV Sindhu, Kabaddi player and DSP in Himanchal Pradesh Police Shri Ajay Thakur, sprinter Ms Hima Das, para athlete high jumper Shri Sharad Kumar, top tennis player Ms. Ankita Raina, mercurial cricketer Shri Yuvraj Singh and Men's cricket team captain Shri Virat Kohli participated in the video conference. Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports and other senior officials of the Ministry also participated in the interaction. ■



MATTERHORN MOUNTAIN IN SWISS ALPS lighted with **TRI-COLOUR** in the name of **HOPE** after India under PM **SHRI NARENDRA MODI**

supplied HCQ tablets & leads the #Covid_19 battle...

#IndiaFightsCorona

CENTRE APPROVES RS 11,092 CRORE FUND FOR STATES TO DEAL WITH CORONAVIRUS

Union Minister for Home Affairs Shri Amit Shah on April 03, 2020 approved the release of Rs 11,092 crore under the State Disaster Risk Management Fund (SDRMF), to all states to battle the coronavirus pandemic. The move comes a day after the assurance given by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi during his video conference meeting with chief ministers of the states.

"The Central Government has released in advance its share of first installment of State Disaster Risk Management Fund for the year 2020-21, amounting to Rs. 11,092 crores, with a view to augment funds available with the State Governments," a press release said.

On March 14, Centre released a special fund for utilisation of State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) to make available additional funds for the state governments so they can utilise it for taking preventive measures to contain coronavirus.

The fund was meant to be utilised for setting up quarantine facilities, sample collection and screening; setting up additional testing laboratories, cost of consumables; purchase of personal protection equipments for healthcare, municipal, police and fire authorities; purchase of thermal scanners, ventilators, air purifiers, and consumables for government hospitals.

"Central Government is sensitive to the need for providing food and shelter to homeless people including migrant labourers, who are stranded due to lockdown measures. Accordingly, on 28.03.2020, the Central Government allowed the States Government to use SDRF for this purpose also," the release said.

INDIA, CANADA, AUSTRALIA AMONG TOP TO CONTROL COVID 19 OUTBREAK

At a time when strict lockdown has been enforced by many countries to battle Coronavirus pandemic spread, statistic from Union ministry of health and family welfare (MOHFW) has revealed that India took longer than most countries in the West to show up 12,000 or more number of Covid-hit positive patients. The rate shows India took six days from its tally of 3000-6000 Coronavirus patients last week to double to 12,799.

This when the US and Germany took just two days, Italy three days while the UK, Spain and France each took four days to double up their tally to cross 12,000-mark. "This shows how our lockdown 1.0 for the 21 days beginning March 25, that was widely touted as biggest exercise in the world to contain pandemic, was successful. This combined with restriction on rail network and domestic airport restrictions has now given the opportunity to resume activity in industrial zones and rural areas while prescribing workplace norms when we commence operations in these areas from April 20 even during lockdown 2.0," said a release of health ministry.

The MOHFW statistics also reveal while 2.1 lakh tests were conducted on the day positive



THE MOHFW STATISTICS ALSO REVEAL WHILE 2.1 LAKH TESTS WERE CONDUCTED ON THE DAY POSITIVE CASES HAD CROSSED THE 10,000-MARK WHILE 1.14 LAKH TESTS WERE CONDUCTED ON THE DAY WHEN POSITIVE CASES CROSSED 5,000 MARK TWO WEEKS AGO. ONLY CANADA HAS FARED BETTER THAN INDIA ON THIS PARAMETER.

cases had crossed the 10,000-mark while 1.14 lakh tests were conducted on the day when positive cases crossed 5,000 mark two weeks ago. Only Canada has fared better than India on this parameter. Canada conducted 2.9 lakh tests and 2.4 lakh tests for the same corresponding number of positive cases.

Italy that has seen more than 21,645 deaths, saw only 73,154 and 49,937 tests conducted for Covid suspects for the same corresponding number of positive case.

The MOHFW and Worldometer statistics also reveal that India, despite its known clusters of densely populated areas, has shown 9 cases per million population. With this India stands even behind Australia (253), Japan (68) and South Korea (207) and not just the US (1946), Spain (3864) and Italy (2732).

The statistics also reveal that among deaths per million population, India is marginally behind its Asian neighbors and transcontinental countries such as Australia (2), Japan (1), South Korea (4). In the same category, Spain (402), Italy (358), France (263) and the UK (190) have crossed the 100-mark. ■

LIFE IN THE ERA OF COVID-19



NARENDRA MODI

It has been a topsy-turvy start to the third decade of this century. COVID-19 has brought with it many disruptions.

Coronavirus has significantly changed the contours of professional life.

These days, home is the new office. The Internet is the new meeting room.

For the time being, office breaks with colleagues are history.

I have also been adapting to these changes. Most meetings, be it with minister colleagues, officials and world leaders, are now via video conferencing.

In order to get ground level feedback from various stakeholders, there have been videoconference meetings with several sections of society. There were extensive interactions with NGOs, civil society groups and community organisations. There was an interaction with Radio Jockeys too.

Besides that, I have been making numerous phone calls daily, taking feedback from different sections of society.

One is seeing the ways through which people are continuing their work in these times. There are a few creative videos by our film stars conveying a relevant message

of staying home. Our singers did an online concert. Chess players played chess digitally and through that contributed to the fight against COVID-19. Quite innovative!

The work place is getting Digital First. And, why not?

After all, the most transformational impact of Technology often happens in the lives of the poor. It is technology that demolishes bureaucratic hierarchies, eliminates middlemen and accelerates welfare measures.



Let me give you an example.

When we got the opportunity to serve in 2014, we started connecting Indians, especially the poor with their Jan Dhan Account, Aadhar & Mobile number. This seemingly simple connection has not only stopped corruption and rent seeking that was going on for decades, but has also enabled the Government to transfer money at the click of a button. This click of a button has replaced multiple levels of hierarchies on the file and also weeks of delay.

India has perhaps the largest such infrastructure in the world. This infrastructure has helped us tremendously in transferring money directly and immediately to the poor and needy, benefiting crores of families, during the COVID-19 situation.

Another case in point is the education sector. There are many outstanding professionals already innovating in this sector. Invigorating technology in this sector has its benefits. The Government of

India has also undertaken efforts such as the DIKSHA Portal, to help teachers and boost e-learning. There is SWAYAM, aimed at improving access, equity and quality of education. E-Pathshala, which is available in many languages, enables access to various e-books and such learning material.

Today, the world is in pursuit of new business models.

India, a youthful nation known for its innovative zeal can take the lead in providing a new work culture.

I envision this new business and work culture being redefined on the following vowels.

I call them- vowels of the new normal- because like vowels in the English language, these would become essential ingredients of any business model in the post-COVID world.

ADAPTABILITY:

The need of the hour is to think

of business and lifestyle models that are easily adaptable.

Doing so would mean that even in a time of crisis, our offices, businesses and commerce could get moving faster, ensuring loss of life does not occur.

Embracing digital payments is a prime example of adaptability. Shop owners big and small should invest in digital tools that keep commerce connected, especially in times of crisis. India is already witnessing an encouraging surge in digital transactions.

Another example is telemedicine. We are already seeing several consultations without actually going to the clinic or hospital. Again, this is a positive sign. Can we think of business models to help further telemedicine across the world?

EFFICIENCY:

Perhaps, this is the time to think of reimagining what we refer to as being efficient.

Efficiency cannot only be about how much time was spent in the office.

We should perhaps think of models where productivity and efficiency matter more than appearance of effort.

The emphasis should be on completing a task in the specified time frame.

INCLUSIVITY:

Let us develop business models that attach primacy to care for the poor, the most vulnerable as well as our planet.

We have made major progress in combating climate change. Mother Nature has demonstrated

to us her magnificence, showing us how quickly it can flourish when human activity is slower. There is a significant future in developing technologies and practices that reduce our impact on the planet. Do more with less.

COVID-19 has made us realise the need to work on health solutions at low cost and large scale. We can become a guiding light for global efforts to ensure the health and well being of humanity.

We should invest in innovations to make sure our farmers have access to information, machinery, and markets no matter what the situation, that our citizens have access to essential goods.

OPPORTUNITY:

Every crisis brings with it an opportunity. COVID-19 is no different.

Let us evaluate what might be the new opportunities/growth areas that would emerge now.

Rather than playing catch up, India must be ahead of the curve in the post-COVID world. Let us think about how our people, our skills sets, our core capabilities can be used in doing so.

UNIVERSALISM:

COVID-19 does not see race, religion, colour, caste, creed, language or border before striking.

Our response and conduct thereafter should attach primacy to unity and brotherhood.

We are in this together.

Unlike previous moments in history, when countries or societies faced off against each other, today we are together facing a common challenge. The future will be about

togetherness and resilience.

The next big ideas from India should find global relevance and application. They should have the ability to drive a positive change not merely for India but for the entire humankind.

Logistics was previously only seen through the prism of physical infrastructure – roads, warehouses, ports. But logistical experts these days can control global supply chains through the comfort of their own homes.

India, with the right blend of the physical and the virtual can emerge as the global nerve centre of complex modern multinational supply chains in the post COVID-19 world. Let us rise to that occasion and seize this opportunity.

I urge you all to think about this and contribute to the discourse.

The shift from BYOD to WFH brings new challenges to balance the official and personal. Whatever be the case, devote time to fitness and exercising. Try Yoga as a means to improve physical and mental wellbeing.

Traditional medicine systems of India are known to help keep the body fit. The Ayush Ministry has come out with a protocol that would help in staying healthy. Have a look at these as well.

Lastly, and importantly, please download Aarogya Setu Mobile App. This is a futuristic App that leverages technology to help contain the possible spread of COVID-19. More the downloads, more its effectiveness.

Will wait to hear from you all...

(The Writer is Prime Minister of India)

Courtesy : [linkedin.com](https://www.linkedin.com)

PM Modi uses 'Gamcha Mask' in new profile picture, netizens follow suit

Leaded by example, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was seen covering his face with a Manipuri Gamcha (towel), also known as Meitei Lengyan, during his address to the nation on 14 April, 2020 wherein he announced an extension of the Coronavirus lockdown till 03 May. Minutes after his address, PM Shri Modi changed his display picture on his social media profiles — his mouth and nose covered with the 'Gamcha' and hands folded in Namaste pose.

"Wearing a face cover is an essential exercise during the lockdown for people when they step out of their homes," PM Shri Modi said before removing it and continuing with his nearly 25-minute speech. The Lengyan is a symbol of unity of all indigenous communities in Manipur and is highly regarded by its people. Mostly worn by men in the state, it is a cultural symbol too.

Last week, during an interaction with Chief Ministers of various states, PM Shri Modi was seen wearing a homemade mask



aimed at spreading awareness over COVID-19.

Screenshot of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's official Twitter handle shows his new profile picture. Soon, others too started following his footsteps. Several senior BJP leaders, Union Ministers, leaders to millions of netizens, many have changed

their profile picture on social media donning a 'Gamcha' over their faces.

Party president Shri JP Nadda, also put pictures of wearing face covers on his Twitter profiles with a message and others including the Union Health Minister also given messages by changing their profile picture. ■



Jagat Prakash Nadda @
JPNadda
#WearFaceCoverStaySafe

Dr Harsh Vardhan @drharshvardhan
Wear a homemade masks to combat
#COVID2019 !#StaySafe during
#Lockdown2 Spend time productively
#StayHome and #dontpanicbuy #Help
others. Be #compassionate. Inspire others
to wear a #mask change your #DP

PM MODI ADDRESSES BJP KARYAKARTAS ON PARTY'S 40TH STHAPANA DIWAS

'Humanity facing a crisis; our devotion to service of the country creates our path during this challenging time'

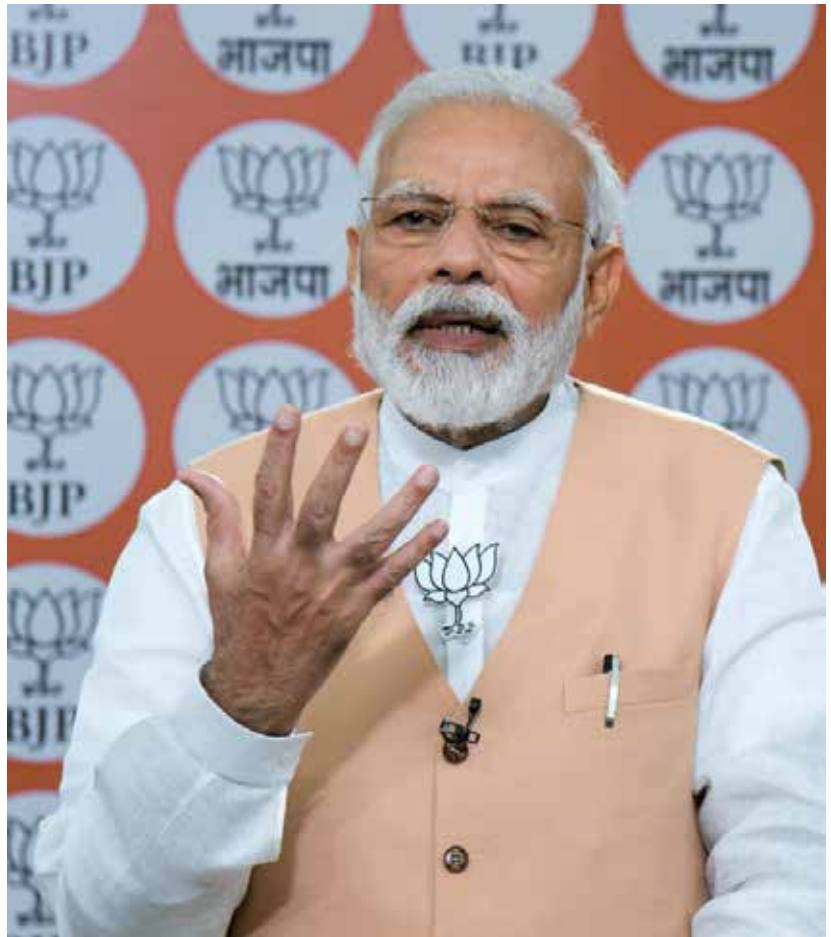
On the occasion of BJP's 40th anniversary, PM Shri Narendra Modi said, "This foundation day of BJP has come at a time when not only the country but also the world is going through a difficult time. Humanity is facing a crisis; our devotion to service of the country creates our path during this challenging time."

Addressing the party Karyakartas he said, "India has worked rapidly with a holistic approach that is being appreciated by not only Indians but also WHO. All countries should come together and fight this, so India had active participation in the meeting of the SAARC countries and the G20 meeting."

Shri Modi talked about India's efforts which have set an example before the world in tackling Coronavirus Pandemic. The PM added, "India is one of the countries which understood seriousness of this disease and waged a timely war against it. India took several decisions and tried its best to implement them on ground."

Lauding people's participation, Shri Modi said, "The maturity shown by the people during lockdown, in a large country like India, is unprecedented. No one could have imagined that the people will abide by this with such obedience and sense of service."

The Prime Minister also appreciated the citizens' support at 9 pm on April 5, he said that the strength of togetherness of 130 crores people of our country was clearly visible. "People from every section of society and age group demonstrated this unity and



strengthened the resolve in fight against COVID19," he added.

PM Shri Modi made five requests to the Party Karyakartas. He asked them to ensure food for the poor, thank the doctors, nurses, hospital staff, police personnel and sanitation workers, encourage use and distribution of masks, to install Aarogya Setu app and contribute towards PM CARES Fund. He also urged the Karyakartas to further encourage 40 people to contribute towards the Fund. ■

MAKE PUBLIC SERVICE, CLEANLINESS, COOPERATION AND DEDICATION AN INTEGRAL PART OF LIFE: NADDA

In his address to the party Karyakartas on the 40th foundation day of the party on 06 April, 2020 Bharatiya Janata Party National President Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda called upon the party Karyakartas to make Public Service, Cleanliness, Cooperation and Dedication an integral part of life in this hour of crisis of global corona epidemic on the auspicious occasion of the 40th foundation day of the party.

Shri Nadda appealed to party Karyakartas to hoist new party flags in all party offices and every BJP Karyakarta's house but they must follow the rules of social distancing strictly at the time of flag hoisting. Decorate photos of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee and Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya with available flowers.

The BJP President said that all BJP Karyakartas to give up one meal on Sthapana Diwas as a way to show solidarity with people facing hardships during the lockdown, and provide food packets to 5+1 needy people who are suffering most in the lockdown. Karyakartas can post the campaign on social media with #FeedtheNeedy hashtag.

Shri Nadda expressed his wish that in the next one week, a system must be in place where we can provide two homemade face covers to each person in our booth. We should circulate videos of face cover preparation & distribution over social media with hashtag #WearFaceCoverStaySafe.

The BJP President said that since BJP will be celebrating its 40th Foundation Day, BJP Karyakartas should make 40 others to donate Rs. 100 to PM-CAREs fund and they can campaign it on social media with #My40FortheNation hashtag.

He said, on the occasion of 40th Sthapana Diwas, we have to contact 40 houses in our booth & get their signatures on 5 thanking letters thanking Police, Doctors & Nurses, Safai Karamcharis, Bank & Postal employees and Govt. & Civic Employees. We have to handover thanking letters locally to those sections of frontline Corona Warriors.

He said, "The way Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has led the country at this moment of global



crisis due to Covid-19, it is being praised everywhere. The whole world is looking towards PM Shri Modi with hope, to recover from this crisis".

Noteworthy, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi also took to Twitter and posted his message on the 40th anniversary of the BJP. "We mark our Party's 40th Anniversary when India is battling COVID-19. I appeal to BJP Karyakartas to follow the set of guidelines from our Party President @JPNaddavJi, help those in need and reaffirm the importance of social distancing. Let's make India COVID-19 free," the Prime Minister tweeted.

The BJP National President made a special request to the party Karyakartas and said that they should start reading the literature available about the Bharatiya Janata Party and senior and leaders of the party in their homes at the time of lockdown. ■

BJP PRESIDENT CONNECTS WITH 3.5 LAKH PARTY WORKERS VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE DURING LOCKDOWN

The spread of Covid-19 and mandatory social distancing has changed the interaction methods of BJP too. Public meetings have been replaced by video and audio conferencing or communication through social media. With all outdoor activities cancelled, party is using technology to run basic and urgent business.

As the 'most-tech savvy party', BJP has been tapping technology for long. Its usage, however, increased manifold during the lockdown. The party is doing seven to nine video and audio conferencing and it has an able Karyakarta network mapped out till booth level and the party leadership connects with everyone from top



to bottom, using various digital mediums.

After lockdown, the BJP National President Shri JP Nadda has been regularly having video conferencing with party leaders, office bearers and Karyakartas across the country to pass on important information. There are

three main agenda on which the communication has been taking place in BJP.

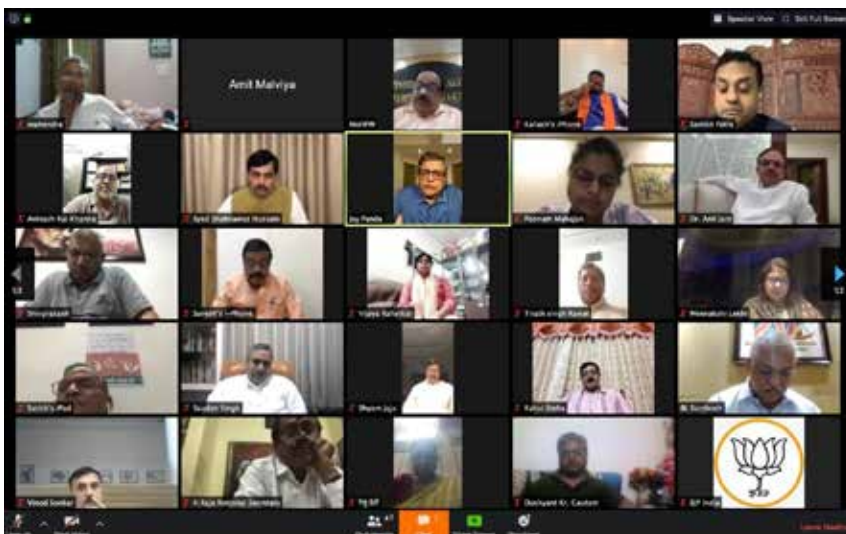
First is to deliver food, grain and medicines across the country through co-ordination between BJP workers and the central office.

The second is looking after issues of migrant workers in every district through a taskforce of party workers.

Thirdly, the party has also been working on convincing people to donate to PM CARES.

Leading the party leaders from the front when it comes to delivering relief and essentials to the needy during the ongoing lockdown, Shri JP Nadda has ensured that party workers continue to work for the welfare of the people and help them during their hour of need.

As a part of this process, the



BJP President has held 63 video conferences, 20 audio bridges and connected with over 3.5 lakh party workers ever since the lockdown was announced by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. In many such online briefings, he was assisted by BJP National General Secretary (Organisation) Shri BL Santosh.

The BJP President has

ensured that each district, Yuva Morcha, IT cell, Mahila and SC Morcha national and state executive members were spoken to regarding the need for a proactive effort by the party. Shri Nadda has also addressed the various State Presidents, General Secretary Organization, public representatives and other office bearers of the party during this

period.

Shri Nadda did not let even a day go by when he did not interact with party workers. He paid attention to every minute detail that should be looked into to ensure the Central government's decisions during lockdown are aided by foot soldiers of the party in a way that would help those affected most by the lockdown.

BJP PRESIDENT CONNECTS WITH EDITORS OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS

Bharatiya Janata Party National President Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda discussed with the editorial members of 'Kamal Sandesh' published from the center and the editors of party magazines of 20 states on 21 April, 2020 through video conference and reviewed the publication work on the changing scenario due to Covid-19 pandemic. In the meeting, Party National General Secretary (Organization) Shri BL Santhosh was also present.

During the interaction Shri Nadda said that the entire country is fighting against the Covid-19 under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi unitedly.

He said during initially days of the pandemic we had just a single testing lab in the country, whereas now within a month more than 120 labs are ready and if the collection center is included, then this number goes up to 2000.

The BJP President said that with the request of different countries and at the initiative of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, 'hydroxychloroquine' medicine has been supplied to 62 countries of the world.

The National President also said that party workers are also working tirelessly and so far they have distributed more than five and a half crore food packets.

Shri Nadda said that the dimensions of the publication are also changing in view of the



circumstances arising out of Covid-19. We now publish fortnightly and monthly magazines. However, we should plan to publish digital bulletins weekly and daily, he said.

He said that the editors of the magazine are well-known for their articulate expression and therefore, through the use of your pen, please inform every worker about the challenges arising out of Covid-19 and our fight against it.

The National President further added that the party magazine should also cover messages issued by the Ministry of AYUSH for the safety of the people and other alternatives therapies like Ayurveda, Homeopathy and Psychological treatment as well as publish articles written by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and other senior leaders of the party. ■

WE SUPPORT INDIA'S 'PROACTIVE' COVID-19 RESPONSE: IMF

The International Monetary Fund on 16 April, 2020 said that it supports India's proactive decision of imposing a nationwide lockdown in its fight against coronavirus. A day earlier, the IMF in its World Economic Outlook had forecast India's growth rate to be 1.9 per cent in 2020.

"India entered the pandemic turmoil in the midst of a credit crunch-induced slowdown and its recovery prospect becomes more uncertain," Chang Yong Rhee, the Director of the IMF's Asia and Pacific Department, told reporters during a news conference in Washington.

"Despite the economic slowdown, the government implemented a nationwide lockdown and we support India's proactive decision," Rhee said.

On March 25, India entered a three-week lockdown, which was slated to end on April 14. The lockdown was extended till May 3.

For 2021, he said, there is hope. If containment



policies succeed there could be a rebound in growth, he said. However, it is highly uncertain how this year will progress, he added.

Noting that this is not a time for business as usual, Rhee said that Asian countries need to use all policy instruments in their toolkits. In doing so, policy tradeoffs will be inevitable and will depend on policy space, he added. ■

I-T DEPT ISSUES 10 LAKH REFUNDS WORTH RS 4,250CR IN JUST 1 WEEK

The income tax department has issued over 10 lakh refunds worth Rs 4,250 crore in the last one week after the government's April 8 decision to issue all refunds up to Rs 5 lakh. The central board of direct taxes (CBDT) on April 16, 2020 said it has already issued over 10.2 lakh refunds totalling around Rs 4,250 crore as on April 14. "These refunds are over and above the 2.50 crore refunds already issued in FY 19-20 till March 31st totalling to Rs 1.84 lakh crore," CBDT said.

About 1.75 lakh more refunds are in the process of issuance in this week, the CBDT said, adding

that these refunds would get credited directly to the taxpayer bank account in 5-7 business days.

The income tax is, however, awaiting e-mail responses from around 1.74 lakh cases regarding reconciliation with their outstanding tax demand for which a reminder e-mail has been sent asking them to respond within seven days.

"It may be noted that these reminder e-mails from I-T department are in fact for the benefit of taxpayers as it seeks them to confirm their outstanding demand, their bank accounts and reconciliation of defect/mismatch prior to issue of refund," CBDT said. ■

India's Aarogya Setu becomes world's highest downloaded app in just 13 days

- Aarogya Setu app has reached 50 million users in just 13 days-fastest ever globally for an app, tweeted NITI Aayog CEO
- Developed by the National Informatics Centre that comes under the Ministry of Electronics and IT, Aarogya Setu tracking app is already available on both Android and iOS smartphones

With the country entering the second phase of lockdown from today to combat the spread of the novel coronavirus spread in India, the government's recently launched Aarogya Setu application that tracks Covid-19 cases around and helps in fighting the virus on an individual level, reached 50 million downloads just 13 days, making it the world's fastest downloaded app, said NITI Aayog CEO, Amitabh Kant.

"AarogyaSetu, India's app to fight COVID-19 has reached 50 mn users in just 13 days-fastest ever globally for an App," Kant tweeted.

Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had also urged the citizens to download the application in order to keep themselves safe during the pandemic outbreak. Modi also said that the tracking app is an essential tool in Covid-19 fight and is possible to use it as an e-pass to facilitate travel from one place to another, according to Press Trust of India report.

Developed by the National Informatics Centre that comes under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, the 'Aarogya Setu' tracking app, which is already available on Google Play Store on Android smartphones and App Store for iPhones, will help track the coronavirus infection by using the smartphone's GPS system and Bluetooth and provide information that will help in determining if you have been near a Covid-19 infected person or not.

Ensuring the data is encrypted, the app uses your location to know of the area you are around comes



under the infected areas of the database and also needs an activated Bluetooth to determine if you have been within six feet from the infected person.

The Aarogya Setu app supports 11 languages. Once you have downloaded the app, you need to register with your mobile number. Later, the app will have an option to enter your health stats and other credentials. To enable tracking, you need to keep your location and Bluetooth services on.

District administration has been asking all educational institutions, departments etc to push downloading of the app.

Furthermore, citing sources, PTI reported that Tata Consultancy Services is also working on testing and some of the other aspects while Tech Mahindra and the Mahindra group is working with the committee on the next version of this application and leveraging next generation technologies like AI, machine learning, data science to expand the reach of the app on all types of phones apart from only smartphones.

Meanwhile, with the confirmed coronavirus cases in India breaching 1, 100-mark in last 24 hours, the total Covid-19 cases in the country have surged to 11,933, according to the Union Health Ministry data. As many as 392 deaths have been reported in the country so far. ■

GOVERNMENT DISBURSES RS 16,621 CRORE UNDER PM-KISAN SINCE LOCKDOWN

The total amount released during the lockdown period also includes last year's due payment of Rs 1,674.43 crore which has been disbursed to 83.77 lakh beneficiary farmers, an official statement said.

The government has disbursed Rs 16,621 crore to about 8.31 crore beneficiary farmers under the PM-KISAN scheme since March 24, the day lockdown was announced to curb COVID-19. The total amount released during the lockdown period also includes last year's due payment of Rs 1,674.43 crore which has been disbursed to 83.77 lakh beneficiary farmers, an official statement said.

The rest Rs 14,945 crore has been released to 7.47 crore farmers as the first installment under the PM-KISAN for the 2020-21 fiscal which started from April 1. Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme, the Centre transfers an amount of Rs 6,000 per year, in three equal instalments, directly into the bank accounts of farmers, subject to certain exclusion criteria relating to higher income status.

To give immediate relief to farmers affected by the nationwide lockdown, the government had on March 27 promised to transfer the first installment of Rs 2,000 to each of 8.69 crore beneficiaries under the scheme, in the first week of April.



Besides, the Centre said it has dispatched 3,985 tones of pulses for free delivery to PDS beneficiaries under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PM-GKY). The Union Agriculture Ministry has also decided to allow 'Truthful Label seeds' for subsidy components for the North East, Hilly regions and the UTs of Jammu & Kashmir only, for all crops under National Food Security Mission.

The ministry further said organic products are being delivered in Punjab at doorstep in the specially designed electric van under Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY). In Maharashtra, 21,11,171 quintals of fruits and vegetables have been sold by 27,797 Farmer Producers Organizations (FPOs) in 34 districts by online/direct sale method, it added. ■

FARMERS CAN CONTINUE TO AVAIL SPECIAL INTEREST RATE TILL MAY 31: RBI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 22 April, 2020 said farmers can continue to avail interest rate subvention of 2 per cent and preferential rate of interest of 3 per cent till May 31 for short-term loan installments falling due between March 01 and May 31, to help farmers not able to travel to bank branches for payment of their short term crop loan dues. This will be applicable for short-term crop loans of up to Rs 3 lakh per farmer, the RBI said.



Why Jansangh?

Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee in his presidential address at the first Convention of All India Bharatiya Jana Sangh held in Delhi on 21st October, 1951 elaborated on main reasons behind the formation of Bharatiya Janasangh. We are publishing the full text of his speech for our esteemed readers in a series. The third and last part of his speech is given below :



**DR. SYAMA PRASAD
MOOKERJEE**

Regarding Kashmir our party feels that the case should be withdrawn from U.N.O. and there should be no further question of plebiscite. Kashmir is an integral part of India and should be treated as any other State. It is indeed tragic that one-third of Kashmir should be in the hands of the enemy and our Government should be unable to free the area from foreign occupation in spite of occasional outbursts of determination to fight any future penetration. From what I have stated above it will appear that our party claims to deal with national and international problems in a spirit of realism consistent with the honour and dignity of India. We have been attacked vigorously by some spokesmen of other parties specially Mr. Nehru, the President of the Congress.

Since he also happens to be the Prime Minister of India his utterances naturally carry great weight. The vigour of his repeated attacks has given us added strength and determination. We will not succumb to threats and abuses. Indeed they have provided

us with widespread publicity and for this our thanks are due to him. It is open to anyone to criticize another party's programme freely and unequivocally but such criticisms should not amount to misrepresentation of facts. The main charge against us is that we are a communal party with retrograde ideas. A bare examination of our programme will convince any right-thinking man that this is a perversion of truth. The charge of pandering to communalism really lies at the door of the Congress and specially against Mr. Nehru himself. Let him coolly examine his own performances during the last thirty years. At every step when he and his colleagues had to deal with the intransigence of Muslim League, they ran away from the fight and ultimately succumbed to it by dividing their motherland. Dr. Ambedkar's recent proposal to partition Kashmir on the basis of Hindu and Muslim population has shocked many. We also do not approve of this. Such concessions do not settle disputes but only create fresh jumping grounds for Pakistan for making fresh demands. That was indeed the old Muslim League technique. But surely this was exactly what Mr. Nehru and his friends had done with regard to India in 1947. It is true that some of us supported

the partition of Bengal and Punjab in 1947 but be it recorded that we were forced to do so when Bharat's division was imminent. We always wanted to keep these and other provinces within United Bharat. When we found that this was not possible due to the betrayal of the Congress and the pact between itself and Muslim League supported by an astute British policy, we were anxious to save as much of these provinces as possible and keep them within free India. Otherwise they would have been lost to India in their entirety.

If Bharat had not been partitioned, there would have been no occasion to partition these great provinces whose people have suffered enormously for the sake of Bharat's liberation. Having repeatedly sacrificed Bharatiya nationalism at the altar of Muslim communalism and even after partition having surrendered to the whims and howls of Pakistan Government it does not lie in the mouth of Mr. Nehru to accuse others of communalism. There is no communalism in Bharat today except the new policy of Muslim appeasement which has been started by Mr. Nehru and his friends for the purpose of winning their votes at the forthcoming election. We have provincialism and other types of

class or caste differences in the country today. Let us jointly try to remove these evils so as to lay the foundation for a truly democratic India. The cry of communalism raised by Mr. Nehru is to sidetrack the real issues now before the country. The problem before the country today are clearly related to hunger, to poverty, to exploitation, to maladministration, to corruption, to abject surrender to Pakistan, all being evils for which the main responsibility rests on the Congress and the Government under it. Mr. Nehru, the Arch-Fascist of India, accuses others of fascism. Such efforts to hoodwink the public will meet with miserable failure.

NEW ERA OF HOPE

We firmly believe that the inauguration of this party will usher in a new era of hope, peace and strength. Our goal and objective are sound but our success will depend on the organisation that we can set up and the confidence that we can create in the minds of the people themselves. That will take time and much patient labour. Let its not be completely overshadowed by the forthcoming elections. No doubt we will face them boldly and appeal to the electorate wherever we can to trust us with their votes explaining the viewpoints that we are claiming to advocate. There is however greater chance of defeating the Congress at the elections if there is at least electoral understanding among the principal parties in opposition. The main basis for such understanding should be

popularity and confidence of the voters. The Congress has collected enormous funds and all sorts of pressures are being put upon various classes of people for getting their support for the Congress. It enjoys the powers of Government today and there is every likelihood that it will not hesitate to manipulate the official machinery for winning the elections. From our recent experience in Delhi elections it is feared that elections may not be free and fair. The manner in which the official machinery was utilised for the Delhi session of the Congress also indicates how Congress and Government have become synonymous expressions. Such abuse of power creates most unhealthy precedents. All opposition parties should, therefore, unite in demanding that the conditions for free and fair election should be scrupulously observed. Even Delhi elections, where the Congress has won, reveal interesting conclusions. Of the total voters barely 30 per cent have voted for the Congress.

Thus the majority of the voters are anti-Congress. This has been the case in the capital city of Bharat in spite of feverish and hectic efforts of the Prime Minister and others to win success for the Congress. But for the fact that the contestants were too many in number and in some places Congress gave tickets to non-Congress independents, the majority of the votes would have been cast against the Congress and the Congress would have been ultimately

defeated. In any case our party, although barely two months old, has secured about 24 per cent of the total votes and in many cases the difference between the Congress candidates and ours was very small. This is no small achievement. Our workers must march ahead in full confidence of the justice of our cause and the support which we have already received in different parts of the country.

SERVICE AND SACRIFICE

We enter upon our task with full faith, hope and courage. Let our workers constantly remember that only through service and sacrifice will they be able to win the confidence of masses of the people. The great task of revitalising and reconstructing free Bharat awaits us. The mother calls her children, irrespective of class, caste or religion to come to her and serve her. However dark the present clouds may be, Bharat has a great destiny to fulfil in the years to come. May our party whose symbol in the forthcoming elections is a humble earthen Tradip' try to carry this light of hope and unity, faith and courage to dispel the darkness that surrounds the country. The journey has just begun.

May Providence endow us with strength and fortitude to remain ever on the right path, not cowed by fears or tempted by favours, and to help to make Bharat great and strong, spiritually and materially, so that she may become a fit and noble instrument in the preservation of world peace and prosperity. Jai Bharat! ■

DR. B R AMBEDKAR: A NATION BUILDER

Dr. Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar represents a multifaceted personality contributing immensely to enrich various facets of Indian national life. The people remember him as the chief architect of the Indian constitution, a social revolutionary and a Dalit thinker. So far, Babasaheb's writings in India have been selectively read within a particular framework showing him as a champion of deprived and oppressed sections of Indian society. He is seen as a chief architect of Indian constitution who laid the foundation of liberal democracy in the country expecting the state to take welfare measures in the interest of weaker sections of the society. But other side of his personality remains unexplored. He was a nationalist and a nation builder of highest order.

Speaking on the third reading of the draft constitution, Babasheb said in voice choked with emotion, "On 26th January 1950 India will be an independent country (cheers). What would happen to her independence? Will she maintain her independence or will she loose it again?"

This is the first thought that comes to my mind. It is not that India was never an independent country. The point is that she once lost the independence she had. Will she lose it a second time?" He further answers his own question emphasizing that these apprehensions were rooted in the history of India wherein the country had to face the ignominy of defeat and suffer at the hands of conquerors due to treachery of its own people.

He said on the occasion, "What perturbs me greatly is the fact that not only India has once before lost her Independence, but she lost it by the infidelity and treachery of some of her own people. In the Invasion of Sind by Mahommed-Bin-Kasim, the military commanders of King Dahar accepted bribes from the agents of Mahommed-Bin-Kasim and refused to fight on the side of their King. It was Jaichand, who invited Mahommed Ghori to invade India and fight against Prithvi Raj and promised him the help of himself and the Solanki kings.

When Shivaji was fighting for the liberation of Hindus,

the other Maratha noblemen and the Rajput kings were fighting the battle on the side of Mughal emperors. When the British were trying to destroy the Sikh Rulers, Gulab Singh, their principal commander sat silent and did not help to save the Sikh kingdom.

He had very convincing answers on the question of whether the democratic Constitution will survive the test of time. He said, "It is not that India did not know what democracy is? There was a time when India was studded with republics and even where there were monarchies, they were either elected or limited. They were never absolute. It is not that India did not know Parliaments or Parliamentary procedure. A study of the Buddhist Bhikshu Sanghas discloses that not only there were Parliaments – for the Sanghas were nothing but Parliaments – but the Sanghas knew and observed all the rules of modern Parliamentary procedures, be it about seating arrangements, rules regarding Motions, Resolutions, Quorum, Whip, Counting of votes, voting by Ballot, Censure Motion, Regularization, Res Judicata, etc. Although these rules of Parliamentary Procedure were applied by the Buddha to the meetings of the Sanghas, he must have borrowed them from the rules of the political Assemblies functioning in the country in his time."

Exhorting the people of India to guard the hard earned independence, he said, "Will history repeat itself? It is this thought which fills me with anxiety. This anxiety is deepened by the realization of the fact that in addition to our old enemies in the form of castes and creeds, we are going to have many political parties with diverse and opposing political creeds. Will Indians place the country above their creed or will they place creed above country? I do not know. But this much is certain that if the parties place creed above country, our independence will be put in jeopardy a second time and probably be lost forever. This eventually we must all resolutely guard against." While the nation feels indebted for his immense contributions in the nation building process, we pay our homage to Babasaheb on his Jayanti. ■



THE SAGA OF LOCKDOWN

INDIA HAS SHOWN EXTRAORDINARY SOLIDARITY, FORBEARANCE AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS



RAJNATH SINGH

Facing the exceptional challenge of stopping Covid-19 from spreading further, the nation has shown tremendous solidarity and patience. When it started, the lockdown seemed an impossible notion, more so in this country. Now, even after an extension, people remain steadfast in their resolve to protect themselves and their fellow citizens from the virus.

The way 1.3 billion Indians have joined hands against the pandemic is unprecedented in world history. Generations to come will wonder how it was made possible in a country like India. I am convinced that this would not have been possible but for extraordinary leadership.

The infection is, of course, spreading and the battle is far from won. Yet, we have reasons to feel confident, because the magnitude of the outbreak has been very limited in India, compared to the numbers in other parts of the world. This should be surprising, because India is not only a developing nation with limitations in public healthcare infrastructure and resources; it is also a vast



country with high population density.

If the only way to stop the virus from claiming human lives was to keep a safe distance from fellow human beings, then the battle might have been as good as lost even before it began. How do you get the message across to a vast population, with different levels of literacy and access to the news media? What about cultural barriers? It would be physically impossible for any authority to enforce such a ban across the length and breadth of the nation if it failed to persuade people.

Yet, the impossible has

happened. There were aberrations, yes, but they were aberrations; they were the exceptions that proved the rule. The Tablighi Jamaat event in the capital in March and the exodus of migrant labourers from some cities to their homes at the beginning of the lockdown were unfortunate, and yet they illustrate nothing more than stray cases of human frailties against a vast canvas of the whole population refraining from movement.

From Arunachal Pradesh in the northeast to Kachchh at the other end, from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, Indians have

united for a common cause. How shall we explain this miraculous show of self-restraint? The Indian psyche is part of the answer. So are our cultural traditions.

There may be many more factors. Yet, the most crucial factor that brought them all together was the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The nation is fortunate, at such a critical juncture, in having a prime minister whose several qualities again came together in the right combination at this juncture.

The PM decided to impose the lockdown at a time when the number of infected patients was quite low. This shows his concern but also boldness – something we have seen before in other circumstances. Bringing the whole country to a halt and jamming the economy in order to save citizens' lives is an extremely hard call to take, as we know from the global response to Covid-19.

Modi's popularity ensured that the difficult decision was not opposed but welcomed, and people at large enthusiastically turned it into their own movement. As we saw in the curtain raiser to the lockdown, the Janata curfew meant the people on their own followed restrictions on movement. I can't think of any other leader, in India or abroad, who could have successfully modified public behaviour

literally within hours.

His appeals to people – first, about banging thalis as a gesture of gratitude towards doctors and others and later to light lamps as a symbol of solidarity and positivity – should also be evaluated in terms of the results they achieved. I can recount many anecdotes of villagers in far-flung places to whom the vibes of positivity would not have

attitude. They themselves credit "Modi-ji" for this dramatic transformation. It is this trust of people in the PM that has ensured the lockdown is so supremely successful.

This is not to belittle the contributions made by the state chief ministers, district magistrates/ collectors and health officials. There indeed are several CMs who have done wonderful work. A number of mayors and municipal commissioners have gone way beyond the call of duty to ensure the wellbeing of citizens.

In this new kind of battle, our armed forces, police and paramilitary forces have also risen to the occasion in ensuring order as well as in helping local authorities in providing succour to those in need. Yet, without coordination from above, such efforts were likely to remain localised, not delivering the overall results that we have before us.

Moreover, what is heartening to note is that the PM has given priority to the marginalised, the daily wagers, labourers, and farmers. With the special package along with a slew of measures, the government is making best efforts to ensure that they do not have to bear a disproportionate part of the economic burden of the lockdown. ■

(The writer is Union Minister of Defence, GoI)

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reached except through such innovative ways.

Such measures from the PM have spread the good word about awareness among them. When I get a chance to speak over phone with old colleagues and other fellow citizens from small towns and villages, I am amazed at the level of their awareness, their readiness to take precautions in spite of hardships, and their positive

FUTURE, POST-COVID-19

TO MEET CHALLENGES AHEAD, EMPHASIS MUST BE ON LIVELIHOOD SECURITY



BHUPENDER YADAV

Humans had started to believe that they had become invincible with technological advancements. Now, an organism that is one-thousandth the width of an eyelash has forced about seven billion people across the world to not only stop flying, but to also stay within the confines of their homes.

Many are optimistic that a vaccine will soon be found and we will return to life as we knew it. This misses a larger point: There are limits to technological advancements. Defeating the coronavirus doesn't obliterate the risk of emergence of new viruses. With rapid deforestation and climate change, many new viruses are emerging even as we race to find a vaccine for COVID-19. And there are no instant vaccines for them.

While viruses are as old as human existence, climate change has only aggravated our vulnerabilities. In 2014, a virus frozen in the Siberian permafrost for 30,000 years was revived in a laboratory and was still found potent enough to infect an amoeba.

With glaciers melting, floods ravaging countries and earthquakes bringing down the sturdiest of human creations, the coronavirus, could well be the trailer for what is

to come. If we want to come out of our houses and live with the freedom to move around, we need to course-correct.

For starters, we must redefine human development goals and prioritise sectors which need more attention. Both villages and cities will have to be treated in a way that factors in the sustainability of their development. We can no longer turn a blind eye to the specific requirements of our villages and cities; we need to make both self-sufficient and non-exploitative when it comes to using natural resources. Catchment areas and floodplains will have to be freed from construction and commercially exploitative activities. Smart cities must be complemented with smart villages that are not just provided electricity, sanitation and water, but are also digitally connected. The move towards green energy, including solar and wind has to be made.

While we do need to augment medical education with more doctors and better healthcare facilities, India also needs to give a big push to medical research. Research is not only needed in the field of allopathy, but also in the field of traditional medicine such as ayurveda. Together, the two can prepare us for the challenges of tomorrow.

Market demand cannot be allowed to dictate economic models on which countries are run. Market demand initiated a relentless assault on nature with resources being

extracted without caring for the future of the planet. An important question to ask is the role that politics will play in this effort to prevent environmental degradation that exposes mankind to threats like viruses and bacteria.

Human history shows us that some of the most seemingly insignificant things have ushered in some of the most significant changes in the world. In *Sapiens*, Yuval Noah Harari describes how wheat production changed the course of human evolution. Harari says, "We did not domesticate wheat. It domesticated us." In *Against the Grain*, political scientist-anthropologist James C Scott said that wheat cultivation is responsible for the arrival of what we now understand as state power, and with it, bureaucracy and inequality.

No political party can afford to ignore the significance of a virus. Irrespective of their ideological moorings, parties will have to come together to formulate a uniform, transparent and implementable policy to tackle such threats to human existence that know no territorial boundaries.

Political parties have to work together to develop an agenda for human development that focuses not just on GDP growth but also on enhancing livelihood security by generating sustainable occupations. The virus is just one aspect. We must be able to foresee the socio-economic disruptions that will take place as a result of such changes. In a federal system such as in India, it

is important for both the Centre and the states to have a minimum agreed "path of growth" which is sustainable and reduces dependence on international market forces.

We must realize that the corona pandemic is not a temporary disruption. The virus will run its course, but India needs to prepare itself for the economic impact that will hit the country because of rising sea levels, more cyclones, floods and melting glaciers. In 2018, the World Bank estimated that the current trajectory of carbon emissions will result in sharply diminishing the living conditions of 800 million South Asians. We can debate the numbers, but we cannot debate on whether it will happen.

The current pandemic has seen

the country act as one unit: Almost the entire country has responded responsibly to the call of staying indoors during the lockdown. States, too, are working in coordination with the Centre to fight the virus. Future challenges need to be met in a similar manner.

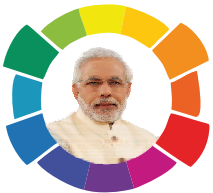
Another question is how the economy will change after the threat of the pandemic recedes. All assessments show that there will be an economic meltdown. The exact nature of the impact will depend on how long it takes for us to take control of the situation. The current crisis has exposed the vulnerabilities of the global economic and trading systems. There is thus a need to review the sectors which are disproportionately dependent on

international market forces.

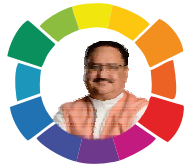
Sectors such as aviation and tourism may well be hit the hardest. But the rush to fix the economy cannot discount the aspect of sustainability. Financial packages for an economic revival should be carefully planned to ensure that they are directed towards activities which provide greater scope for sustainable livelihood security, as opposed to those which are dependent on the global economy.

We need to devise better models for our existence so that we can overcome not only the challenge at hand, and are never again held hostage by a virus. The good news is that it is totally doable.

(The writer is BJP National General Secretary and member of Rajya Sabha)



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PM Shri Narendra Modi participating in the G20 Virtual Summit to discuss about the global response to COVID 19, on March 26, 2020



PM Shri Narendra Modi interacting with the Chief Ministers of States via video conferencing to discuss measures to combat COVID-19, in New Delhi



PM Shri Narendra Modi interacting with Journalists on tackling the challenge of COVID-2019 through video conference in New Delhi



PM lighting the lamp on 9 PM on April 05 to express solidarity with people of the country in the fight against COVID-19 pandemic, at his residence in New Delhi



PM pays floral tribute and greets People on Ambedkar Jayanti



PM Shri Narendra Modi addressing BJP Karyakartas on the Party's 40th Sthapana Diwas, New Delhi



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