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World Health Organization praises PM Modi's effort to help poor amid COVID-19 outbreak



World Health Organisation Chief Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus on April 02, 2020 praised Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's efforts to help the poor amid the lockdown due to the COVID-19 outbreak. "Countries are asking people to #stayhome and shutting down population movement to limit #COVID19 transmission. These steps can have unintended consequences for the poorest and most vulnerable," said Dr Ghebreyesus on Twitter. He then went on to praise Modi for the relief package he announced providing food rations, cash transfers and free cooking gas. "My appreciation to Prime Minister @narendramodi for announcing a \$24 billion package to support Flag of India's vulnerable populations during #COVID19 crisis, including: free food rations for 800M disadvantaged people; cash transfers to 204M poor women and; free cooking gas for 80M households," said the WHO chief. The Indian government last week had announced an INR 1.7 lakh-crore fiscal stimulus package to help the poor and migrants tackle the difficulties arising out of the 21-day lockdown in India.

Read More:

<https://www.connectedtoindia.com/who-praises-pm-narendra-modis-effort-to-help-poor-amid-covid-19-outbreak-7405.html>

India's PM told Heads of Missions to seek Indian national's interests



PM Narendra Modi, has instructed that the country's Ambassadors and High Commissioners seek the interests of Indian citizens working and/or studying abroad especially in a time of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The instruction came via a video conference PM Modi held with Heads of Mission on March 30, 2020 at India's embassies and consulates around the world. India's High Commissioner to TT, Arun Sahu, participated in the internet video conference from the High Commission Office in Port of Spain on March 30, 2020. A press release from the High Commission, stated that PM Modi had noted to Heads of Mission that extraordinary times required extraordinary solutions, which was why even in this globalised era, most of the world had quarantined itself. This was an unavoidable step taken to fight this pandemic, but it was also hugely consequential, as the closure of the globalised system has had an extensive and far-reaching impact upon the international transport system, financial markets and the global economy.

Read More:

<https://newsday.co.tt/2020/03/31/indias-pm-to-heads-of-mission-seek-indian-nationals-interests/>

India to be fastest growing G20 economy on COVID-19 impact as global GDP shrinks



India will emerge as the fastest growing economy among the G20 countries even as Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has slashed India's GDP growth forecast to 2.1 per cent from 6 per cent in the light of the coronavirus pandemic. India's growth at just 2.1 per cent may be a huge downgrade but given the projected recession in other regions like the US, Europe and Latin America, India will show the highest rate of GDP growth. It will be among three countries in G20, along with China and Indonesia, both at 1 per cent growth, to avoid a recession this year, said the EIU of UK in a report. Italy will be the worst hit at a negative growth of 7 per cent. The EIU said that Covid-19 is likely to send almost all G20 countries into a recession.

Read More:

<https://www.thestar.com.my/news/regional/2020/03/30/eiu-india-to-be-fastest-growing-g20-economy-as-global-gdp-shrinks>

India to spend US\$1.3 billion to boost Pharmaceutical Production



India plans to set up nearly Rs 1 lakh crore (US\$1.3 billion) fund to provide boost to companies to manufacture pharmaceutical ingredients domestically. This move comes after supply chain was disrupted due to COVID-19 Pandemic exposed the country's dependence on China and raised the threat of drug shortages. The program consists of spending on infrastructure for drug manufacturing centers and financial incentives of up to 20% of incremental sales value over the next 8 years, according to a Government statement. Currently, India imports almost 70% of its active pharmaceutical ingredients, the chemicals that make a finished drug work, from China. Hubei province, the epicentre of the coronavirus outbreak has been major source of these ingredients. As the world's single largest exporter of generic drugs, India is responsible for about 20% of the world's supply.

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<https://www.ibef.org/news/india-to-spend-us-13-billion-to-boost-pharmaceutical-production>

India is third-largest electricity producer globally



India is the third-largest electricity producer across the globe, as stated by the Power Minister RK Singh in the Lok Sabha. Also, India secured the 106th position in terms of per capita consumption in 2017, according to the latest key world energy statistics published by the IEA in 2019. The reforms in the power sector are a continuous process due to changes in the situation, stated by the Minister. Singh further added that power sector reforms now focus on the supply of 24x7 quality power to consumers, higher standards of service, promotion of renewable energy sources, development of hydropower, improving efficiency, especially in the distribution sector, etc. He also hinted that reforms linked distribution scheme and changes in tariff policy are some of the measures under consideration in this regard. As per the IEA report, world gross electricity production was 2.5 percent higher in 2017 as compared to 2016. Since 1974, global electricity production grows continuously on a YoY basis, except between 2008 and 2009, when the global financial crisis caused an appreciable decline in production, it added. Besides, the share of production of non-OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries in 2017 reached 57 percent of global electricity generation, which is more than double the share they held in 1974, as cited by the report. It further added that the annual production growth between 2000 and 2010 averaged 1.1 percent in OECD countries, as against 6.4 percent in non-OECD countries.

Read More:

<https://www.saurenergy.com/solar-energy-news/india-3rd-largest-power-producer-globally>

PM Modi held emergency meeting with SAARC nations to discuss COVID-19 emergency fund



Making a strong pitch for SAARC nations to jointly combat coronavirus, PM Modi on March 15, 2020, proposed setting up a COVID-19 emergency fund with India committing USD 10 million initially for it, and asserted that the best way to deal with the pandemic was by coming together, and not growing apart. Apart from Modi, Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, Maldivian President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, Nepalese Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli, Bhutanese premier Lotay Tshering, Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and Special Assistant to Pakistani Prime Minister on Health Zafar Mirza, participated in the video conference. In a significant message, Modi asserted that it was important for the SAARC member countries to work together and said the region can best respond to the coronavirus pandemic by "coming together, not growing apart". PM Modi said it was important to focus on collaboration, not confusion, and preparation, not panic. The Indian PM suggested that nodal experts of all SAARC states meet in a week's time by video-conference to take forward the ideas exchanged at the meeting. PM Modi said, "I propose we create a Covid-19 emergency fund," in addition he said, "This could be based on voluntary contributions from all of us. India can start with an initial offer of \$10 million for this fund. Any of us can use the fund to meet the cost of immediate actions. Our foreign secretaries, through our embassies, can coordinate quickly to finalize the concept of this fund and its operations."

Read More

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/prepare-put-dont-panic-is-indias-mantra-to-counter-coronavirus-narendra-modi/articleshow/74638006.cms>

PM interacts with AYUSH practitioners; AYUSH sector has a long tradition of keeping the nation healthy; has an important role to play in checking the spread of COVID-19



PM Modi on March 30, 2020 interacted with AYUSH sector practitioners via video conference. Prime Minister said that the AYUSH sector has a long tradition of keeping the nation healthy and its importance has increased manifold in the ongoing efforts to tackle COVID-19. Prime Minister observed that their network is spread through the length and breadth of the country, so it's imperative for them to utilize this network, while working according to WHO guidelines, to spread the message of good practises which need to be adopted in the efforts to control the spread of the virus. He also praised the ongoing efforts of AYUSH Ministry in promoting #YogaAtHome to de-stress the mind and strengthen the body during this difficult phase. PM Modi underlined the importance of countering and fact checking unsubstantiated claims of AYUSH having cure for the disease, adding that AYUSH scientists, ICMR, CSIR and other research organizations must come together for evidence-based research. He said that the country must be ready to use the entire healthcare workforce to meet the challenge, and if the need so arises, help from private doctors connected with AYUSH may be sought by the government. PM Modi suggested that AYUSH medicine producers could utilize their resources towards producing essential items like sanitizers which are in high demand these days. He exhorted them to utilize the platform of telemedicine to reach out to the public and generate constant awareness to fight the pandemic. He also highlighted the importance of enforcing social distancing with full vigour to counter the spread of the pandemic. The AYUSH practitioners lauded the PM for leading the country's fight against COVID-19. They talked about the impact of these traditional practises towards boosting immunity. Prime Minister said that it is important to create awareness about India's traditional medicines and medical practises all over the world.

Read More:

<https://www.ibef.org/news/pm-interacts-with-ayush-practitioners-ayush-sector-has-a-long-tradition-of-keeping-the-nation-healthy-has-an-important-role-to-play-in-checking-the-spread-of-covid19-pm>

High Commission of India hosted Artificial Intelligence workshop for students at its office



On 12th March, 2020, a workshop for students of Siparia West Secondary School, St Anthony's College and Debe High School was held in the High Commission of India office on Artificial Intelligence and its usage. Teachers and Ministry of Education officials were also present on the occasion as Mr. Abhrajit Das of Nutrien Trinidad made his presentation to educate and inform the students about the advantages and usage of Artificial Intelligence and Internet of Things (IoT).

Read More:

<https://twitter.com/AmbArunSahu/status/1238187250950815744/photo/3>

India's race to build a low-cost ventilator to save COVID-19 patients



In an 8,000 sq ft (743 sq m) facility in the western Indian city of Pune, a bunch of young engineers are racing against time to develop a low-cost ventilator that could save thousands of lives if the coronavirus pandemic overwhelms the country's hospitals. These engineers - from some of India's top engineering schools - belong to a barely two-year-old start-up which makes water-less robots that clean solar plants. Last year, Nocca Robotics had a modest turnover of 2.7 million rupees (\$36,000; £29,000). The average age of the mechanical, electronic and aerospace engineers who work for the firm is 26. India, by most estimates, only has 48,000 ventilators. Nobody quite knows how many of these breathing assistance machines are working. But it is a fair assumption that all those available are being used in intensive care units on existing patients with other diseases.

UN report: India likely to escape the looming global recession



According to a recent United Nations trade report, the world economy is predicted to go into recession this year with an estimated loss of trillions of dollars of global income due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is spelling severe trouble for developing countries. However, according to the report, India and China are likely to escape from this global recession. With the majority of the world's population living in developing countries, which makes up two-thirds of the whole lot, it is going to face an unprecedented economic downturn from the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. The United Nations is calling for a \$2.5 trillion rescue package for these nations. According to the report, released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), titled 'The COVID-19 Shock to Developing Countries — "Towards a 'whatever it takes' programme for the developing nations being left behind', commodity-rich exporting countries will face a \$3 trillion drop in investments from overseas in the next two years. "The report stated that in recent days, advanced economies and China have put together massive government packages which, according to the Group of 20 leading economies, will extend a USD 5 trillion lifeline to their economies.

Read More

<https://analyticsindiamag.com/un-report-india-likely-to-escape-the-looming-global-recession/>

Read More:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-52106565>

India's Finance Minister announces relief package to help fight the COVID-19 outbreak



India's Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on March 26, 2020 announced a relief package worth Rs 1.70 lakh crore to help the nation's poor tackle the financial difficulties arising from Covid-19 outbreak. Sitharaman said the economic relief package will focus primarily on migrant labourers and daily wage labourers. "A package is ready for the poor who need immediate help like migrant workers and urban and rural poor. No one will go hungry. The package is worth Rs 1.7 lakh crore," Sitharaman said. The package includes a mix of food security and direct cash transfer benefits which shield poor families during the lockdown. Under the Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Ann Yojna (PMGKY) which is a part of the relief package, at least 80 crore poor people will be covered. Under the scheme, an additional five kilos of rice/wheat will be given to 80 crore individuals -- over the 5 kilo they already get -- along with a one-kilo pulse per household for a period of three months. The government will spend Rs 45,000 crore for undertaking these measures. She also announced that there will be Rs 50 lakh insurance cover for each healthcare worker for three months. "Safai karamcharis, ward-boys, nurses, paramedics, technicians, doctors and specialists and other health would be covered by a special insurance scheme. Any health professional who while treating Covid-19 patients meets with some accident, then he/she would be compensated with an amount of Rs 50 lakh under the scheme," stated the government press releases.

Read More

<https://www.indiatoday.in/business/story/finance-minister-nirmala-sitharaman-live-updates-economic-relief-package-india-coronavirus-1659912-2020-03-26>

Intas Pharma to donate 2 million hydroxychloroquine tablets for WHO-endorsed study



Intas Pharmaceuticals Ltd is collaborating on a World Health Organization-endorsed study into the prevention of Covid-19 using hydroxychloroquine, a drug that may have an effect in preventing and/or reducing symptoms of the coronavirus, according to the company. There are 40,000 frontline healthcare workers involved in the global COPCOV (chloroquine/hydroxychloroquine prevention of Covid-19 in the healthcare setting; a randomised, placebo-controlled prophylaxis) study which is scheduled to start shortly. These workers are involved in caring for Covid-19 patients, said Intas, touted to be the largest supplier by volume of generic medicines to the UK NHS. The study will be led by scientists from the University of Oxford and will be funded by the Wellcome Trust. The study pools the resources of international experts across multiple continents. Intas will provide up to two million tablets of hydroxychloroquine to the trial, free of charge, along with two million tablets of matched placebo (medicines that look real, but don't contain the active ingredient). Mr. William Schilling, co-lead investigator, Research Physician and Infectious Diseases/ Microbiology Registrar, Mahidol Oxford Tropical Medicine Research Unit in Thailand, said: "We are in a race against time to find effective treatments and preventive measures as the Covid-19 pandemic grows. What we already know is that chloroquine has antiviral activity against SARS-CoV-2 in cell culture, as it does for the related SARS-CoV." The Intas statement cited professor Sir Nicholas White, Wellcome Trust Fellow and consultant in infectious diseases at the University of Oxford, as saying, "The hypothesis for this study is that chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine might both slow viral replication in exposed subjects, attenuating or preventing the infection. Given the extensive experience in clinical practice, established safety and tolerability profile, if it proves effective then it would be a readily deployable and affordable preventive measure for high risk individuals such as healthcare workers".

Read More:

<https://www.ibef.org/news/intas-pharma-to-donate-2-million-hydroxychloroquine-tablets-for-whoendorsed-study>

Medical devices industry in India has the potential to grow at 28% p.a. to reach \$ 50 bn by 2025



Medical devices are segregated into six major segments, of which equipment and instruments (surgical and non-surgical) form the largest portion (53%) of the pie in India. There are 750–800 domestic medical devices manufacturers in India, with an average investment of \$ 2.3–2.7 mn and an average turnover of \$ 6.2–6.9 mn. Around 65% of the manufacturers are mostly domestic players operating in the consumables segment and catering to local consumption with limited exports. Orthopaedic prosthetics and patient aids segments to be the two fastest-growing verticals by 2020 and are projected to grow at a CAGR of 9.6% and 8.8%, respectively.

Read More:

<https://www.investindia.gov.in/sector/medical-devices>

High Commission of India collaborated with Office of the Member of Parliament for Chaguanas East for Yoga demonstration



H.E. High Commissioner of India to T & T briefed Yoga students at a Yoga demonstration event at Chaguanas South Secondary School on March 07, 2020. The demonstration was arranged by High Commission of India in collaboration with Office of Member of Parliament of Chaguanas East. The yoga demonstrations were aimed at sensitizing person about the benefits of yoga and its positive to a



healthy lifestyle. This event is expected to take place in many locations in anticipation of International Day of Yoga in June 2020.

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<https://twitter.com/AmbArunSahu>

FORTH COMING EVENTS IN INDIA:

IPHEX INDIA 2020
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Overseas Business Visitors interested to join the event can register (www.iphex-india.com) to avail "to and fro" economy class air-tickets and accommodation during the event, subject to selection and approval from selection committee.

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SUGGESTED ITINERARIES FOR TRAVEL ON GANDHI CIRCUIT

On the occasion of celebration of **150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi**, the Apostle of Peace, Indian Association of Tour Operators presents a list of 11 different suggested itineraries for travel on Gandhi Circuit are as below:

SUGGESTED ITINERARIES

Sr. No.	Duration of Tour	Places Covered
1.	6 nights/ 7 days	Porbandar/Rajkot/Ahmedabad/Vadodara/Surat
2.	5 nights/ 6 days	Porbandar/Rajkot/Bhavnagar/Ahmedabad
3.	7 nights/ 8 days	Porbandar/Rajkot/Bhavnagar/Ahmedabad/Surat
4.	5 nights/ 6 days	Delhi/Jaipur/Agra/Delhi
5.	3 nights/ 4 days	Mumbai/Pune
6.	2 nights/ 3 days	Kolkata
7.	3 nights/ 4 days	Madurai/Kanyakumari
8.	11 nights/ 12 days	Mumbai-Porbandar/Rajkot/Bhavnagar/Palitana/Ahmedabad/Vadodara/Surat/Delhi



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9.	4 nights/ 5 days	Kolkata and Bihar
10.	4 nights/ 5 days	Kolkata and Odisha
11.	3 nights/ 4 days	Delhi/Shimla/Delhi

For any enquiry on booking tours as per the listed itineraries, travel agencies/tourists are requested to contact via E-mail the Indian Association of Tour Operators – i.e. IATO at: iato@airtelmail.in

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<https://www.digitalindia.gov.in/>

<https://www.makeinindia.com/>

<https://www.indiatradefair.com/>

<https://www.swachhbharatmission.gov.in/>

<https://www.gandhi.gov.in/>

<https://www.indiaperspectives.gov.in/>

<http://dgftebrc.nic.in:8090/TradeDispute/>



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