India’s Foreign Minister speaks with T & T’s Foreign Minister

Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar held talks with Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs Senator Dennis Moses on April 30, 2020. “The telephone conversation between the ministers during the prevailing situation of COVID-19 Pandemic is significant in terms of the cordial relationship between the two countries,” as stated by the High Commission of India on April 30. On April 30, 2020, India’s Foreign Minister tweet stated that he spoke to T & T’s Foreign Minister and he looks forward to an early meeting of the India-T & T Joint Commission. He also said that the two countries are working together on IT cooperation and healthcare. “India continues to reach out to its friends in the Caribbean region, as the global pandemic continue to affect all parts of the world.” The High Commission of India stated. Jaishankar also spoke with Grenadian Foreign Minister Peter David on the same day. He also followed up with talks with Finance Ministers Louis Straker of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Dr. Kenneth Darroux of Dominica. After speaking to Darroux he tweeted, “Great to talk to a fellow fan of Chris Gayle.”

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https://twitter.com/AmbArunSahu

India clears US$250,000 Paracetamol exports for Trinidad & Tobago

The Foreign Ministry of the Government of India has cleared export of Paracetamol API, worth over US $250,000 to T&T according to press release from the High Commission of India in Port-of-Spain. In a report on April 20, 2020, the Indian newspaper, the Hindu said that as a common fever medication, Paracetamol is the most sought after and widely used drug globally ever since the COVID-19 outbreak. The Indian High Commission stated that T&T is among 63 countries, for which the export of the medicine has been approved. The Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient (API) is the part of any drug that produces the intended effects. Some drugs, such as combination therapies, have multiple active ingredients to treat different symptoms or act in different ways. “This decision has been taken on a humanitarian grounds to ensure the supply of medicine which is widely used, including in cases with COVID-19. It may be noted that this is part of India’s efforts to contribute to the global efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. It is also a symbol of our solidarity towards all the countries who require this medicine during the hour of need. A total of 1667.25 kg of the medicine with FOB value of US$256500 would be supplied by Milan Laboratories Pvt Ltd of India to T&T.”

Read More:
https://www.cnc3.co.tt/india-clears-us250000-paracetamol-exports-for-tt/
Indian Railways crosses 2 million mark in distribution of free meals

Distribution of free hot cooked meals by Indian Railways during the national lockdown due to COVID-19 crossed the two million mark today with a total of more than 20.5 lacs. The global pandemic has created unprecedented situations leaving large number of people vulnerable to hunger. Those worst hit by this pandemic and lockdown are stranded persons, daily wage labourers, migrants, children, coolies, homeless, the poor and many who form the floating population. Indian Railways staff from number of Railway organizations have worked tirelessly since March 28, 2020 to provide hot cooked meals to needy people after the lockdown due to COVID-19. Railways has been providing bulk cooked food with paper plates for lunch and food packets for dinner through IRCTC base kitchens, RPF resources and contribution of NGOs. While delivering the food to needy persons, social distancing and hygiene is being observed.

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India supplies anti-malaria drug to T & T to fight COVID-19

The GOI has approved a supply of medicine to fight COVID-19 to be sent to T&T, including the anti-malarial drug hydroxychloroquine (HCQ). The Ministry of External Affairs (Foreign Ministry of GOI) said in a press release on April, 16, 2020, the decision was made on "humanitarian grounds" to ensure the supply of "widely used medicines, including cases of COVID-19." The statement said it was a "symbol of our solidarity with countries who require this medicine during this hour of need." HCQ is used to prevent and treat malaria. The statement said in pre-clinical laboratory studies, "HCQ has been found effective against coronavirus (and) is being recommended for treatment under special circumstances and for protection of high-risk individuals." India has also cleared export of paracetamol API (Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient), approximately worth US$250,000 to T&T. T&T is among 63 countries for which the export of paracetamol has been approved. India leads in production and export of HCQ with 70% of annual global production.

Read More:
https://newsday.co.tt/2020/04/17/india-restarts-hydroxychloroquine-supply-to-tt/

Assistance rendered by the High Commission of India to stranded Indians who has been affected by COVID-19 in T & T, Grenada, Commonwealth of Dominica & Montserrat

The High Commission of India has issued advisories on a regular and timely basis for COVID-19 as well as on the Mission's website and social media platforms. There has been dedicated helpline numbers which have been set up for Indian nationals in Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada, Commonwealth of Dominica and Montserrat who are affected by the crisis. Working through Indian communities and WhatsApp groups, information has been collected and shared with stranded Indians on the evacuation planning and other efforts made by Government of India. The Mission has been in touch with almost all stranded Indians spread over its jurisdiction. As required, food and provisions have been provided to some stranded Indian nationals with the help of the local Indian community/agencies. Masks obtained locally with help from the Penal/Debe Foundation and Sewa TT are being distributed to stranded Indians in Trinidad. Also, information and videos relating to Ayurveda and Yoga, has been shared in our social media channels to help people work on their wellness. The Art Competition 'United Against Corona- Express through Art' has also been given publicity through Mission's website and social media channels.

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https://www.facebook.com/IndiaInTnT/photos/pcb.26331303746797004/2633130653463680/?type=3&theater
India coronavirus: The woman who pushed for homemade masks

A woman scientist from India is behind the push for mass use of homemade masks for more than a billion people, reports science writer Pallava Bagla. On 11 April, 2020, PM Modi wore a white homemade cloth mask during a video conference call with political leaders around the country. Five days earlier, his government had recommended that Indians use homemade face masks in densely populated cities to protect themselves from coronavirus if they had to leave their homes. This was a change from the earlier position that only people who were infected should wear masks. Behind India’s policy change and a push for mass use of homemade masks for more than a billion people is a little-known female biochemist.

Shailaja V Gupta, 58, is a scientist in the office of India’s principal scientific adviser. She helps draw up policy and advises the government on the best use of technology. "Homemade masks were a very obvious solution to limit the chain of transmission, especially in crowded conditions," she says. "People living in slums, for example, need a local, cheap and simple solution and that is where the homemade mask can make a difference." There continues to be debate around the efficacy of masks - both homemade and otherwise.

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India coronavirus: World’s largest postal service turns lifesaver

India has the largest postal service in the world - and now it is stepping in to help deliver lifesaving medicines during a countrywide lockdown aimed at tackling the coronavirus pandemic. The BBC's Ayeshea Perera in Delhi reports. Red postal vans are a familiar sight in India. They make thousands of journeys every day, criss-crossing the country's wide network of post offices in 600,000 villages. The postal service does much more than deliver letters and packages. It is also a bank, a pension fund and a primary savings instrument for

Indian companies can spend Social Responsibility fund to fight Coronavirus crisis

The Government of India announced on March 23, 2020, allowed companies to spend their corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds to fight the coronavirus (COVID-19), a notified disaster. The move is expected to benefit the local community where businesses have operations and complement the state’s efforts to combat the crisis that has disrupted economic activity and could impact livelihoods. Indian companies spend around ₹15,000 crore a year on charity as mandated by law. The Companies Act requires that firms with a net worth of at least ₹500 crore or revenue of ₹1,000 crore or net profit of ₹5 crore should spend at least 2% of their net profit on CSR. If they fail to do so, it should be explained in the annual financial statement. An order by the corporate affairs ministry said that CSR funds may be spent on various activities related to COVID-19 in ways such as promoting healthcare including preventive care. CSR funds could also be used to tackle disaster management which includes relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction activities. The order explained that the decision was taken in view of the spread of the virus in the country, its declaration as a pandemic by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the government’s decision to treat it as a disaster. "Spending of CSR funds for COVID-19 is eligible CSR activity," said the order.

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World Health Organization welcomes joint efforts with India to fight COVID-19

World Health Organisation (WHO) Chief Mr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has welcomed the world health body’s cooperation with India to leverage strategies that helped the country win its war against polio into the response to COVID-19 outbreak, saying such joint efforts will help defeat the pandemic. The World Health Organization has said it will work with India’s Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to leverage the strategies that helped the country eradicate polio to fight the pandemic. The WHO’s national polio surveillance network will be engaged
The International Monetary Fund (IMF) supports India’s "very wise" decision to impose a national lockdown to combat the coronavirus pandemic despite the resulting economic slowdown, according to Changyong Rhee, the organisation's director of the Asia and Pacific Department. He said at a news conference on April 15, 2020, "India entered the pandemic turmoil in the midst of a credit crunch induced slowdown and its recovery prospect becomes more uncertain." The IMF drastically revised India’s growth rate projection for the current fiscal year to 1.9 per cent from the 5.8 per cent made in January, which was lower than the 7 per cent made in October. Rhee said that India's strict action against the COVID-19 pandemic "can cause a drop-in economic activity (and) growth rate will go down definitely, but I think that is a very wise and important decision to minimise the long-term cost of this disease spread." He to strengthen COVID-19 surveillance and its field staff will continue to support immunization and elimination of tuberculosis and other diseases. India eliminated polio in 2014. He said “All of you in the field Integrated Disease Surveillance Project, state rapid response teams and WHO - are our surveillance corona warriors. With your joint efforts we can defeat the coronavirus and save lives,” Harsh Vardhan, India’s Minister for Health & Family Welfare said. WHO South-East Asia Regional Director Mr. Poonam Khetrapal Singh said the National Polio Surveillance Project played a critical role in strengthening surveillance for polio that generated useful, timely and accurate data to guide policies, strategies and interventions until transmission of the poliovirus was interrupted in the country, adding that the other WHO field staff involved with elimination of "It is now time to use all your experience, knowledge and skills, with the same rigor and discipline that you showed while monitoring polio activities, to support districts with surveillance, contact tracing and containment activities” Singh said.


‘About 70% of vaccines used around the world are made in India

Dr. Jerome Kim, considered the world’s most authoritative voice on vaccines, said on Friday that India has a huge role to play in dealing with the coronavirus pandemic. "About 70% of the vaccines used around the world for extended immunisation programmes are made in India," Dr. Kim told WION. Dr. Kim, the Director-General of International Vaccine Institute, joined Palki Sharma Upadhyay on Gravitas, WION’s prime time show, from Seoul on April 10, 2020 to talk about several issues including South Korea’s success story against the COVID-19. South Korea is being heralded globally for its response against COVID-19 which helped flatten the curve in the country against the infectious disease. Rigorous testing was the hallmark of South Korea’s response. Positive cases were promptly isolated and treated. Almost 2/3rd of the total patients have recovered. South Korea’s model is now considered the gold standard of fighting against the virus. A clinical scientist and the world’s leading voice on vaccines who lead the US military’s program on the HIV vaccine, Kim had a lot to say about India’s role in the fight against COVID-

Economic and Commercial Newsletter, May 2020
said that the fiscal stimulus as well as the monetary policy easing adopted by the Indian government and the Reserve Bank are in the right direction, but whether they will be enough "depends on how this containment policy which is just adopted, how successful it will be". He said that he hoped that India's efforts will be successful, "but if the situation becomes aggravated, then I think in the short run they have no choice but to use more fiscal and monetary policies to contain the slowdown of the economy". After the COVID-19 crisis is over, he said India will have to go back to carrying out structural reforms and take steps for a more inclusive growth by focusing on priorities like the infrastructure. Surveying the Asian region, he said that for the first time in 60 years its growth will be at "a standstill" - or zero per cent - this year. But he added that even this performance will be "better than other regions." Similarly, India with its paltry growth rate projection of 1.9 per cent this year will be the fastest growing major economy in the world, according to the IMF's projections.

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Serum Institute to make Crores of potential Coronavirus Vaccine Doses

The Serum Institute of India said on Tuesday it plans this year to produce up to 6 crore doses of a potential vaccine against the new coronavirus that is under clinical trial in Britain. Serum, the world's largest maker of vaccines by volume, is mass-producing the vaccine candidate developed by the University of Oxford, which started testing it on humans last week, and is a leader in the global race to develop an antidote to the novel coronavirus. Some 30.5 lakh people have been reported to be infected globally, and by a Reuters tally 211,376 have so far died from COVID-19, the respiratory disease caused by the coronavirus. While the Oxford vaccine, called "ChAdOx1 nCoV-19", is yet to be proven to protect against COVID-19 infection, Serum decided to start making it after it had shown pre-clinical promise and had progressed into human trials, Serum Chief Executive Adar Poonawalla said. "They are a bunch of very qualified, great scientists (at Oxford) ... That's why we said we will go with this and that's why we are confident," Mr Poonawalla told Reuters in a phone interview. "Being a private limited company, not accountable

19. Dr. Jerome said that with 7 billion people in the world who should potentially be vaccinated, someone has to make the vaccine, make a lot of doses and make it quickly. "India has a big role to play, not only because of its population, but we know that India has a very important vaccine manufacturing industry," he said. "About 70% of the vaccines used around the world for extended immunization programmes are made in India" he added.

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Chitra GeneLAMP-N makes confirmatory tests results of COVID 19 possible in 2 hours

Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, Trivandrum, an Institute of National Importance, of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), has developed a diagnostic test kit that can confirm COVID19 in 2 hours at low cost. The confirmatory diagnostic test, which detects the N Gene of SARS- COV2 using reverse transcriptase loop-mediated amplification of viral nucleic acid (RT-LAMP), will be one of the world’s first few if not the first of its kind in the world. The test kit, funded by the DST called Chitra GeneLAMP-N, is highly specific for SARS-CoV-2 N-gene and can detect two regions of the gene, which will ensure that the test does not fail even if one region of the viral gene undergoes mutation during its current spread. The tests performed at NIV Alappuzha (authorized by ICMR) show that Chitra GeneLAMP- N has 100 per cent accuracy and match with test results using RT-PCR. This has been intimated to ICMR, the authority to approve it, for COVID-19 testing in India, following which License needs to be obtained from CDSCO for manufacture. Current PCR kits in India enable detection of E gene for screening and RdRp gene for confirmation. Chitra GeneLAMP-N gene testing will allow confirmation in one test without the need for a screening test and at much lower costs. The detection time is 10 minutes, and the sample to result time (from RNA extraction in swab to RT-LAMP detection time) will be less than 2 hours. A total of 30 samples can be tested in a single batch in a single machine allowing a large number of samples to be tested each day.

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to public investors or bankers, I can take a little risk and sideline some of the other commercial products and projects that I had planned in my existing facility,” Mr. Poonawalla said. More than 100 potential COVID-19 candidate vaccines are now under development by biotech and research teams around the world, and at least six of these are in preliminary testing in people in what are known as Phase 1 clinical trials.

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Honorary Consul of India in Grenada assisted Indian nationals during the COVID-19 crisis

Grateful to Our Honorary Consul in Grenada Ms. Shadel Compton, Dr. Keshav and Mr. Ashok for helping with rations for a group of 4 Indians stranded at Grenada due the COVID-19 crisis.

Read More:
https://twitter.com/IndiainTandT/status/1254381704975912960/photo/1

IMF Executive Board Approves US$65.6 Million in Disbursements to Dominica, Grenada, and St. Lucia to Address COVID-19 Pandemic

The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved disbursements to Dominica, Grenada, and St. Lucia following their requests under the Rapid Credit Facility (RCF) mechanism, with a combined SDR 48 million (US$65.6 million), to help cover their balance of payment needs stemming from the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Disbursements to all three countries are set at the maximum available access under the RCF

instrument of 100 percent of quota for Grenada (SDR 16.4 million or US$ 22.4 million) and St. Lucia (SDR 21.4 million or US$ 29.2 million), and 89.4 percent of quota for Dominica (SDR 10.3 million or US$14 million). These countries are small states that are very vulnerable to shocks, including large natural disasters, with Dominica in particular still recovering from the devastation of Hurricane Maria in 2017. Following the Executive Board discussion of the requests, Mr. Tao Zhang, Deputy Managing Director and acting Chair, made the following statement: “The COVID-19 pandemic poses a major challenge to Dominica, Grenada, and St. Lucia. Their key tourism sectors have been hit hard by the shock. The contraction in tourism is expected to have a major impact on their economies, by causing ripple effects across all economic sectors, eroding fiscal revenues, and creating urgent balance of payments pressures. In addition, these three small states are also highly vulnerable to natural disasters.

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FORTH COMING EVENTS IN INDIA:

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<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Durations of Tour</th>
<th>Places Covered</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>6 nights/7 days</td>
<td>Porbandar/Rajkot/Ahmedabad/Vadodara/Surat</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>5 nights/6 days</td>
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<td>7 nights/8 days</td>
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<td>5 nights/6 days</td>
<td>Delhi/Jaipur/Agra/Delhi</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>3 nights/4 days</td>
<td>Mumbai/Pune</td>
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<td>6.</td>
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<td>Kolkata</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>11 nights/12 days</td>
<td>Mumbai-Porbandar/Rajkot/Bhavnagar/Palitana/Ahmedabad/Vadodara/Surat/Delhi</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>4 nights/5</td>
<td>Kolkata and Bihar</td>
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Email: trade.pospain@mea.gov.in

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<td>3 nights/4 days</td>
<td>Delhi/Shimla/Delhi</td>
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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

TO CONNECT WITH THE HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA:

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
- 116 positive cases
- 8 deaths

GRENADA
- 21 positive cases
- No deaths

COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA
- 16 positive cases
- No deaths