

Dear Reader

India responded whole-heartedly to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal to observe voluntary shutdown -'Janta Curfew' (people's curfew) – on March 22, Sunday, as part of self-isolation drive to fight corona pandemic. Later Delhi government announced lockdown of the national capital from March 23 to March 31 as Covid19 cases are surging. During the Janata Curfew Railways and urban transport services, were halted for 14 hours (IST 7 AM to 9 PM) in the entire country. Markets and establishments except those dealing in essential goods and services remained closed for the day. People all over the country came out in their balconies and clapped and rang bells for five minutes at 5 p.m. to express gratitude to those on the frontline of the war against the viral pandemic.

NATHEALTH on its part also expressed gratitude and respect to front-line health workers and emergency responders. In a thanksgiving gesture of NATHEALTH released a video on social media platforms to express gratitude and respect to doctors, nurses, and health.

Official records have confirmed over 360 Covid-19 positive cases this week, amidst fears of real numbers being larger and surging. In the face of acute shortage of testing kits, inadequate capacity to disinfect public spaces and insufficient hospital beds, India has been taking preventive measures to protect a large vulnerable population.

NATHEALTH is collaborating with the Government to support the fight against the crisis. Our diagnostic forum has been engaged with the government to workout collaboration to support to scale up testing facilities.

The country is passing through an unprecedented crisis and it's a global crisis. It's time to be prepared fully. NATHEALTH members, healthcare industry, policymakers, and media have been playing an important role.

India on Sunday showed the spirit of solidarity and that gives the confidence that We shall Fight, We shall win.

Check out the newsletter to know what is happening in other segments of the healthcare sector. Follow us on Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook for real times updates.

<https://twitter.com/nathealthindia>

<https://www.facebook.com/nathealthindia/>

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[Next 15 days critical for India in its fight against Covid-19](#)

Next 15 days critical for India in its fight against Covid-19

**In a statement issued to Media, NATHEALTH Secretary General Siddhartha Bhattacharya said that “It is high time to be prepared and agile. The healthcare sector stands united at this juncture to respond to the evolving scenario. We must prevent the spread through government and citizen-led public health measures while putting in place a unified preparedness strategy to treat COVID-19 across India.”**

**Govt allows private labs to test for COVID-19**

[Govt allows private labs to test for COVID-19](#)

The Narendra Modi government will now allow “high quality” accredited private labs to conduct the tests of coronavirus samples to ramp up its COVID-19 testing capabilities. However, NATHEALTH Vice President Dr Harsh Mahajan said Diagnostic Companies have not receive any notification regarding this yet.

[A record 8000 people earn their certification on Awareness & Management](#)

**Medvarsity Offers Free Online Certificate Course on COVID-19 in Partnership with FICCI and NATHEALTH**

A record 8000 people earned their free certificate on Awareness and Management of Covid-19. This was achieved in less than 24 hours after its announcement on LinkedIn by Medvarsity. As cases of Coronavirus (Covid-19) continue to rise, social media had given rise to a large amount of content that was factually incorrect and sometimes dangerous. The course was released in partnership with FICCI and NATHEALTH

**Healthcare Policy Update**

[No Entry of foreigners in Kashmir](#)

**All travellers to be quarantined in J&K: Govt**

**Jammu and Kashmir administration has appealed foreigners not to visit the Union Territory, warning that all visitors, including those coming from Ladakh, would be quarantined.**

**Corporate takes Safeguard Measures**

**Covid-19 scare: Cautious India Inc. asks staff to work from home**

**Some of India’s largest corporations, a swathe of start-ups and technology multinationals are asking employees to work from home even as the country reported nearly a dozen new cases of Covid-19 infections.**

**The World is ‘at war’**

Coronavirus Could Kill Millions If Allowed To Spread Like Wildfire: UN Chief

**The world is "at war" with a virus, which if allowed to "spread like wildfire" would kill millions of people, UN chief Antonio Guterres said on Thursday and called for a coordinated, decisive and innovative policy action from the world's leading economies to combat the pandemic.**

[Covid-19 : Enemy against Humanity](#)

WHO Chiefs says Covid -19 'enemy against humanity'

The head of the World Health Organization, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the new coronavirus was an "enemy against humanity", as the number of people infected in the pandemic soared past 200,000.

### **Healthcare Policy Overview**

[India more prepared against Covid-19](#)

Vaccine Research on Coronavirus

As per index of average overall global health security score 2019, India has been classified as "more prepared "Subsequently. World scientists on COVID-19 met at the World Health Organization's Geneva headquarters to assess the current level of knowledge about the new virus, agreed on critical research questions that need to be answered urgently, and ways to work together to accelerate and fund priority research that can contribute to curtail this outbreak and prepare for future outbreaks.

[No Vaccine for Covid-19 is a big concern](#)

Proposals invited on COVID-19 & related respiratory viral infections

Proposals maybe submitted as per SERB-IRHPA format by 5 pm on Monday, the 30th March 2020, through the SERB online portal

COVID-19 virus has spread rapidly throughout the world. Given the lack of an efficacious vaccine and lack of availability of suitable chemotherapeutic interventions, the global population has been hit hard to the current coronavirus outbreak.

### **Med Tech & Diagnostics Forums**

[Exports of ventilators banned](#)

Aviation ban may cause shortage of ventilators in India

India banned the exports of ventilators, certain kinds of masks, and textile raw materials for masks and coveralls, to prevent shortage of these in India. But for manufacturing the ventilators locally, companies said they needed imported components. Respirators are essential to treat serious cases of coronavirus infection.

## **Ecommerce companies restricted**

[Firms gearing up to meet sanitizers, masks demand](#)

E-commerce platforms like Amazon, Flipkart, Big Basket and Grofers have not had stocks of frontline sanitizer brands at several locations. Chemist shops in several cities said they are not getting any fresh supplies of sanitizers from Tuesday, while face masks, too, were almost sold out.

## **India to broaden testing criteria for Covid-19**

[Covid-19 testing criteria may be widened](#)

India is considering a proposal to broaden testing criteria for Covid-19 amid debate that they may be too narrow to detect community transmission of the disease. The high-level expert committee set up by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has suggested that all with atypical pneumonia and close contacts of Covid-19-positive persons be tested.

## **Insurance Forum**

[Covid-19: Queries on health insurance policies surge](#)

Coronavirus impact: Insurers see marked jump in inquiries for health policies

Queries on new policies have increased up to 40% since fresh cases of the virus were detected in Delhi and Agra. But the impact on pricing for new policies will be negligible as actuarial models generally factor in historical data. However, businesses of several health and travel insurers could be hit if the virus were to significantly impact India

[Financial assistance to poor for treatment](#)

Financial Assistance for Medical Treatment

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare provides financial assistance for treatment of poor patients suffering from identified life threatening diseases and taking treatment in Government hospitals, under the Umbrella Scheme of Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi (RAN) and Health Minister's Discretionary Grant.

[Proportion deduction restricted by IRDA](#)

[IRDAI proposes to restrict proportionate deduction in health insurance claims to help policyholders](#)

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has proposed changes in norms which govern how much of hospital bill is reimbursed to a health insurance policyholder in case of a claim. The proposed changes are expected to benefit policyholders with insurance policies which have sub-limits.

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