



CURRENT AFFAIRS

NEWS OF 1st APRIL

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By Sujit Sir



Tablighi Jamaat headquarters cleared

29 more occupants test positive, taking the total in Delhi alone to 53; contact tracing under way

NIRHIL M. BARTI
 SAHARU THYREIN
 NEW DELHI

All occupants of the Tablighi Jamaat headquarters, at the centre of an extensive net of the novel coronavirus transmission, were evacuated by early Wednesday, even as the authorities scrambled to identify and quarantine visitors who had returned home to various parts of the country.

At least 29 more occupants tested positive on Wednesday, taking the total in Delhi alone to 53.

Of around 310 delegates from Kerala, only 60 have returned to the State, and are under quarantine.

The missionary sect's followers travel extensively, and efforts are on to trace



Reaching out, for safety: Media personnel maintaining physical distance as they interview health workers sanitising an area near the Nizamuddin mosque in Delhi. (ANI)

Phones to be tracked

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday announced that the mobile phones of all those who have been asked to home quarantine themselves will be tracked by the Delhi police to keep a check on their movement. Several other countries have used this technology to contain the spread of COVID-19 and it was one way to ensure that people abide by quarantine norms, Mr. Kejriwal said. (ANI)

110 new cases from Delhi event in T.N.

No Stage-3 transmission, says govt.



Intensive checks: Coimbatore Corporation workers checking houses in Ukkadam on Wednesday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Nizamuddin event: Centre seeks action against officials responsible

Govt. counsel seeks suo motu action for 'negligence'

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

A Central government standing counsel has written a letter to the Delhi High Court seeking to initiate suo motu action against the State government officials responsible for alleged negligence in preventing the religious congregation in Nizamuddin here that led to further spread of COVID-19.

Central government Standing Counsel Gaurang



The standing counsel has written a letter to the Delhi High Court on the matter. •

...suo motu action from the

COVID-19 Regulations, 2020 under the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897.

"These gatherings were also in violation of another order issued by the Office of the Commissioner of Police, New Delhi, which was effective from March 18, 2020, wherein assembly of five or more individuals was prohibited," it said.

"However, despite the said orders being in place, the congregation [being conducted] shows negligence

India sees a sharp spike in infections

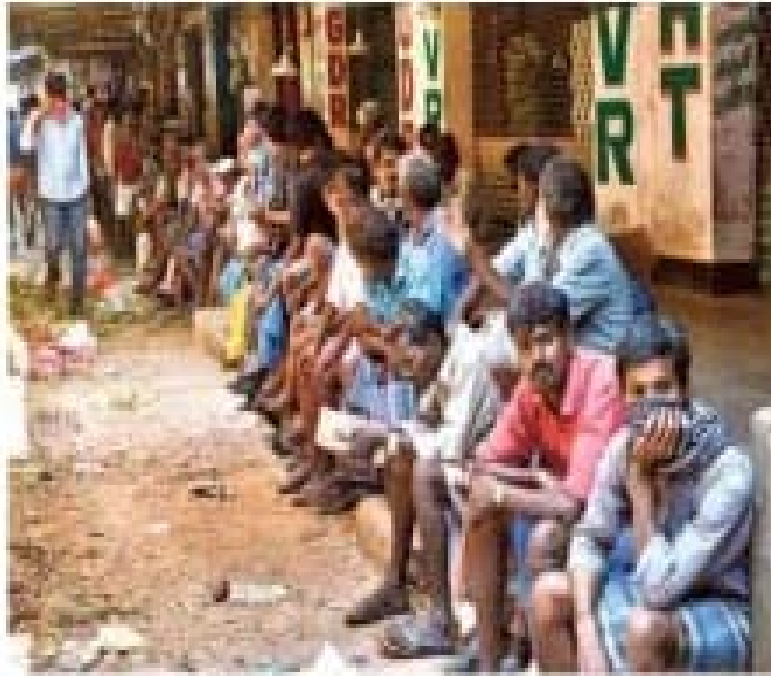
376 new cases registered in past 24 hours

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

India reported three deaths and 376 new cases on Wednesday – the highest-ever single-day increase in its COVID-19 tally.

This brought the total confirmed cases to 1,637 and took the death toll to 38. One hundred and thirty two persons have been cured/discharged from hospitals after recovery, the Union Health Ministry said at its daily press briefing, which was



Hunger pangs: Workers waiting for meals being distributed at the Koyambedu Market in Chennai. •IL VELAYUTHAN RAJ

(ICMR) said 47,951 tests had been conducted so far, in-

gal. The Home Ministry ordered the States to prevent

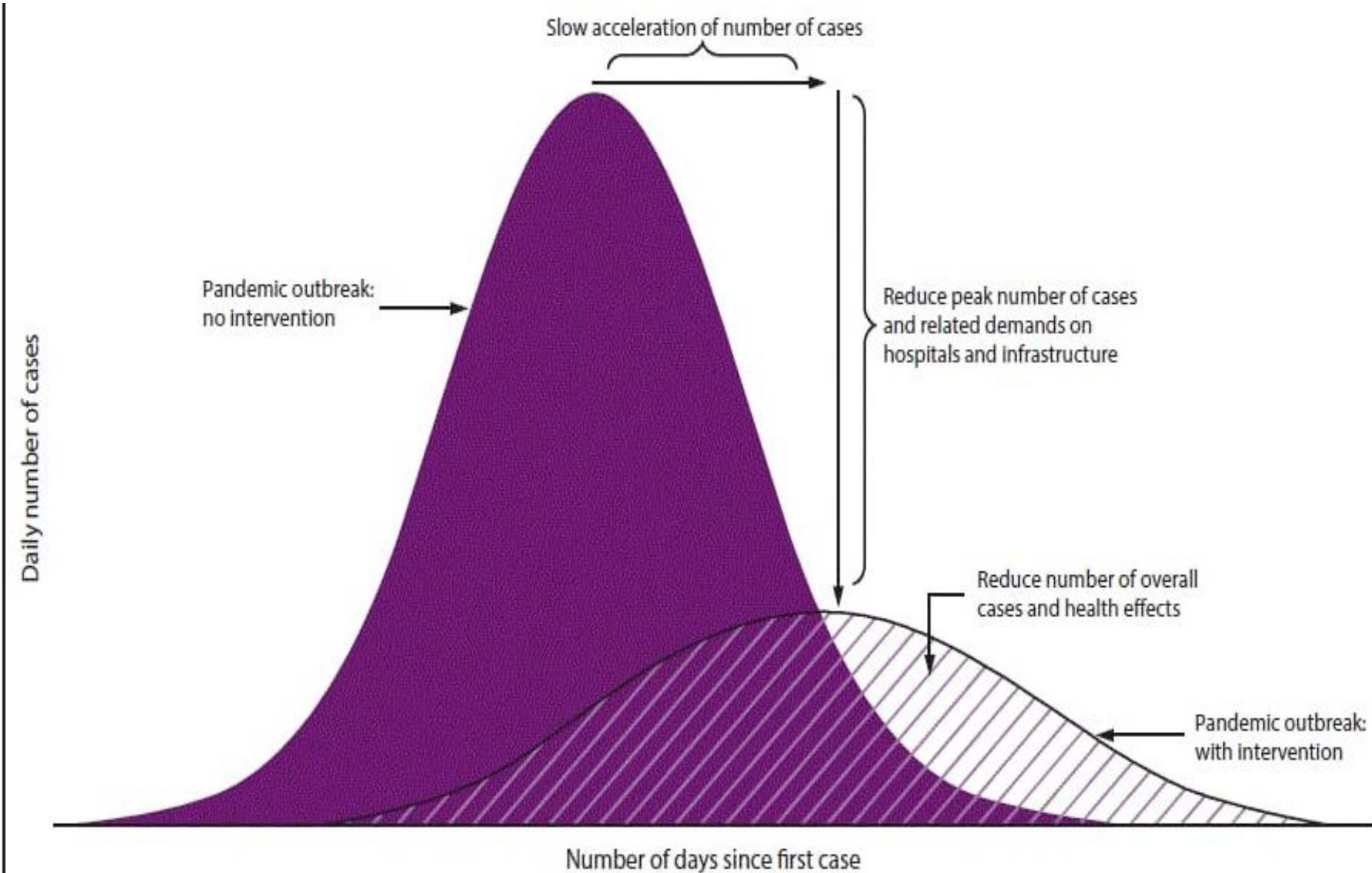
cial measures" for migrants on Tuesday. Under this, trained counsellors and/or community group leaders of all religions would visit them in relief camps and provide support.

The measure followed a directive from the Supreme Court to deal with the migrants in a "humane manner".

The Railways are modifying coaches to accommodate 80,000 isolation beds.

Twenty-four categories of medical devices would be regulated as "drugs", according to a decision by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority. This

Coronavirus: What is 'flattening the curve,' and will it work?



What is an Epi Curve?

An epi curve is a visual display of the onset of illness among cases associated with an outbreak

आपदा प्रबंधन अधिनियम--2005



आपदा प्रबंधन अधिनियम को दिसंबर, 2005 में लागू किया गया. ये एक राष्ट्रीय कानून है जिसका इस्तेमाल केंद्र सरकार करती है ताकि किसी आपदा से निपटने के लिए एक देशव्यापी योजना बनाई जा सके.

इसके तहत केंद्र सरकार के पास अधिकार होता है कि वह दिए गए निर्देशों का पालन ना करने वाले पर कार्रवाई कर सकती है. इस कानून के तहत राज्य सरकारों को केंद्र की बनायी योजना का पालन करना होता है.

- इस एक्ट के दूसरे भाग के तहत राष्ट्रीय आपदा प्रबंधन प्राधिकरण के गठन का प्रवधान है. जिसका अध्यक्ष प्रधानमंत्री होता है. इसके अलावा इसके अधिकतम नौ सदस्य हो सकते हैं जिसका चुनाव प्रधानमंत्री के सुझाव पर होता है.

- इस कानून की सबसे खास बात है कि इसमें राष्ट्रीय आपदा प्रबंधन प्राधिकरण आदेशों का पालन ना करने पर किसी भी राज्य के अधिकारी के साथ-साथ प्राइवेट कंपनियों के अधिकारी पर भी कार्रवाई कर सकती है.
- ये कानून किसी प्राकृतिक आपदा और मानव-जनित आपदा की परिस्थिति पैदा होने पर इस्तेमाल किया जा सकता है.

एपिडेमिक डिज़िज़ एक्ट 1897.

- मार्च महीने की शुरुआत में भारत सरकार ने 123 साल पुराने अंग्रेजी हुकूमत में बनाए गए एपिडेमिक डिज़िज़ एक्ट 1897 लागू किया था.
- इस कानून को अंग्रेजों ने फरवरी 1897 में तब के बॉम्बे शहर में फैल रहे प्लेग महामारी को कंट्रोल करने के लिए बनाया था.

- इसमें ब्रितानी सरकार के पास शक्ति थी कि वो देश में कहीं भी ज्यादा लोगों के जुटने पर रोक लगा सकती थी. इसी कानून का इस्तेमाल साल 2018 में गुजरात में फैले कॉलरा बिमारी के दौरान किया गया था
- चूंकि ये कानून राज्य सरकारों को महामारी की प्रकृति को देखते हुए नए नियम बनाने की सहूलियत देता है ऐसे में ये फैसला राज्य सरकारों को लेना होता है कि वह अपने राज्य में क्या नए नियम-कायदे महामारी के प्रकोप को रोकने के लिए बनाना चाहती है.

Five Delhi doctors test positive for COVID-19

One has been confirmed to be infected

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

At least three doctors of different Delhi hospitals and two doctors from Aam Aadmi Mohalla Clinics have tested positive for COVID-19 in the city, according to officials.

But only one of the doctors has been confirmed to be infected while treating patients.

A resident doctor from the Biochemistry Department of the Safdarjung Hos-



A view of an Aam Aadmi Mohalla Clinic in New Delhi.

• SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Kejriwal announces ₹1 crore for kin of staff who die fighting virus

'Scheme was for soldiers, but doctors on the front line now'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

After an emergency Cabinet meeting on Wednesday, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced that if anybody loses their life while serving any COVID-19 patient, be it sanitation workers, doctors, nurses or any other staff temporary or permanent from government or private sector, their family will be given ₹1 crore as a mark of respect for their service.



Medical staff seen outside a city hospital. •PH

ate doctor, nurse and sanitation workers, die while

loped nations of the world, like the U.S., the U.K., Italy,

Ration shop owner held for misappropriation

Accused saw an opportunity to sell foodgrains at higher price, says police officer

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Owner of a fair price shop was arrested for allegedly misappropriating foodgrains in west Delhi's Raghunir Na-

meer Sharma.

The police said that an information was received about misappropriation of foodgrains by an owner of a fair shop owner at Raghunir

said a senior police officer, adding that the shop owner was then called and asked to open the shop where the sale and stock register was checked.

was suspected to have been transferred was also checked where 21 jute bags of rice which were meant for disbursement at the fair price shop were found," the officer

Over 30% of ration shops found closed, says food rights group

'No way to ascertain whether beneficiaries are getting supplies'

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

According to a report published by the Delhi Rozi Roti Adhikar Abhiyaan (DRRAA), 32% of the ration shops visited by the organisation were found closed. Of the 37 ration shops inspected by the DRRAA across the city including, Narela, Murika,



Delhi has a network of 2,011 ration shops. Proper functioning of these shops is crucial, especially during the time of the COVID-19 crisis

**DELHI ROZI ROTI ADHIKAR ABHIYAAN
REPORT**

COVID-19

proof of distribution is available in the public domain nor are the contact details of ration cardholders available for verification by phone."

The report added that all the shops that were open, distributed ration free of

Centre's extra ration promise yet to be kept at PDS shops

Orders issued only on Monday, States yet to lift additional grain for the distribution of extra 5 kg rice or wheat

PRINCELLA JOHNSA
 SRIJANA K. SAH
 NEW DELHI

One week into the COVID-19 lockdown, and five days after the Centre's welfare package was announced, there is no sign of the promised five grains and pulses at ration shops across the country.

Although the Finance Minister promised that the

Produce Minister, Girdh Kar

mal, slowly moving from one chalk circle to the next, keeping the proper coronavirus-era distances from other shoppers.

"I heard that the Modi Sarkar announced extra ration last week itself. But when I come here, I find that they are still giving only the 7.5 kg promised by 'Apniwaal,'" she says, gesturing to the large poster of the Delhi Chief Min-



ister say that the ground work has just begun, with States having sent in their requisitions.

While a sufficient stock of 34.25 metric tonnes of pulses are available with NAFED, these are whole grains directly procured from farmers, and are yet to be milled and processed, for which the Centre will need to rope in private players. Also, unlike

ing in my pocket which I am saving up for emergencies," he says, adding that his family of four children are now dependent on the food served at a local government school.

Running out of food

"At this point, ration shops have become more crucial than ever before for the 40% of the Delhi population who

SC to hear migrant workers' issue

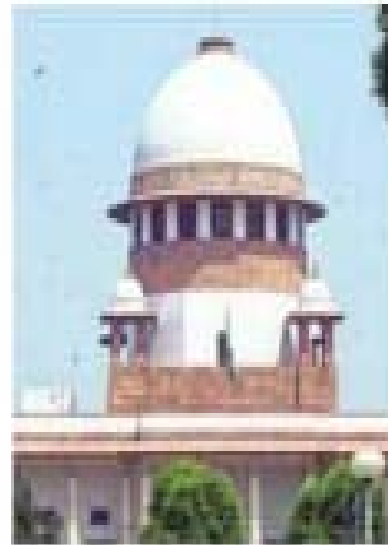
Lockdown without intimation caused panic and sudden loss of jobs: petitioner

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday agreed to urgently hear a petition filed by activists Harsh Mander and Anjali Bhardwaj that the declaration of the 21-day national lockdown without prior information "precipitated an unprecedented humanitarian crisis" for migrant work-

when the court assembles next.

The petition wants the Centre and States to jointly and severally ensure payment of wages/ minimum wages to migrant workers within a week, whether employed by other establishments, contractors or self-employed. It also sought a direction from the court to the



The Centre and the States

their hometowns," the plea said.

The petition said the declaration spread panic to such an extent that "workers crowded in large numbers of many thousands at bus terminals, railway stations, inter-State borders, potentially exposing them to the virus."

Mr. Mander and Ms. Bhardwaj criticised the Mi-

Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)



Abbreviation	ICMR
Formation	1911 (as IRFA); 1949 (renamed to ICMR)
Type	Government Organisation
Headquarters	New Delhi
Region served	India
Secretary & Director General	Dr. Balram Bhargava



Indian Council of Medical Research

- Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) is the **apex body in India for the formulation, coordination and promotion of biomedical research.**



World Health Organization

Abbreviation	WHO
Formation	7 April 1948; 71 years ago
Type	United Nations specialised agency
Legal status	Active
Headquarters	Geneva , Switzerland
Head	Director-General Tedros Adhanom
Parent organization	United Nations Economic and Social Council



IDBI Bank, IDFC First implement moratorium

Borrowers to send e-mails with choice

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Customers of IDBI Bank who wish to continue with equated monthly instalments (EMIs) and do not want to avail the moratorium will need to inform the bank by sending a mail to moratorium@idbi.co.in, the lender said in a communication.

IDBI Bank said there was no separate request needed



ers who want to avail the moratorium have to inform the bank from his/her registered email at

कोरोना वायरस: तीन महीने EMI टालना क्या वाकई फ़ायदेमंद है

- कोरोना वायरस की महामारी को देखते हुए 1 मार्च, 2020 से लेकर 31 मई, 2020 तक पड़ने वाले टर्म लोन की किस्तें और कैश क्रेडिट फैसिलिटी पर ब्याज की उगाही को टालने का फैसला किया गया है.

- लेकिन खास बात ये है कि बैंकों की ओर से भले ही आपकी ईएमआई को होल्ड कर दिया जाए, लेकिन ब्याज का मीटर चलता ही रहेगा और बाद में आपसे इसकी भरपाई की जाएगी.
- बैंकिंग एक्सपर्ट बताते हैं कि पर्सनल लोन और क्रेडिट कार्ड के मामले में तो इसकी चपत और भारी होगी. दरअसल, होम लोन और ऑटो लोन के मुक़ाबले पर्सनल लोग अधिक महंगे होते हैं, जाहिर है ब्याज के तौर पर आपको अधिक रकम चुकानी होगी.

Centre to borrow ¹ 4.88 lakh cr. in first half

The Centre will borrow ¹ 4.88 lakh crore in the first half of the coming financial year 2020-21, or 62.56% of the gross borrowings of ¹ 7.8 lakh crore for FY21, Department of Economic Affairs Secretary Atanu Chakraborty said on Tuesday.

“The government is committed to meet its requirements for fighting COVID-19, whether on account of health issues, or on account of protecting the economy, and also providing necessary stimulus at any point of time. The entire borrowing was designed in that fashion,” Mr. Chakraborty told journalists here.

Anti-people move: CITU

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) on Wednesday termed the government's decision to cut interest rates on small savings an “anti-people” decision that would adversely hit senior citizens.

“This is the second reduction in interest rate on small savings in a span of less than one year, last being in June 2019. This will affect financially the mass

Indonesia declares state of emergency as coronavirus toll jumps:

Indonesian leader Joko Widodo declared a state of emergency on March 31 as coronavirus (COVID-19) deaths in the world's fourth most populous country jumped again. However, he has resisted calls for a nationwide lockdown.

Coronavirus | Step up checking virus in patients, says virologist Jacob John



Jacob John says chasing the virus should be phased down in a strategy shift

T. Jacob John has called for a shift in strategy — chasing the virus should be phased down and checking the virus in infected persons should be stepped up.

“This is not a hotspot transmitting virus but it is a virus that transmits everywhere... Containment measures have to continue. But now, containment measures should have 30% priority, and healthcare testing 70% priority.

Lessons from Hubei

A lockdown, followed by aggressive screening testing and hospitalisation, brought results

MUKUL SANWAL

Success in conquering SARS-CoV-2 is best defined in terms of ensuring that there is no community spread. The nature and scale of the effort calls for fresh thinking, as it reverses established approaches. The messaging from the Central and State governments must bring this out, and not leave it to the local bureaucracy and police to interpret as a curfew.

The Prime Minister has taken a bold political decision. However, India faces an unprecedented imple-

vides important lessons, in view of the migration patterns in the country. Around five million people left Hubei to other parts of China to celebrate the New Year just prior to the lockdown of Wuhan on January 23. Thereafter, the number of confirmed cases doubled every three days and the numbers reached 30,000 cases in a fortnight, by February 9. The spread peaked at 70,000 cases on February 16.

The experience of Wuhan, a city of 11 million, is relevant for our hot-

Taipa calls for boosting telecom network capacity

Data usage up due to work-from-home

With data traffic in the country surging by at least 30% in the past few days amid most people working from home, the Tower and Infrastructure Providers Association (Taipa) on Tuesday said there is a need to quickly enhance telecom network capacity for which the States need to align their policies with the Centre's Right of Way (RoW) 2016 norms.

The cost of a cure for COVID-19

If Gilead's drug is successful, the Indian government should issue a compulsory licence under the Patents Act



SHYEL TREHAN

The World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic. However, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) declared COVID-19 an orphan disease, or a rare disease. Which of these statements is true? As of March 23, it seemed both.

COVID-19 and the Orphan Drug Act

In the U.S., under the Orphan Drug Act, 1983, companies are provided incentives to develop therapies, or orphan drugs, for rare diseases. The idea is that without these incentives, companies would find it difficult to recoup their R&D costs given the small number of people suffering from the rare disease. The Act allows seven years of market exclu-

ably expect to generate relatively small sales. Is it legal to apply the benefits of a statute to something entirely outside its stated objective and purpose? The simple answer is no.

Gilead is reported to have said that it intends to make the drug accessible and affordable around the globe. However, Gilead's exorbitant pricing of its drug to treat hepatitis C and its drug to treat HIV attracted attention in the past. Yet in 2017, Gilead placed its HIV therapy in the Medicines Patent Pool, a move that would make the medicine more accessible. For Remdesivir, Gilead's suspension of its "compassionate use" programme raised alarm bells. The programme was reinstated for only children and pregnant women; Gilead said it cannot process "the overwhelming number of applications". Gilead also stated that it had transitioned to an "expanded access" programme, for emergency use in severely ill patients. Public apprehension is somewhat justified, not least of all on account of the FDA's conduct in conveniently interpreting a statute to benefit big pharma during a pandemic.

ORPHAN DRUG?

"Orphan drugs" are medicinal products intended for diagnosis, prevention or treatment of life-threatening or very serious diseases or disorders that are rare.

These drugs are called “orphan” because under normal market conditions the pharmaceutical industry has little interest in developing and marketing products intended for only a small number of patients.

Hydroxychloroquine combination allowed

Ministry issues revised guidelines

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry has allowed the use of Hydroxychloroquine in combination with Azithromycin

revised guidelines are based on currently available information and would be reviewed from time to time as new evidence emerges," it added.

Petition in SC seeks free testing

It challenges legality of advisory that caps the price for testing at ₹4,500

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

A petition was filed on Tuesday in the Supreme Court seeking a direction to the government to provide free COVID-19 testing in all laboratories, including private ones.

The plea, filed by Delhi resident Shashank Deo Sudhi, challenged the legality of a March 17 advisory that caps



In the alternative, the petition asked the court to direct the court to "ramp up the testing facilities at the earliest, given the escalating mortality and morbidity rate across the country".

COVID-19

Mr. Sudhi said the COVID-19 tests should be conducted under NABL (Nation-

China chases Indonesia's fishing fleets, staking claim to sea's riches

Fishers in Natuna islands say they feel vulnerable with Beijing's presence in South China Sea becoming more aggressive

HANNAH REICH
 JAKARTA, INDONESIA
 NATUNA ISLANDS

Dedi knows where the fish run strongest in Indonesian waters off the Natuna islands. The Chinese know, too. Backed by Chinese coast guard ships, Chinese fishing fleets have been raiding the rich waters of the South China Sea that are internationally recognised as exclusively Indonesian's to fish.

While Mr. Dedi catches



terrible. "There was a vacant period, then China came back," said Ngarti Yuni Supripti, the Deputy Regent of the Natuna archipelago.

Global tensions

The latest episode occurred in February, fishers said, when Chinese boats flanked by coast guard vessels dropped their trawl nets yet again. It seemed as if the circumstances outlook peaking in China at the time hadn't

waterway through which one-third of the world's maritime trade flows. But local leaders in the Natunas don't control what happens near their shores.

Chinese inequality was on full display in January when President Joko Widodo of Indonesia visited the Natunas. "There is no bargaining when it comes to our sovereignty," Mr. Joko said. Earlier, Indonesian fighter jets buzzed the sky, while war-

had taken place.

"Little by little, I think the Chinese will take the Indonesian sea, the Philippine sea, the Vietnamese sea," said Wandarmas, a fisherman in the Natunas. "They are hungry: oil, natural gas, and lots and lots of fish."

The Chinese fishers are helping feed the country's growing appetite for seafood by trawling the South China Sea.

But they are also writing a

COUNTRIES WITH CLAIMS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA



The hand of another Indian suspected in Kabul attack

- **For the first time, NIA files case for terror attack outside India**
- Muhammed Muhsin, a 29-year-old man from Kerala's Kasaragod, is suspected to be one of the three attackers.
- The NIA registered the case under various Sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, the Indian Penal Code and Section 6(8) of the NIA Act.



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