

**Consulate General of India
Sao Paulo

Text of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's address to the nation on vital aspects relating to the menace of COVID-19

24 MAR 2020

Namaskaar !

My dear fellow citizens,

Today, once again, I am in your midst to discuss Corona Global Pandemic.

On 22nd March, we took the resolution of Janata-Curfew. As a nation, every Indian contributed with full responsibility and sensitivity to ensure its success.

Children-elders, big-small, poor-middle class- upper class, everyone came together in this hour of crisis.

Every Indian made Janata-Curfew a success.

Through one day of Janata-Curfew, India proved that at the time of crisis befalling our nation, at the time of crisis befalling humanity, how each and every Indian comes together to put forth united efforts to deal with it.

All of you deserve praise for ensuring the success of Janata-Curfew.

Friends,

All of you are listening to and watching news items regarding Corona Global Pandemic situation around the world.

All of you are also witnessing how the most advanced countries of the world have been rendered absolutely helpless by this pandemic.

It is not that these countries are not putting in adequate efforts or they lack resources.

The Coronavirus is spreading at such a rapid pace that despite all the preparations and efforts, these countries are finding it hard to manage the crisis.

The analysis of happenings in all these countries since the last two months, and the opinion of experts has proved that there is only one way to effectively deal with Coronavirus - **Social Distancing**.

That is, maintain physical distance with others and stay within the confines of one's home.

There is no other method or way to escape Coronavirus.

If we want to restrict spread of Coronavirus, we will have to break its chain of infection.

Some people are under the delusion that social distancing is essential only for sick people.

It is wrong to make those assumptions.

Social distancing is necessary for each citizen, for each family, and for each member of the family.

Carelessness of a few, ill-conceived notions of a few can put you, your children, your parents, your family, your friends, the entire country in grave jeopardy.

It will be impossible to estimate the price India will have to pay if this carelessness continues.

Friends,

In the last two days, several parts of the country have been put under lockdown.

These efforts by State Governments should be taken with utmost sincerity.

In light of health sector experts and experiences of other countries, the nation is taking a very important decision today.

From midnight tonight onwards, the entire country, please listen carefully, the entire country shall go under complete lockdown.

In order to protect the country, and each of its citizens, from midnight tonight, a full ban is being imposed on people from stepping out of their homes.

All the States in the country, all the Union Territories, each district, each municipality, each village, each locality is being put under lockdown.

This is like a curfew only.

This will be a few levels more than Janata-Curfew, and also stricter.

This is a necessary step in the decisive fight against Corona Pandemic.

The nation will have to certainly pay an economic cost because of this lockdown.

However, to save life of each and every Indian is mine, Government of India's, each state Government's, each local unit's top most priority.

Hence, It is my plea to you to continue staying wherever you are right now in the country.

Considering the circumstances at present, this lockdown will last 21 days.

The next 21 days are of critical importance for us.

As per health experts, a period of at least 21 days is extremely critical to break infection chain of Coronavirus.

If situation is not handled in these 21 days, the country and your family could go back 21 years.

If situation is not handled in these 21 days, several families will get devastated forever.

Hence, you must forget what going out means for the next 21 days.

Stay inside your home, stay inside your home, and do just one thing- stay inside your home.

Friends,

This decision of a nationwide lockdown that has been taken today has drawn a 'Lakshman Rekha' at your doorsteps.

You must remember, that a single step outside your home can bring a dangerous pandemic like Corona inside.

You must also remember that at times, a person infected with Corona may seem to be completely healthy in the beginning, since it is not evident that the person is infected.

Therefore, take necessary precautions and stay inside your homes.

By the way,

The people who are staying at home, are employing new methods over social media to disseminate information in an innovative manner.

There is one banner that I also liked, which I would like all of you to see.

Corona, i.e., Koi Road pe Na Nikle (no one should go out on the road)

Friends,

Experts have even said that when Corona infects a person, it may take a few days for the symptoms to manifest.

During this time, such a person unknowingly infects others who he may come in contact with.

According to a World Health Organization's report, a person infected with this virus can transmit this to hundreds of people within the span of 7 to 10 days.

This means, that it spreads like wildfire.

Another estimate given by the World Health Organization is very important.

Friends,

It took 67 days for the count of people infected with Corona to reach the 1st one lakh all over the world.

After this, it took only 11 days for another one lakh people to get infected.

Think, it took 67 days for it to infect one lakh people at first, but only 11 days to reach a total of two lakh people.

This is even more alarming that it took only 4 days for this disease to reach three lakh people from the count of two lakh.

You can imagine how rapidly Coronavirus spreads.

Once it begins to spread, it is very difficult to contain it.

Friends,

This is the reason that situation became uncontrollable when Coronavirus started spreading in countries such as China, US, France, Germany, Spain, Italy and Iran.

Also remember, whether it is Italy or US, the healthcare services in these countries are considered to be among the best in the world. Despite this, these countries have not been able to contain the impact of Corona. The question at hand is, where does one see a ray of hope in this situation? What is the solution, what are the options?

Friends,

The ray of hope to combat Corona comes from the experiences of those countries that have been able to contain Corona to some extent.

Citizens of these countries have not stepped out of their homes for weeks. Citizens of these countries have fully adhered to the government rules and hence, these countries now are heading towards overcoming this pandemic.

We should also accept that this is the only way before us. We must not step outside our homes. Whatever happens, we have to stay indoors. We can save ourselves from Corona only if we do not cross *Lakshman Rekha* of our homes. We have to stop the spread of this pandemic, and break the chain of the infection.

Friends,

Currently India is at a stage where our current actions will determine how much we are able to minimize the impact of this disaster.

It's time to consistently keep strengthening our resolve. It's time to exercise caution at every step. You have to remember that *Jaan hai toh Jahaan hai*.

Friends,

This is the time for patience and discipline. Until the lockdown situation remains, we must keep our resolve, we must keep our promise.

It is my plea to you, that while you are staying at home, you must think about and pray for the wellbeing of people who are fulfilling their duties, who are exposing themselves to great risk.

Think about the doctors, nurses, paramedical staff, pathologists who are working day and night in hospitals to save each and every life. Think about hospital administration staff, ambulance drivers, ward boys, sanitation workers who are working to serve others in these difficult conditions. Pray for those people who are working to sanitize your society, your locality, your streets, and public places to ensure that this virus is eradicated completely.

Think about the media persons as well who are working round the clock and risking infection while reporting from the streets and hospitals.

Think about the Police force around you, who are working relentlessly without worrying about the welfare of their family. They are working day and night to save you and, on several occasions, also bearing the wrath of the public.

Friends,

In the conditions that the Corona global pandemic has created, the Central and State Governments countrywide are working swiftly. We are constantly striving to ensure that citizen do not face much inconvenience in their daily life. We have made provisions to ensure that supplies of all essential items continue smoothly.

This crisis has certainly brought on a very difficult time for the poor.

Along with the Central and State Governments, individuals from civil societies and institutions are constantly striving to reduce the problems of the poor. Several people are collaborating their efforts to help the poor

Friends,

In addition to the basic necessities, lifesaving necessities have to be given top most priority

In order to tackle this novel pandemic, the Central Government is constantly working towards better equipping the healthcare facilities of the country

The Government has been taking decisions on the advice of the World Health Organization, country's top medical and research organizations and top health experts.

The Central Government has put in place a provision of 15 thousand crores for treating the Coronavirus patients and strengthening the medical infrastructure of the country.

This will allow for quickly boosting the number of Corona testing facilities, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Isolation Beds, ICU beds, ventilators and other essential equipment. Simultaneously, training of medical and paramedical manpower will also be undertaken.

I have requested the State Governments to ensure that healthcare is the topmost priority at the moment

I am pleased that the private sector is standing shoulder to shoulder with fellow citizens in full capacity during this crucial time

Private labs and hospitals are eagerly coming forward to work with the Government during these challenging times

But, friends, be careful that during such times, knowingly or unknowingly, several rumors are circulated. I appeal to you to beware of any kind of rumors or superstitions

It is extremely important for you to abide by the instructions and advice given by the Central and State Governments and the medical fraternity.

I request you not to take any medication without consulting doctors if you are showing any symptoms of this infection. Any sort of medical experiment can put your life to great risk.

Friends, I am confident that every Indian will abide by the instructions of the Government and local authorities during this crucial hour.

21 days of lockdown is a long time, but it is equally essential for your safety and that of your family.

I am confident that every Indian will not only successfully fight this difficult situation but also emerge victorious.

Take care of yourself and your loved ones.

Jai Hind!
