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Are you tired of lockdowns?



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Are you tired of Lockdowns?

• *Yugal Parashar*

It has almost been a year since the first Covid-19 lockdown happened in New Zealand in March last year and ever since it has been repeated several times on different alert levels, on and off. We New Zealanders, have relatively been a fortunate lot, to have not faced as strict conditions here as in some other countries' world over. Our geographic location, distance from the affected countries and a smaller population were some of the significant factors that contributed to initially stamp out the deadly virus. New Zealand government also acted swiftly but firmly by closing the borders completely and putting the

country on a strict Level-4 lockdown as the virus struck. The general empathy shown towards businesses and common man by Jacinda led government not only helped to contain the virus and support the community but also paved the way for her to make a resounding come back.

Ever since the historic mandate Jacinda Ardern won in last October, most opposition parties were clueless on about what issue they should attack the government. The finding of UK variant of new strain has now given them this opportunity to question and blame the government about its failure to contain the virus from letting it spread it in the

community. In the prevailing circumstances for any government of the world there are not many options available, where on the one hand you need to save the lives of your

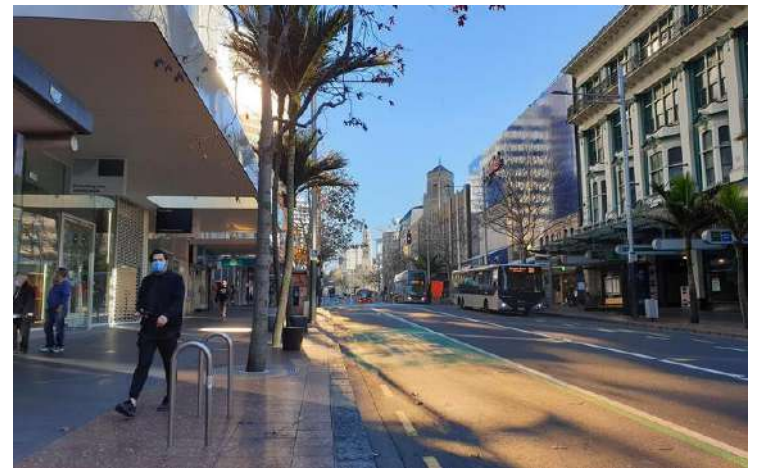
people and on the other hand you must be mindful of the economy not crashing down. We all must understand that we are passing through some extraordinary times and this is one situation that comes once in a lifetime. Unfortunately, there is no history or a precedence of a pandemic like this one to follow and most countries are only going on hit and trial method.

Even though the vaccines developed so far are no guarantee of 100% immunity from infection, we still need to applaud the efforts of researchers and scientists of many countries including India to have successfully developed a vaccine for the deadly disease in such a short time. In fact, we should take pride in India being among just a few countries in the world, to not only taking care of its own citizens but also looking after its neighbouring and other friendly countries. Several developed countries of the world are also waiting to receive Indian vaccine.

Vaccine or no vaccine, the best way to keep you safe and healthy is to strictly

follow the Covid-19 protocols issued by the government. If we take all due precautions and maintain our hygiene, wear mask, and avoid crowded places then we are doing our bit. Any negligence, especially when we are in a lockdown situation, can be very costly not only for you but for the wider community also. If the Prime Minister is angry at the rule breachers, there is reason for that. For a silly mistake of one individual, the whole nation of 5 million suffers and it also delays recovery plans of government apart from creating new financial burdens on the already overburdened government.

So, if you are really sick and tired of repeatedly happening lockdowns, please start rigorously following the lockdown protocols and safety regulations. We have done it earlier and we can do it this time too. This is the only magic to get rid from lockdowns and only you and we together can do it.



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National's five-point plan to avoid lockdowns



The latest community outbreak in South Auckland has reminded us all that despite it being a year with Covid-19, our response can always be improved on.

Locking down our largest city hurts. Businesses, workers, and our communities all feel it.

The Government needs to get on top of the latest Covid-19 outbreak in Auckland, and we have put together a five-point plan for managing future community cases.

Because, at the end of the day, we do not want to be yo-yoing in out of lockdown.

Our five-point plan for managing community outbreaks is:

1. Introduce rapid antigen testing – nasal swab tests that return results in 15 minutes.

2. Roll out high intensity, well-staffed testing stations across Papatoetoe and at every single location of interest

3. Conduct higher intensity wastewater testing at suburb and sub-suburb levels in Papatoetoe

4. Set aside enough vaccines for all border and port workers, then priority vaccinate South Auckland

5. Increase monitoring of

people who are required to self-isolate, including spot checks

New Zealand should be following in Taiwan's footsteps, where managed isolation at home comes with strict protocols, such as random phone calls and requests to confirm their location through a video call or supplying an image.

The high trust approach we take to self-isolation in this country comes with risks, as we have seen over the past few days.

New Zealanders have largely done a great job of following self-isolation advice, but it is unlikely we'll ever have 100 per cent compliance, and it's extremely frustrating when a small number of people don't follow the rules

Monitoring of self-isolators should be

ramped up to guarantee compliance, this means regular spot checks, and if not contact is made within 24 hours then the police are involved.

The Government also needs to roll out more staff across more testing sites to cut down times and make it easier for people to visit a testing station.

Long queues and wait times only discourage people from getting tests. We need to fix this.

National would also like to see rapid antigen testing introduced. These nasal swab tests provide results in 15 minutes and are common overseas. They would be an added layer of testing alongside our standard tests.

This type of testing would allow us to test large numbers of New Zealanders, quickly. Those who test positive would then have their results confirmed by a standard Covid-19 test.

The rapid antigen tests are especially good for giving quick answers and peace of mind to people who are showing symptoms of an illness and want to know if they have Covid-19.

The Government should also set aside enough vaccines for all border and port workers, and priority vaccinate South Auckland.

South Auckland presents an increased risk of transmission due to the density

of population and the number of border workers who reside there.

The National Party is focused on challenging and pushing the Government to make sure our response to any outbreaks is strong, and to prevent any further community transmission.

Locking Auckland down every couple of weeks cannot be the only answer. We need to be thinking creatively to make sure we are doing everything possible to avoid lockdowns.

By putting in place National's five-point plan, New Zealand would be in a strong position to fight Covid-19.



Judith Collins

National party leader based in Auckland. Leader of the opposition, Member for Papkura, National Party.

There is no long term COVID-19 strategy

“ACT applauds and endorses the business people who have written to the Government today asking what its longer term COVID-19 strategy is,” says ACT Leader David Seymour.

“We'd all like to know, but at the moment we have the blind leading the sighted.

“ACT has been calling for transparency on how the Government plans to reintegrate with the world for months.

“Does the Government not actually have a plan, or is it just too dangerous for people to know the answer?

“A key plank of ACT's COVID-19 policy is involving the business community in providing the solutions to help keep the virus at bay and allow the economy to endure its effects.

“But there has been no openness, there is no sign of a plan or a strategy.

“It's actually tragic that the Government is so divorced from the business community that it needs to ask to be pulled into the loop on this stuff.

“It's clear that part of the problem – aside from the fact this Government doesn't really trust business and doesn't



know how to talk to them – is there isn't really a loop to be pulled into.

“The Prime Minister summed the Government's approach to COVID-19 up perfectly yesterday when talking about talking about the vaccine programme and who will get vaccinated when.

“She said ‘this will be a rolling decision making programme.’

“Translation: ‘we're going to be making this up as we go along.’

“The business community shouldn't hold its breath. There is no coherent strategy to impart.” –*ACT New Zealand*

What's Labour doing for rural New Zealand?

We know that when our rural communities do well, all of New Zealand benefits. Labour is committed to supporting our regions so that, together, we can achieve even more.

Here are just some of the ways we are backing rural communities.

1) Growing our primary sector workforce

To make sure our primary industries have the skilled workers they need, we have made trades training in critical industries free. This will enable young people across New Zealand to upskill for a career in agriculture, horticulture, viticulture, fisheries, or forestry, while ensuring our primary industries can get the workers, they need to get the job done.

2) Connecting rural communities

In today's world, being online is essential for business, education, and recreation. As part of our rural broadband roll-out, we are installing mobile broadband towers around the country to improve connectivity in our regions.

3) Protecting farmers from costly pests

We have ramped up pest control programmes around the country to get rid of costly pests like wilding pines and wallabies. This will not only help keep costs down for farmers but will also create jobs

in our regions and support New Zealand's economic recovery.

4) Investing in schools, healthcare, and jobs

We are investing in infrastructure projects across the country that will make our communities more resilient, while creating thousands of jobs and supporting our economic recovery.

5) Boosting export earnings with our primary industries

We are working with our farmers and growers to generate an extra \$44 billion in export earnings over the next decade, while protecting the environment and creating jobs.

6) Supporting communities through emergencies

When a flood, drought or severe storms hits, our farmers and growers are among the hardest hit. We have rolled out more than \$19 million to support communities affected by severe weather events.

–*LabourVoices*



Grant residence status to all migrants currently in New Zealand, appeals Ryann's petition



A group of long-term migrants currently residing in New Zealand, struggling to gain residence for many years have a heartening request for Jacinda Ardern's government - to grant a residence amnesty.

ANKA - The Association of New Kiwis Aotearoa grew from a group of people to voices that cannot go unheard, especially when the conditions surrounding the pandemic are worsening by each passing day. With the reoccurrence of lockdown and no community vaccination roll out till date in New Zealand, the economy and businesses are struggling. The whole process is a chain and immigration on the other hand is not showing any change.

The residency applications from the year 2019 are still being processed even though there is no large influx of applications from last year due to the pandemic. Immigration New Zealand also halted the skilled migrant resident visa category since October 2020, the expression of interest for residency is not being selected by the immigration until further notice and is subject to change in future.

Kris Faafoi, the immigration minister has made it quite clear that the skilled migrant residency category needs a

review, this statement has not only caused panic but also questionable future for skilled migrants stuck in New Zealand due to Covid-19.

Separated from family members who are stranded overseas due to the border closure, difficulties in changing work as it has become less secure in prevailing circumstances, lack of stability caused by uncertainty around the fact that whether they will be able to stay here or not and the impact on mental health which is gone unnoticed are just some of the issues faced by migrants currently residing in Aotearoa.

"We strongly feel that people who are invited to come to New Zealand is because there are a lack of skills or people here should be allowed to stay and integrate properly. We are not here temporarily. We love this place and its people and want to make our lives here. We want to contribute and make Aotearoa New Zealand a better place for all" says the team.

The petition that started ANKA has been presented in the parliament in February. Petition request is that the House of Representatives grant a residence amnesty to approximately 200,000 migrants on temporary working

visas or resident/citizen partner working visas currently in New Zealand, similar to the amnesty granted back in 2000 under the fifth Labour Government.

The petition has already received a whopping number of sixty-four thousand signature and was presented on the 5th of February. The results are still awaited.

The reason for this petition is straight, "In March 2020, the skilled migrant residence pool was closed to new applicants, with no indication when it might reopen. In addition, there have been regular changes to the residence criteria, making some people who may have relied on those criteria when leaving their countries ineligible for residence once they are here. COVID-19 has added to the difficulties these 'new Kiwis' face. They are important to NZ—our economy and our communities—and I feel they should be granted residence status now" quotes petition of Ryann Lourenco.

For more details and on this petition, you can visit www.anka.org.nz, they are keen to accept support not only across the political spectrum but also from local people across New Zealand. "We are keen to emphasize that we are not 'taking jobs' or 'taking houses' from New Zealanders. We are already here; we pay taxes at

the same rate as New Zealanders. This is not about bringing lots more people across the border, but about supporting people who are already here!" quotes the association. - *TIN Bureau*

Tell Us Your Story

We are asking people what their story or situation is with regards to immigration. Since the pandemic, situations across the world have changed, we need more compassion and empathy from Immigration New Zealand when it comes to visa status for people who wish to stay and work for the betterment of New Zealand.

Contact us on editor@indiannews.co.nz or message us on our Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter handle. Let your voices be heard!

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Hindu Elders Foundation proposes to organise Auckland Faag Mahotsav 2021

Hindu Elders Foundation NZ has proposed to organise Auckland Faag Mahotsav 2021 jointly along with other leading organisations operated by Bharatiya (Indian) diaspora and some neighbouring countries of India.

In this regard, the first joint meeting was held at Mahatma Gandhi Centre on 8th February.

The agenda of the meeting was to share and invite various organisations' valuable input to plan this unique event, Auckland Faag Mahotsav 2021 and be proud of our diverse culture.

Subsequently, meetings were held

on 11th & 19th February where in more than 40 organisations registered their interest in joining the organisation and conducting this event.

During these meetings, a joint committee of leading organisations was formed which finalised to hold Mahotsav on 5th April at the Mahatma Gandhi Centre.

On behalf of the Convener, Auckland Faag Mahotsav and Committee Members, its Joint Secretary Mr Jyoti Swaroop Dua extends a warm welcome and invitation to all organisations to join in this effort and make the event a huge success. *-TIN*

Mandeep Kaur promoted as Senior Sergeant

The first Indian born officer in New Zealand Police, Mandeep Kaur Sidhu, has been promoted as a Senior Sergeant at NZ Police headquarters at Wellington. Mandeep Kaur joined New Zealand Police as Frontline Officer in 2004, later working with Road Policing, Family Violence, the Investigation Support Unit, Neighbourhood Policing and Community Policing.

She was working as an Ethnic Peoples Community Relations Officer, based at Henderson Police Station in Waitemata before being promoted as Senior Sergeant

now, to be based at Wellington NZ Police headquarters.

Mandeep is a very friendly, approachable and people's person. She is also very religious person and would go to worship at local Gurudwara regularly. With her achievements, Mandeep has made the local Punjabi community of New Zealand very proud. The Indian News extends its heartiest congratulations on her feat. *-TIN*



SAY NO TO FAMILY VIOLENCE



Family violence is a high priority for Police and reducing the number and impact of family violence incidents is a key Police strategy.

Family violence can be physical, verbal, psychological or sexual. It is not a private matter when people are being harmed.

Police is aware that the economic and social impacts of COVID19 can add extra pressure and stresses onto families.

Family violence cannot be tolerated under any circumstances and no culture supports violence of any kind to a human and more so a family member.

If you are in immediate danger and cannot call 111, get yourself out of the harm's way, get to a safe distance and ask a neighbour over a fence, or a passer-by, to call 111 for you.

Remember your call to 111 could potentially save a life.

Do not hesitate to contact Police if you need to report family violence. You can also contact other agencies such as those

below.

If you are facing a life challenge then look for solutions as a family or reach out to your wider community, family, and friends for support

Remember, support is available if you need it and the following agencies have the language and cultural capability to meet your needs.

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- New Zealand Sikh Women's Association: (09) 270-0798
- Gandhi Nivas (for men): 0800-426-344
- Shanti Niwas Charitable Trust : (09) 622 1010
- Safer Aotearoa Family Violence Prevention Network : 0800-367-942
- Shakti : 0800-742-584
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26 Km road built in 18 hours, a feat to go in record books



An infrastructure company from Hyderabad in India IJM, has created a record of laying new road of 25.54 lane kilometres in less than 18 hours (17.45 hours) as per the tweet of India's Road & Transport and Infrastructure Minister Nitin Gadkari. This road construction happened on national highway number 13, between Solapur and Bijpur. This

is first time in India that a road has been built at such a great speed though the Road Transport Ministry under its Minister Mr Gadkari is creating new records at every given opportunity.

This feat of fastest laying of new road will enter the Limca Book of Records, tweeted the Minister. The 110-kilometre, 4 lane highway is expected to complete by October 2021. The Indian government has got very ambitious plans for next 5 years to connect the whole of India with a network of world class roads and connect all main cities and business centres with each other by 2025. *-TIN Bureau*

BJP core committee will declare election candidates soon: Dilip Ghosh

Head of Assembly elections in West Bengal, Bharatiya Janata Party President Dilip Ghosh on Tuesday said that the Core Committee of the party will soon declare names of the candidates for the first and second phase of elections in West Bengal.

"Core Committee discussed candidates for the first and second phase of the election here in West Bengal. It will soon name declare the names," said Ghosh while speaking to ANI. The BJP leader also said that they also reviewed the upcoming election rallies in West Bengal.

"We also reviewed the upcoming election rallies of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, party national President JP Nadda and Yogi Adityanath in the state," he added.

The elections for the 294 Assembly seats in West Bengal will begin on March 27. The state is going to witness eight-phase Assembly polls this year.

West Bengal is likely to witness a triangular contest this time with TMC, Congress-Left alliance and the BJP in the fray. *-TIN Bureau*

Innovation should be affordable for people, accessible to masses: Piyush Goyal

Addressing the Global Bio-India Start-Up Conclave, 2021, Union Minister Piyush Goyal said that innovation must be affordable for the people, accessible to the masses, and should have an impact on society.

"Innovation has to be affordable for the people, accessible to the masses and should have an impact on society," the Minister of Railways, Commerce and Industry said at the Conclave organized by the Department of Biotechnology on Tuesday. Piyush Goyal said in a statement that our start-ups, young professionals, innovators, thinkers and scientists will be at the cutting edge of technology worldwide, and at the forefront of India's development to ensure a better future for our children.

Expressing his hope towards the growth of the country, Goyal said that newer technologies will serve the country and ensure we convert future challenges into opportunities.

Goyal complimented all the young start-ups for their ingenuity, their forward-looking thinking and all the good ideas demonstrated by them.

"Our start-ups need to be encouraged



to experiment, to go beyond the run of the mill thinking. Stressing on the need to ensure they are not afraid of failure. It is only when somebody fails, he knows how not to do something, and the learning helps in the future," he added.

Lauding the efforts of DBT, the minister said that they have demonstrated India's capability and prowess in research, innovation and new technologies. He said that the forward-looking, contemporary thinking and professional approach of the department has ensured that there are over 4,000 start-ups in the country in the field of Biotechnology.

During the event, the project development cell of DBT was launched. Five new technologies were also launched.

-TIN Bureau

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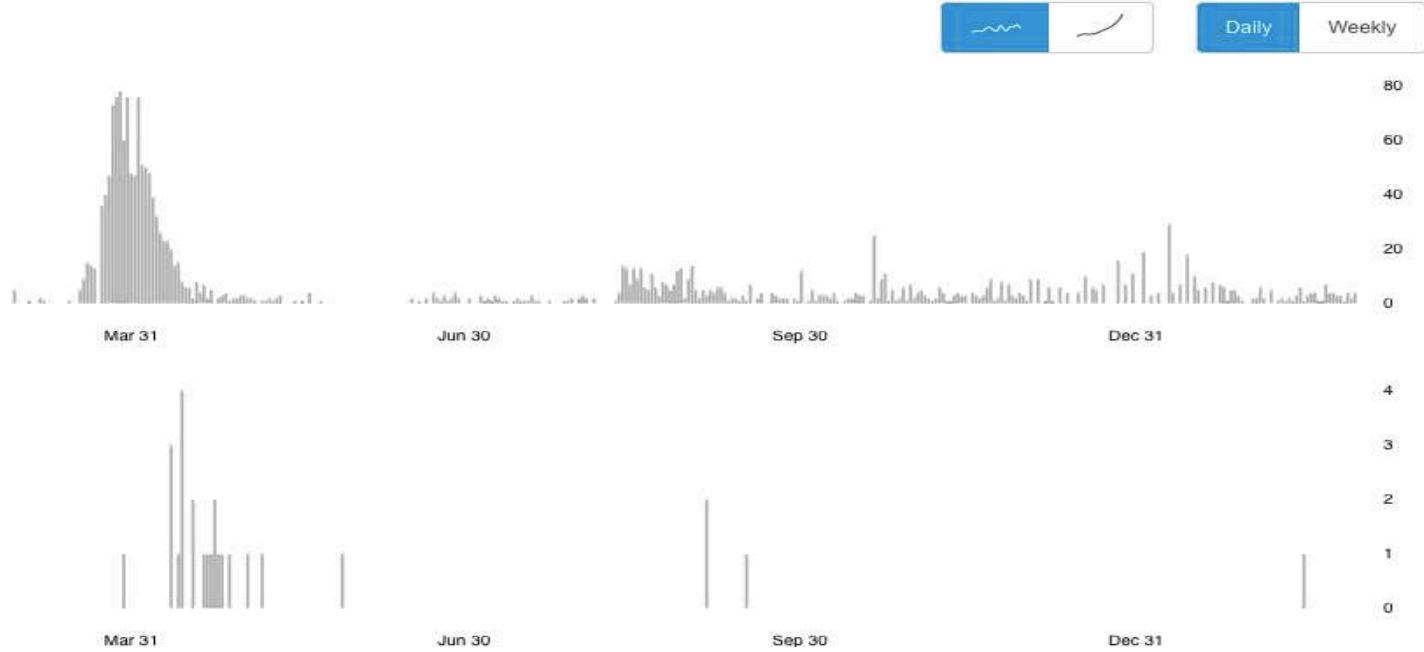


In **New Zealand**, from **Jan 3** to **6:09pm CET, 2 March 2021**, there have been **2,026 confirmed cases** of COVID-19 with **26 deaths**.

New Zealand Situation

2,026
confirmed cases

26
deaths



(Graph courtesy World Health Organisation)

No new community cases, 16,000 tests processed yesterday - Hipkins

Despite more than 16,000 tests being processed on Tuesday 2nd March, no new cases of Covid-19 have been found in the community, Covid-19 Response Minister Chris Hipkins says.

Director-General of Health Dr Ashley Bloomfield said two new cases were found in managed isolation and quarantine, and one of those was a historical case.

Hipkins and Dr Bloomfield were speaking at the latest 1pm Covid-19 update, with the weekly Wednesday focus on the vaccine rollout.

Dr Bloomfield had said yesterday that any positive cases that may have resulted from potential exposure to the virus in Auckland last week would start to turn up today.

Hipkins says tests are still

coming in however, and "we're still in the critical period ... we're not quite there yet" in terms of being certain the latest cluster has not spread further.

He says Cabinet will be looking at whether there are any additional cases and what other warning signs or risk factors are out there before deciding on alert levels.

Friday's Cabinet meeting will be the earliest that alert level will be considered, he says. *-RNZ*



Covid-19: Developments from New Zealand

He expects potential positive cases from the list of exposure locations of the recent cases could start being detected from today onwards.

Police revealed today they issued a warning after busting a group of people attending a church service at a house in Māngere East on Sunday, the day the alert level changes came into force.

Bloomfield said the government could not police everyone's behaviour, and taking a prosecutorial approach to the latest breaches would hinder people coming forward.

"We need everyone to do their bit," he said. "Our efforts is to unite against Covid, not let the virus divide you."

It comes as the National Party and ACT mount pressure on the government to do more to stop breaches from happening, after it was revealed one of the latest cases had gone for a walk with the mother of another family identified in the Papatoetoe



cluster during a level 3 lockdown.

There has also been debate about whether it was made clear to a family member, who worked at KFC the night before going into quarantine, she was supposed to be self-isolating.

Health officials say they will review their response to the latest outbreak, involving Papatoetoe High School students and their families, to look for potential improvements, but insist their messaging has been very clear.

There are now 15 Covid-19 cases in four families connected to the Auckland February cluster in Papatoetoe. *-RNZ*

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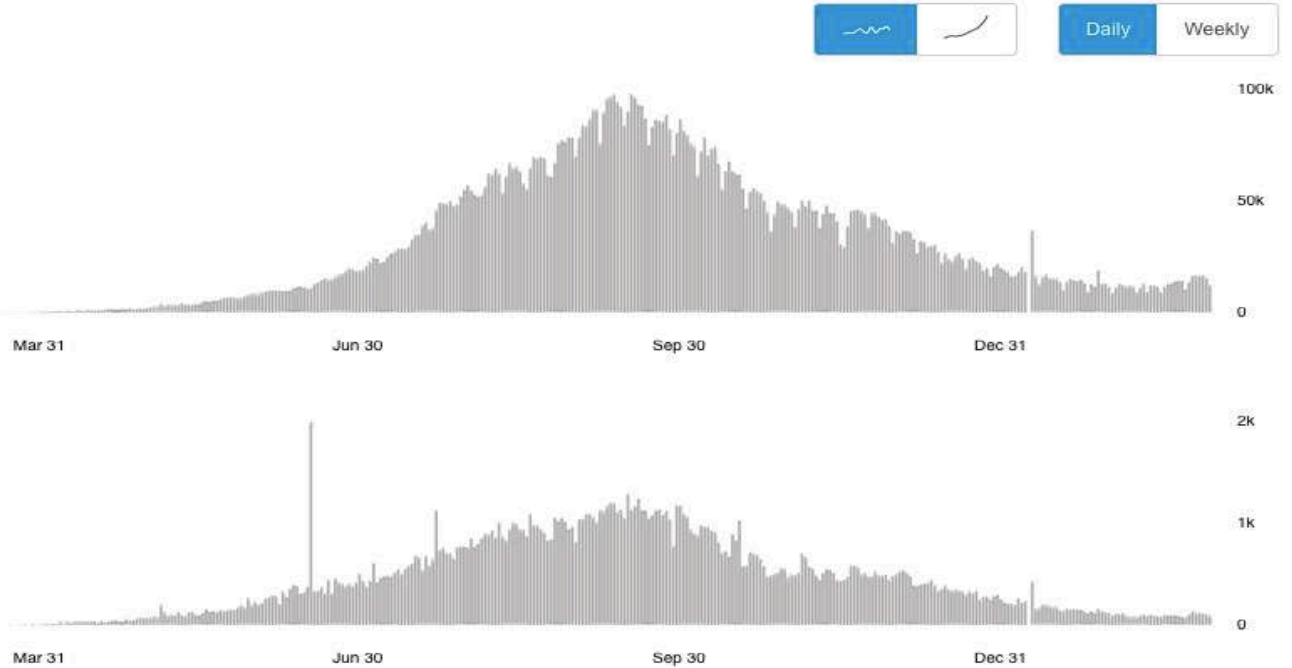
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In India, from Jan 3 to 6:09pm CET, 2 March 2021, there have been 11,124,527 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 157,248 deaths.

India Situation

11,124,527
confirmed cases

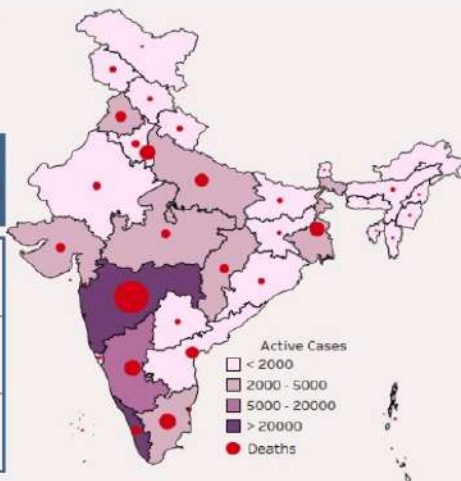
157,248
deaths



(Graph courtesy World Health Organisation)

COVID-19 Tracker
As on 2 March 2021, till 8AM

Total Cases	1,11,24,527 (▲12,286)
Recovered	1,07,98,921 (97.07%) ▲12,464
Active	1,68,358 (1.51%) ▼269
Deaths	1,57,248 (1.41%) ▲91



States' Cases (Highest)	Recovered (%)	Active (%)	Deaths (%)	
Maharashtra	21,61,467 (▲6,397)	20,30,458 (94%)	78,825 (3.6%)	52,184 (2.4%)
Kerala	10,61,341 (▲1,938)	10,08,972 (95%)	48,159 (4.5%)	4,210 (0.4%)
Karnataka	9,51,600 (▲349)	9,33,421 (98%)	5,843 (0.6%)	12,336 (1.3%)
Andhra Pradesh	8,89,974 (▲58)	8,82,080 (99%)	725 (0.1%)	7,169 (0.8%)
Tamil Nadu	8,52,016 (▲474)	8,35,506 (98%)	4,009 (0.5%)	12,501 (1.5%)
Delhi	6,39,464 (▲175)	6,27,149 (98%)	1,404 (0.2%)	10,911 (1.7%)
Uttar Pradesh	6,03,608 (▲81)	5,92,803 (98%)	2,078 (0.3%)	8,727 (1.4%)
West Bengal	5,75,316 (▲198)	5,61,755 (98%)	3,293 (0.6%)	10,268 (1.8%)
Odisha	3,37,277 (▲86)	3,34,647 (99%)	714 (0.2%)	1,916 (0.6%)
Rajasthan	3,20,455 (▲119)	3,16,364 (99%)	1,304 (0.4%)	2,787 (0.9%)
Chhattisgarh	3,12,816 (▲256)	3,06,094 (98%)	2,880 (0.9%)	3,842 (1.2%)
Telangana	2,99,086 (▲163)	2,95,544 (99%)	1,907 (0.6%)	1,635 (0.5%)
Haryana	2,70,950 (▲166)	2,66,612 (98%)	1,288 (0.5%)	3,050 (1.1%)
Gujarat	2,70,316 (▲427)	2,63,475 (97%)	2,431 (0.9%)	4,410 (1.6%)
Bihar	2,62,556 (▲22)	2,60,645 (99%)	370 (0.1%)	1,541 (0.6%)
Madhya Pradesh	2,62,102 (▲336)	2,55,336 (97%)	2,901 (1.1%)	3,865 (1.5%)
Assam	2,17,570 (▲33)	2,14,846 (99%)	1,631 (0.7%)	1,093 (0.5%)
Punjab	1,82,809 (▲633)	1,72,106 (94%)	4,853 (2.7%)	5,850 (3.2%)
Jammu & Kash..	1,26,504 (▲63)	1,23,717 (98%)	829 (0.7%)	1,958 (1.5%)
Jharkhand	1,19,986 (▲37)	1,18,411 (99%)	485 (0.4%)	1,090 (0.9%)

* ▲ indicates increase in the number in the last 24 hrs
* *Active' and 'Deaths' bar plots (for states) are NOT to scale

@COVIDNewsByMIB

PM Modi's gets Covid-19 vaccination

Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived early morning at 6 o'clock at the AIIMS to get his first jab of Corona vaccine as soon as the second phase of inoculation began on Monday.

Several national newspapers in India carried the front page news of the Covid-19 vaccination of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other ministers of the Central government on Monday.

Vaccination will be conducted in more

than 12 thousand government and private hospitals. The state of Bihar will provide free vaccination to its citizens in private hospitals also. In the second phase of the vaccination drive 27 crores will be inoculated, it reported. Prime Minister took his first jab soon after the second phase of above 60 years old people started on Monday, has silenced many of his critics who mocked at him for not taking the vaccine earlier. -TIN Bureau



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Marching ahead with pride!

India, like any other country of the world is facing all sort of challenges like pandemic, crumbling economy and industries as a fallout of pandemic, chaos at home front mostly a creation of the opposition combined and some enemies of India, confrontation at borders from many fronts and hostility and lack of patience among people due to prolong lockdowns and restrictions. But unlike some other countries despite all hiccups, India has still emerged as a winner on the world map under the able and dynamic leadership of its Prime Minister.

Despite constant ridiculing, of all the feats even in these tough times, by different opposition parties of India, world leaders have acknowledged and accepted India as an emerging world leader in every sphere. It is hard to even imagine of any other political entity other than the current Prime Minister of India who could have steered out the nation from such troubled times. It is very easy to play the blame game by the politicians but one (common man) wonders why all this did not or could not happen earlier in first 50-60 of independence. This is first time in the history of independent India that a government has to work under a situation where opposition parties have gone to the extent of opposing the government even by taking support from foreign powers.

These anti-India forces cannot digest the fact that how a country like India can held its head high, beat all the conventional odds and still come out as winner. There was a lot of hue and cry made by all opposition parties when in the year 2020, GDP figures were made public after a 5-6 months of successive lockdowns and predictions of dooms day were all over. This was all said about Indian economy when most of the advanced, industrialised nations of the world were performing worse than India including superpower USA. China was the only exception country, that too since there is no mechanism yet to verify

their numbers and world has to rely only on the information that China provides. The incident of Corona pandemic hitting the entire world is the worst and the biggest disaster to happen in the world after World War-2. So, we must realise that we are passing through some very unprecedented times and there is no magic solution to the problems except for having a very firm determination and to make a sincere and honest effort to fix them. This is what precisely the Indian government has been doing all through this period and we all can see its results.

Indian government has turned the pandemic calamity into an opportunity and established new records of entrepreneurship even in the toughest times. World organisations like IMF have predicted a double-digit growth (11.5%) of GDP of India for year 2021, the only world economy projected to do so. No other country has a forecast of growth in double digit from IMF. This has all happened despite obstacles are being created at every step, government is taking. Now its high time, the people of India must contemplate about what is good for them and their country, what is more important for them, is it their personal interest first or the nation's interest. If we put our nation first and stay united, there is no power in the world that can defeat us. A nation's achievements give its citizens a sense of pride & confidence even if you could be living thousands of miles away from your homeland.

We Indians, even those living in foreign countries should feel proud of our home country's feats and accomplishments. Let us put our party affiliations and politics aside for once and just start thinking about the nation only. Believe me it is going to give you immense happiness and a lot of positive outlook for future. This will also help you to succeed in your endeavours in your adopted countries as well because what goes around comes around.

- Yugal Parashar

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24th February 2021

India and New Zealand's Foreign Minister speak for the first time



Dr. S. Jaishankar
@DrJaishankar

It was a pleasure to speak to New Zealand FM @NanaiaMahuta for the first time. Discussed the COVID challenge and our expectations of an early recovery. Our shared interests are expressed bilaterally and in the Indo-Pacific. Look forward to meeting her in person.



Nanaia Mahuta
@NanaiaMahuta

A warm first conversation with @DrJaishankar and a useful exchange about our respective COVID-19 health response, our common aspirations in the Indo-Pacific region and international education. Ngā mihi nui! 🇮🇳 🇳🇿

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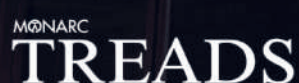
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First time buyers catch a break just as inflation predictions hit new height's



Thanks to a modest drop in prices, first-time buyers got a slight advantage in the market in January, but the Reserve Bank predicts that house price inflation could rise above 22% by the middle of this year.

Here's what you need to know: First Home Buyers at Slight Advantage in January

According to data from the Real Estate Institute of New Zealand, a modest drop in prices at the bottom end of the market, and an even smaller fall in mortgage interest rates, made it slightly easier for aspiring first home buyers to get into a

home of their own in many parts of the country in January.

The national lower quartile selling price dropped back from its record \$550,000 in December to \$525,000 in January, ending seven straight months of price increases.

Around the country lower quartile prices declined in six regions - Northland, Waikato, Hawke's Bay, Wellington, Canterbury/West Coast and Otago. Here in Auckland, January's lower quarter price was unchanged from December, with both months being down very slightly from the record high set in November.

Mortgage interest rates also fell

marginally, with the average of the two-year fixed rates charged by the major banks declining from 2.58% in December to 2.56% in January. The dip in prices meant the amount that would need to be stumped up for a 20% deposit on homes purchased at December's national lower quartile price, dropped from \$110,000 in December to \$105,000 in January.

The rise before the fall - house price inflation peak of 22.4% predicted by mid year

In it's Monetary Policy Statement, The Reserve Bank forecasted that house price inflation will rise above 22% by the middle of this year before easing.

The forecasts, prepared by RBNZ and CoreLogic have changed markedly in the latest MPS compared with the last one in November, reflecting how fast actual prices have risen (between January last year and January this year they rose just over 19%, according to the Real Estate Institute).

In the November forecasts the RBNZ/CoreLogic were forecasting house price inflation of just 7.9% for the year to June. Now the forecast is

22.4%.

However, House price inflation is forecast to fall to 18.4% by September and then 10.2% by the end of this year. And then by March 2022 the RBNZ reckons annual house price inflation will be running at just 3.9%.

The RBNZ stated that a more resilient labour market and the arrival of more permanent migrants prior to the border closure "have contributed to house price inflation being higher than assumed".

"High house price growth can also be attributed to constrained housing supply, declines in interest rates, rebalancing of investment portfolios, and the temporary removal of restrictions on high loan-to-value ratio (LVR) lending in April 2020," the RBNZ said.

Have Interest rates bottomed out?

Banks have started raising interest rates on term deposits. Wholesale interest rates have edged up over past few months. Bond yields are also rising in most parts of the world. Does that mean interest rates have bottomed out?

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Global Finance grabs four awards at the first ever New Zealand Mortgage Awards



Despite a troubling environment through 2020 due to Covid-19's impact on the financial sectors,

Global Finance has yet again triumphed to pick up an amazing four awards at the New Zealand Mortgage Awards for 2021. The awards were set up by Key Media and media partner NZ Adviser the organisers from the 19th annual Australian Awards and the 14th annual Canadian Mortgage awards for the very first time in New Zealand. Key media and media partner NZ adviser decided to find out who is the best aggregator/ mortgage advising company and mortgage adviser in different categories in the entirety of New Zealand.

These awards were open to all mortgage broking companies and mortgage brokers in the entire country. This is the first time that Global Finance has participated in these awards. From a

carefully selected panel of judges Global Finance managed to pick up:

- 1) Best Industry Service
- 2) Mortgage Brokerage of the year (11+Staff)
- 3) Best Customer Service from an individual office – Excellence award
- 4) Independent mortgage adviser of the year (Aseem Agarwal) – Excellence award

Global Finance is not shy to awards either having received many awards from prestigious institutions including ANZ, ASB, AIA, EY, Westpac, Deloitte, PAA and IBA. This brings the number to well over 50 mortgage and insurance awards for the major leader in the Mortgage and Insurance brokerage space, it sees Global Finance potentially claiming the most awards obtained from any mortgage brokerage firm in the country. A title to claim that is no easy feat.

2020, showed ups and downs but a credible industry award such as the inaugural New Zealand Mortgage Awards is a fair reflection of hard work, resilience, and a share showcase of dedication to customers.

Helping Kiwis with their finances through these challenging and changing times gives greater reassurance to New Zealanders in managing their finances.

It's not just part of what we do it's a fundamental core component and that means bringing expert knowledge to New Zealanders on a daily basis. With a thriving property market particularly in Auckland it is crucial that we remain diligent, reliable and informative. and this is clearly reflective in the awards says founder and MD, Ajay Kumar.

Since 1999, Global Finances philosophy has held true, for its customers they always come first and through the Mortgage Genius Plan it has only strengthened the ways in which people relate to their finances and to money in general.

Coupled with the Mortgage Genius Plan, Global Finance has set the path for creating vast improvements to New Zealanders mortgage and insurance service support, through its innovative and extremely effective financial plan. Putting customers ahead by not only just saving large amounts in interest on their loans but, time, peace of mind and creating opportunities for New Zealanders in reaching their financial goals. Global Finance has set the precedent in what it means to provide quality financial service.



The Mortgage Genius plan is carefully designed and developed on a unique basis whereby it highlights the need for everyday New Zealanders to take hold of their financial destinations and have access to a smarter way to manage their loans. Giving people access to a plan that has numerous benefits to the user means people can stay on top of their finances more easily and increase their financial knowledge at the same time.

Global Financial Services Ltd (Global Finance) is a New Zealand leading and most awarded mortgage and insurance broker.

It has arranged approximately \$11 billion of mortgages and insurance cover for 6,000+ families since 1999.

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Let's all choose to challenge. #IWD2021 #ChooseToChallenge



International Women's Day

International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity. Significant activity is witnessed worldwide as groups come together to celebrate women's achievements or rally for women's equality.

Marked annually on March 8th, International Women's Day (IWD) is one of the most important days of the year to:

- celebrate women's achievements
 - raise awareness about women's equality
 - lobby for accelerated gender parity
 - fundraise for female-focused charities
- International Women's Day is not country,

group, nor organization specific. No one government, NGO, charity, corporation, academic institution, women's network, or media hub is solely responsible for International Women's Day. The day belongs to all groups collectively everywhere. Gloria Steinem, world-renowned feminist, journalist and activist once explained "The story of women's struggle for equality belongs to no single feminist, nor to any one organization, but to the collective efforts of all who care about human rights." So make International Women's Day your day and do what you can to truly make a positive

difference for women.

Purple, green and white are the colors of International Women's Day. Purple signifies justice and dignity. Green symbolizes hope. White represents purity, albeit a controversial concept. The colors originated from the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) in the UK in 1908.

The campaign theme for International Women's Day 2021 is 'Choose To Challenge'. A challenged world is an alert world. And from challenge comes change. So let's all #ChooseToChallenge. *(Information courtesy: www.internationalwomensday.com)*



Above faces need no introduction in the community, these women stand out not only for their achievements but for being the backbone of the community. Kudos to them for everything they do for us. A tribute to the wonderful ladies by The Indian News

(Picture courtesy: Respective social media handle)

Fiji police probe alleged sex abuse against Methodist Church



Fiji Police are investigating allegations that a member of the Methodist Church clergy sexually assaulted 14 boys while serving on an outer island.

Police said the alleged incidents happened on Levuka, Ovalau, in the south of the country.

Police spokesperson, Ana Naisoro, said the latest alleged acts were committed between 2018 and this year.

"There is a report being investigated by Levuka Police," she said. "The 14 victims are boys and juveniles."

This is not the first time a member of the clergy in Fiji has been accused of sexually abusing children.

A man had claimed he was molested by a priest at the school when he was a student there.

The head of the Catholic Church warned any priests found to have abused children would be severely dealt with.

Archbishop Peter Loy Chong said he empathised with the victims of sexual abuse "with their hurt, anger, trauma and feelings".

"On behalf of the church, I express our remorse for past failures and extend our sincere regret and deep sympathy to the victims of sexual abuse. The church apologises for any abuse perpetrated by clergy or religious workers. -RNZ

Fiji may ratify revised Forum founding document after 16 years

The outgoing Secretary-General of the Pacific Islands Forum has welcomed Fiji's decision to review a 2005 revision of the body's founding agreement.

Earlier this month, Fiji's Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence was tasked to look at the 2005 document.

Dame Meg Taylor and her deputy Dr Filimon Manoni appeared virtually before a five-member panel of the Fiji committee after the government endorsed a proposal to ratify the agreement.

Dame Meg said Fiji's ratification would represent a significant milestone in the forum family and fasten the bridges that had been rebuilt within the forum, and the regional relations strengthened over

the years.

Dame Meg leaves the Secretariat in April and will be replaced by former Cook Islands Prime Minister Henry Puna.

The Forum has been rocked with tensions rising after five Micronesian leaders threatened, they would withdraw from the regional body after their candidate failed to get the secretary-general position.

It is not clear whether Fiji's move to review the treaty stems from the current stand-off.

The secretary-general is the chief executive officer of the Pacific Islands Forum and is responsible for the management of the secretariat based in Suva. -RNZ



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France reports 22,857 new COVID-19 cases, 417 deaths



Faced with the spread of more contagious variants of COVID-19, the pressure in hospitals remained "very strong" and four to six tough weeks are still ahead, said Gabriel Attal, the government spokesman.

Attal, meanwhile, expected an improvement in

French health authorities on Tuesday reported 22,857 new coronavirus cases in the past 24 hours, sharply up from Monday's 4,703 and higher than the 20,064 daily cases registered a week ago.

The cumulative number of patients who have caught the respiratory illness rose to 3,783,528, the sixth-highest tally in the world. Coronavirus-linked fatalities were at 87,220 after 417 died within one day, including 117 in retirement homes. A total of 25,263 people with COVID-19 were hospitalized, down by 167 from Monday's figure, while 3,586 needed life support, up by 42.

the epidemic situation thanks to the vaccination campaign, which according to him "will gradually help protect the most vulnerable people, ease the pressure on hospitals and allow to relax a certain number of restrictions."

"We see light at the end of the tunnel... But in the meantime the important thing is to continue to hold out," he said.

As of March 1, France had administered 3,036,605 doses of COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer/BioNTech, Moderna and AstraZeneca, data from the Public Health Agency showed. *-TIN Bureau*

US will have enough vaccine for every adult by May end: Biden

The United States would have enough Covid-19 vaccine doses for every adult American by the end of May, said President Joe Biden on Tuesday.

Joe Biden also announced he would direct states to prioritize teachers in their vaccination plans, reemphasizing a commitment to returning students to classrooms amid a confusing administration stance on when and how classrooms can reopen. The new date does not mean all Americans would receive shots by May 31; issues with distribution and personnel mean it could take much longer for all doses to be administered, CNN reported.

"That's progress," Biden said warning there could still be delays in getting shots in Americans' arms and suggesting the country would not return to full normalcy for much longer.

The United States has reported more than 28.7 million confirmed Covid-19 cases and over 514,000 reported deaths. The demand for vaccines still far exceeds supply and these vaccines can't come soon enough.

Biden also announced he was directing states to prioritize teachers in their vaccine distribution plans in a bid to reopen schools.

"Let's treat in-person learning like an essential service that it is," he said, adding his goal was for every teacher or school worker to receive at least the first dose of a vaccine by the end of March.

Biden also announced a collaboration between Johnson & Johnson, Merck, and the federal government to ramp up COVID-19 vaccine production.

Delivering his remarks at the White House, Biden announced the partnership: "Two of the largest health care and pharmaceutical companies in the world that are usually competitors are working together on the vaccine."

"This type of collaborations between the countries we have seen in World War II. We have also invoked the defence production act to equip Merck facilities to safely manufacture the J&J vaccine," he added. *-TIN Bureau*



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Mama it's all in the earth!

• *Vritti Parasher*

Natural skin care and hair care products are a rage at present as we have more and more people switching to sustainable living. In general, people are conscious and want to choose products that are not only beneficial for themselves but also for our planet earth.

With a similar mindset, Gazal and Varun Alagh in 2016 built a brand that genuinely took best care for you, your loved ones, and Mama Earth! This brand is dermatologically tested, FDA approved and Made Safe certified (this seal means that the products is literally made with safe ingredients)

Mamaearth and its product not only captured the Indian market in relatively less time but have been gaining eyeballs in international market as well. Their advertising campaign is on point!

Recently, after going through customer reviews and all the buzz, I decided to invest in a few of their products. It is always good to go back to roots at times! The ingredients used in Mamaearth's product would totally resonate with brown skin tone or those of Asian communities. However, since it is toxin-free beauty brand, it can be a boon for any skin tone.

Vitamin C sleeping mask with Aloe Vera for skin illumination, is an absolute

thumbs up from my end. The biggest difference I noticed is that it has literally made the skin go smooth. The aftereffects are that whenever I apply any other cream, moisturizer or scrub, the feel is amazing as the skin surface has become smooth and lets me apply ant product with ease.

The best part is this product is not sticky, and with little to no smell. You can easily apply at night before sleeping. And feel the texture of your skin once you get up in the morning and wash your face with lukewarm water.

Ubtan face mask with saffron, turmeric, and apricot oil is the other product that is under my scanner. And I can say it has been helpful in removing suntan, as well as adding some glow to the skin tone. It contains saffron, well known for its antioxidant and benefits for skin care.

However, to obtain best results using a combination of products in this particular range will be more empowering.

It is good to see a variety of range this brand is offering, you can choose your best pick. It is also available in New Zealand, you can check their page on Facebook @mamaearthnewzealand or visit them on www.serendib.co.nz (Picture courtesy: *Mamaearth website*)



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Parineeti Chopra shares first teaser of sports biopic 'Saina'

Bollywood actor Parineeti Chopra on Tuesday revealed a teaser video of her upcoming sports biopic 'Saina', which is set to release later this month.

'Saina' is a biopic on India's star badminton player Saina Nehwal. The 'Hasee Toh Phasee' actor, who has trained extensively for her role in the film, took

to her Instagram handle to share a teaser of the movie. She captioned the post as, "SAINA! 26th March in cinemas."

In the 30-second teaser, we witness the journey of the national sports icon from a young enthusiast to a professional. She says "I do not care who my opponent is, I will simply go for the kill". At the end of the teaser, a brief glimpse of Parineeti as Saina Nehwal can be seen.

Earlier, the 32-year-old actor had dropped the first look poster of the film, which also featured the release date of the biopic. It showcased a clear blue sky and a hand with a tricolor wrist band, that is open in the air to catch a shuttlecock.

Written and directed by Amol Gupte, 'Saina' is being produced by Bhushan Kumar, Krishan Kumar, Sujay Jayraj, and Rajesh Shah. It brings on the big screen the journey of one of India's greatest athletes, Saina Nehwal.

The movie will hit the theatres on March 26. (ANI)



'Game Of Thrones' alum Indira Varma roped in for Obi-Wan Kenobi Series On Disney Plus



opposite Ewan McGregor and Hayden Christiansen, who will reprise their roles as, respectively, Jedi master Obi-Wan Kenobi and his former pupil, now the Sith Lord Darth Vader. In keeping with the cone of silence surrounding the show, details about Varma's character have not been released at the moment. The series is expected to fall in between 'Revenge of the Sith' and 'A New Hope' in the 'Star Wars' timeline.

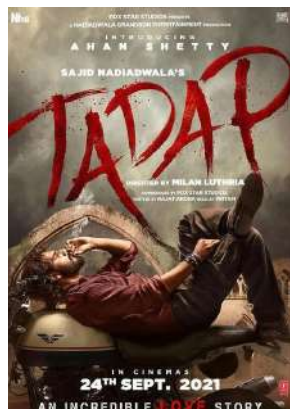
Producer Joby Harold, whose credits include, 'John Wick: Chapter 3' and 'Underground', will be writing the show. He came aboard in April 2020 following a creative reset. 'The Mandalorian' veteran Deborah Chow is set to direct.

As per The Hollywood Reporter, Varma is currently a series regular on ABC's legal drama 'For Life', which wrapped its second season last week. She played Ellaria Sand on 'Game of Thrones' and her other credits include Amazon's 'Carnival Row' and HBO's 'Rome'. (ANI)

British actor Indira Varma has now become the newest entrant to join the cast of the Disney Plus series named Obi-Wan Kenobi. The 'Game of Thrones' alumni will play a lead on the new show that is currently being developed with Ewan McGregor.

According to The Hollywood Reporter, Indira will star in the series

Salman Khan, Anil Kapoor extend best wishes to Ahan Shetty for his debut film 'Tadap'



Shortly after the announcement of Suniel Shetty's son Ahan Shetty's debut project 'Tadap', superstar Salman Khan and Anil Kapoor have extended their best wishes and success to the debutant actor by sharing the poster of the upcoming movie.

The 'Dabangg' actor took to his Instagram handle and shared the poster of the film which features Ahan Shetty in an 'angry young man' look, as he poses on a motorbike. Wishing the actor, Salman wrote, "Ahan wish u all the best and success may all your hard work, discipline and dedication pay off."

He further added, "The tadap of hard work should never die ... @nadiadwalagrandson @ahan.shetty."

Bollywood actor Anil Kapoor also shared the poster of 'Tadap' on his Twitter

handle and congratulated Suniel Shetty stating that his son will surely make him proud. "Have been waiting to hear this news for awhile now! Congratulations @SunielVShetty !! I am sure that #AhanShetty will make you just as proud as @theathiyashetty has! Wishing him all the success and love for #Tadap!!"

Earlier Ahan's father Suniel Shetty had thanked actor Sharad Kelkar on Twitter for showing his support for the movie. He wrote, "Thank You @SharadK7 for your love and support!"

The movie's poster sees Ahan as he lays down on the motorbike while smoking a cigarette. The star kid is seen donning a maroon T-shirt, and a pair of loosely fitted brown pants. With a full-grown beard and neck-length hair, channeling an 'angry young man' avatar, the actor is sure to win people's hearts with his debut project.

Ahan's debut with Sajid Nadiadwala is an addition to the legacy as Suniel Shetty too was launched by the producer.

'Tadap' is a Milan Luthria directorial, starring Ahan, Tara Sutaria, Saurabh Shukla, Kumud Mishra, and Sumit Gulati. The film is being produced by Sajid

Nadiadwala and co-produced by Fox Star Studios. Penned by Rajat Arora with the film's soulful music by Pritam, 'Tadap' will

hit big screens on September 24, 2021. (ANI)

Jubin Nautiyal donates for disaster relief measures

Singer Jubin Nautiyal hands over a cheque of Rs 13.91 lakhs to Uttarakhand CM Trivendra Singh Rawat for disaster relief measures, says Chief Minister's Office (ANI)



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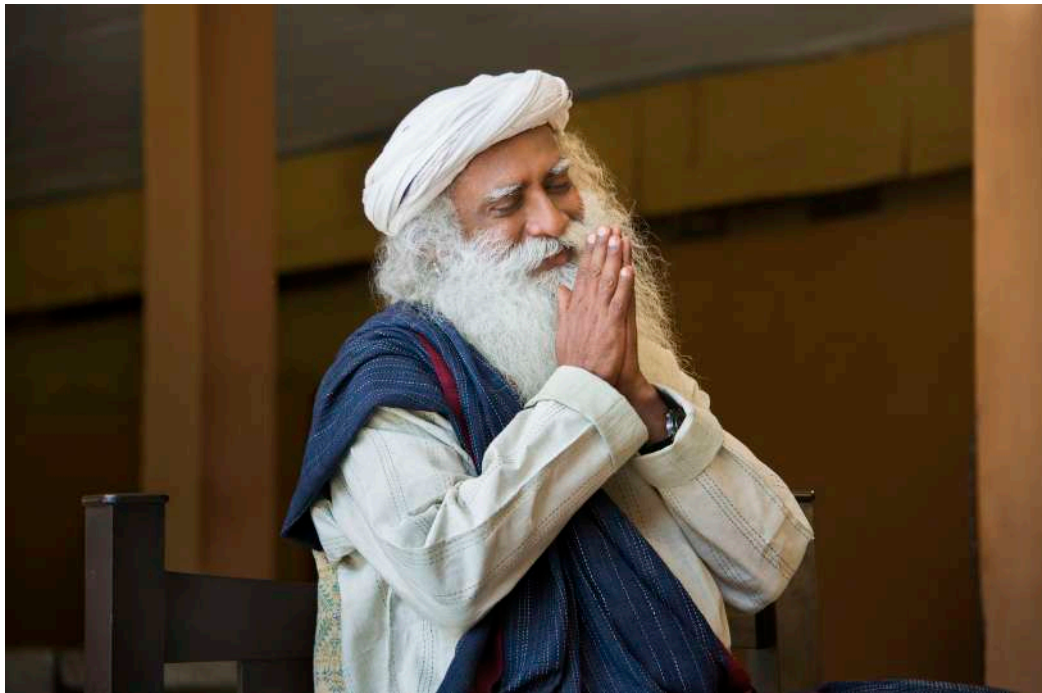
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The Origin of Disease - Sadhguru, Isha Foundation



When you say disease, we have to classify them into two basic categories. One set of diseases are infectious – you contract them from outside. Maybe you ate something which was not hygienic and caught an infection. Or you went close to somebody who had a flu and got it. For that there are medicines.

The diseases that you are talking about are something that the body creates. The fundamental longing of the body is to survive and preserve itself. It is a very deep-rooted longing in this physical

body, that it wants to survive – it wants to keep itself well. In spite of that, if it is creating diseases within itself, what could be wrong? Somewhere, without understanding a few fundamentals, we are going on assuming things.

One thing is definitely the mind. You might know of psychosomatic diseases. If the mind is functioning in a certain way, it hampers the functioning of the energy. Whatever is happening and whatever has happened in this body in terms of creating, maintaining and

nurturing it, fundamentally depends on how your energy functions in this body. If for some reason your energy malfunctions, then a disease can manifest itself. If the energy malfunctions, what kind of disease it may turn into depends upon what is inherently weak in that person. It may be a hereditary aspect – some organ or part of the body could be inherently weak because the parents were so. So if the same imbalance happens in two people, one person may get asthma and the other may get diabetes, depending upon what each has inherited.

What type of imbalance you go through also has a very deep karmic implication. What we call as karma is a huge amount of impressions that we have taken into us, which have become their own kind of software. This software has developed certain tendencies; it tends to move in a particular way. Traditionally in India, we call these tendencies, vasanas. Vasana literally means smell. So what kind of smell emanates from you depends on what kind of garbage you have gathered. Depending upon what type of vasanas you have, accordingly you tend to move in certain ways and also certain aspects in the world tend to move towards you in

a particular way. Is this absolute? No. If you become conscious, even if your smell is one way, you can go another way. But if you are not conscious, you naturally gravitate according to your tendencies. In the body, a certain manifestation of these tendencies can become disease. Because of certain tendencies, the energy does not function properly in certain areas of the body, and disease can happen.

So these are the different ways in which you can impair your energy system. Either by your own karmic system, by your own karmic accumulation; or because of improper eating and other kinds of habits; or by the way your mind functions; your stress, anxiety and these kind of things.

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Ranked amongst the fifty most influential people in India, Sadhguru is a yogi, mystic, visionary and a New York Times bestselling author Sadhguru has been conferred the Padma Vibhushan by the Government of India in 2017, the highest annual civilian award, accorded for exceptional and distinguished service.

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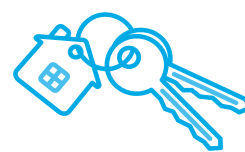
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Inland Revenue's system upgraded ahead of schedule

Inland Revenue's systems are back online early after completing the latest round of Business Transformation work ahead of schedule.

The system was scheduled to be shut down until 8am tomorrow but because the upgrade went really well, IR has been able to reinstate its myIR service and re-open applications for the Resurgence Support payment through myIR from now.

The applications are open for those businesses with a reduction in revenue due to the alert level event which began on

February 15.

As at 4pm on Friday, IR had received 14,074 applications totalling \$41.25 million. IR had disbursed \$17.10 million to 6,342 people.

During the shutdown, changes were introduced for:

- paid parental leave for individuals
- New Zealand foreign trusts, and
- for unclaimed money

For more information about tax relief and income assistance for people affected by COVID-19 visit www.ird.govt.nz/covid19






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Indian women's hockey team lose 0-2 to Germany in third game



quarter but still could not find a way past the Indian women's hockey team's defence. The team managed to keep out three PCs in the previous game too.

Germany ended India's resistance in form of a goal from the third PC. Germany doubled their advantage shortly before the end of the third quarter with seasoned midfielder Hauke getting on the scoresheet. The German

side held on to complete their third successive win.

The Indian women's hockey team will take on Germany in their fourth match on Thursday.

On Sunday, the Indian men's hockey team led by PR Sreejesh put up a scintillating show as they outclassed hosts Germany 6-1 in the first of their four-match Europe tour.

India's goal scorers were Nilakanta Sharma (13'), Vivek Sagar Prasad (27', 28'), Lalit Kumar Upadhyay (41'), Akashdeep Singh (42'), and Harmanpreet Singh (47'), who outplayed the hosts and led their team to a winning start in their first international match in over 12 months.

-TIN Bureau

The Indian women's hockey team impressed in defence but could not stop Germany from winning their third consecutive game in the four-match series here in Dusseldorf on Tuesday.

World No. 3 Germany won by a 2-0 margin through goals from Sonja Zimmermann (26') and Franzisca Hauke (42'). Encouraged by their robust defensive display in the second game of the series, the Indian side continued to frustrate the German attackers. The hosts were unable to create any early momentum and had a penalty corner saved in the first quarter.

While Germany pushed forward to break the deadlock, the Indian backline stood firm yet again. Germany was awarded a PC early into the second

Archer Jyothi Surekha sets new national record

International archer from the city Vennam Jyothi Surekha, who is representing Petroleum Sports Promotion Board, has been selected for the Indian team in the compound women's category for World Cup which begins from April.

The Archery Association of India has conducted the selection trials at the Sports Authority of India (SAI), Sonapat, Haryana for the last three days. Surekha has set a new national record in the ranking round by scoring 710/720 by breaking her own national record of 709/720 which she set last year.

She secured the first rank in the ranking round by scoring total points of 2808/2880. She won all the seven matches in the round-robin round held for the top eight archers and got selected in the first place.

Last week, Indian compound archers displayed a good showing at the 7th Fazza World Ranking Tournament at the Dubai Club for People of Determination grounds.

Shyam Sunder won the compound gold whereas the mixed team of Harminder Singh and Pooja won the compound gold in the mixed team. Rakesh defeated



the 9th ranked archer of France in 1/8th matches (142/140), in the quarterfinal defeated the number one ranked archer Atamanenk Serhiy from Ukraine (142 vs 137).

In the semi-final, Rakesh defeated Agyan of Turkey, ranked no 5 by 143 vs 138. In the final, he defeated Sunder ranked 2 with a score of 143 vs 135.

In the process, Sunder defeated former World No. 1 in Men's Compound Open Marcel Pavlik from Slovakia 145 vs 143 whereas Rakesh defeated Aryan Erdogan of Turkey another former medallist 143 vs 138. Jyoti defeated Dzhoieva Anastasia of Russia. -TIN Bureau

Ind vs Eng: Axar very good in these conditions, extremely accurate, says Crawley

England batsman Zak Crawley said India spinner Axar Patel is "extremely accurate" and does not allow batsmen to score runs.

Riding on brilliant spells of spin bowling from Axar and Ashwin, India had registered a comprehensive 10-wicket win over England in the pink-ball Test at the Narendra Modi Stadium last week to go 2-1 up in the four-match series. In the match, Crawley was dismissed by Axar in both innings. While Crawley had managed to score a half-century in the first innings, he got out on the very first delivery in the second innings.

"He (Axar) is a very good bowler, especially in these conditions. He is extremely accurate and does not give you much to score," Crawley said during a virtual press conference.

The third Test saw both India and England batsmen failing to shine and getting out to balls that did not turn and skidded through from the spinners. But

critics have looked to blame the pitch for the failure of the batsmen. Skipper Virat Kohli was vocal about the dreadful batting display from the two teams.

Crawley said the wicket for the fourth Test will be "very similar" to that of the third match.

With that defeat, England got out of the race for a place in the final of the ICC World Test Championship. England, who are 2-1 down in the four-match series, needed to win the four-match series 3-1 to play the final against New Zealand.

If India manage to win or draw the final Test against England, then the side will qualify for the final of the WTC and they will take on New Zealand in the summit clash.

Although England is out of contention for the WTC final, Crawley stressed that it won't change their mindset as to how they go about the match.

The fourth Test begins on Thursday.

-TIN Bureau

Ind vs Eng: Bumrah takes leave to prepare for marriage

Ahead of the upcoming fourth Test against England, pacer Jasprit Bumrah was relieved from India's squad due to personal reasons, and now it has come into knowledge that the bowler has asked for some days off as he is getting married. Speaking to ANI, sources in the BCCI in the know of developments have confirmed that the pacer is set to get married soon and has taken a leave to prepare for the same.

"He informed the BCCI that he is getting married and has taken the leave to help in preparations for the big day," the source said.

The 27-year-old Bumrah played two Tests in the ongoing four-match series against England and he returned with four wickets.

Bumrah was rested for the second



Test against England at Chennai and he returned wicketless in the third Test as spinners did a majority of the work.

The pacer has also been rested for the upcoming five-match T20I series against England in order to do proper workload management.

India is 2-1 up in the four-match Test series against England and if the hosts win or draw the last match, then they would qualify for the finals of the World Test Championship. -TIN Bureau

Bulgaria's Mariya Mitsova withdraws from Swiss Open

Bulgarian badminton player Mariya Mitsova on Tuesday pulled out of the Swiss Open 2021 after an entourage member tested positive for coronavirus.

Mitsova was identified as a close contact of the entourage member and has been asked to quarantine in the official hotel. The entourage member produced a positive result to the mandatory on-arrival PCR test conducted on Monday and is currently in self-isolation.

"Badminton World Federation (BWF) can confirm Bulgarian women's singles

player Mariya Mitsova has been withdrawn from the YONEX Swiss Open 2021 (New Dates) after a Bulgarian entourage member tested positive for COVID-19," the BWF said in an official statement.

The next player on the reserve list, Laura Sarosi (HUN) has been promoted into the women's singles main draw.

Meanwhile, testing protocols continue to be implemented by the Swiss health authorities, Swiss Badminton, and the BWF is ensuring the health and safety of all participants. -TIN Bureau



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