

## Daily News Monitor: 28 March 2020

### **1. Signal from PM Modi to CMs: Covid-19 lockdown may continue beyond May 3**

**Source: Business Standard ([Link](#))**

The nationwide lockdown is all set to be extended beyond May 3, at least until the middle of the month in the red zones of the country, as many states told Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a video-conference meeting on 27 April that it's not the time yet to lift the curbs. This means more activities may be allowed to resume in green zones of the country. Most Bharatiya Janata Party-ruled states support extending the lockdown, but will wait and abide by the Centre's fresh guidelines. Telangana has already extended the lockdown until May 7, and will take a decision on further extension on May 5. Odisha, Meghalaya and some others support extending it by a month. Congress-led governments want the lockdown to be lifted in areas other than hotspots or containment zones. Delhi will take a call by April 30.

### **2. Want to fly after this lockdown? Get a doctor's certificate**

**Source: The Economic Times ([Link](#))**

An appointment with the doctor may soon become mandatory for you or your family members to board a flight after the lifting of the lockdown and resumption of normal life, which is expected sometime in June. You may also have to buy gloves, face masks and disposable caps for your next flight. Sounds surreal? Not really! A technical committee comprising doctors, bureaucrats and airport and airline officials will soon discuss these and other measures to ensure passenger safety midair after normal life resumes. It is formulating standard operating procedures (SOP) for passengers and flight staff and will soon come out with its recommendations.

### **3. Gurgaon MNCs, BPOs, ITeS offices may have to work from home till July end, says official; no official advisory, clarifies Haryana govt**

**Source: The Economic Times ([Link](#))**

MNCs, BPOs and IT enabled services (ITES) in Gurgaon may have to allow their employees to work from home till the end of July, says Gurgaon Metropolitan Development Authority CEO V S Kundu. Kundu, who is also additional chief secretary of Haryana, however, made it clear that this is his personal opinion and no such advisory has been issued. Several real estate projects, including those of DLF, have got the green signal to resume construction but within the norms of social distancing, he said. Gurgaon, which is part of the NCR, is known as the millennium city and is home to many BPOs, MNCs and technology giants, including Infosys, Genpact, Google and Microsoft.

#### **4. Reliance Industries rights issue soon, as Mukesh Ambani moves closer to zero debt target**

**Source: Financial Express ([Link](#))**

Reliance Industries Ltd, on a quest to become a net-zero-debt company, has said that it will consider a rights issue of equity shares in its board meeting on 30 April 2020. Mukesh Ambani's RIL is India's most valuable listed firm, with a market capitalization of Rs 9.25 lakh crore. It is also one of the highest indebted companies in India, with a gross debt of over Rs 3 lakh crore, and net debt of over Rs 1.5 lakh crore. It is also one of the most cash rich companies with over Rs 1.3 lakh crore cash in hand. Earlier, in August last year, RIL Chairman Mukesh Ambani said he has pledged to make the company a 'zero-net-debt' firm.

#### **5. Coronavirus outbreak: India cancels Chinese rapid antibody test kit orders**

**Source: Business Standard ([Link](#))**

India has cancelled orders given to two Chinese companies for providing Covid-19 test kits after finding them faulty in field conditions, said the government on 27 April. Not a single rupee will be lost to the companies, it said. States must stop using rapid antibody test kits procured from Guangzhou Wondfo Biotech and Zhuhai Livzon Diagnostics, said the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), according to news agency IANS. "The results showed wide variation in their sensitivity, despite early promise of good performance for surveillance purposes," it said in a statement.

#### **6. Airlines gear up to take off again, reopen bookings for flights**

**Source: Livemint ([Link](#))**

Cash-strapped Indian airlines have reopened bookings for domestic flights from as early as 16 May, even though the government has not decided on when to lift a more than month-long suspension of flights. No-frills carriers GoAir and SpiceJet Ltd have started accepting bookings for travel between all major sectors from 16 May. Others such as Vistara, AirAsia India and IndiGo have resumed booking tickets for flights from 1 June. This comes a week after the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) pulled up airlines for selling tickets even as the countrywide lockdown to prevent the spread of covid-19 remained in force. The regulator told the airlines to suspend such bookings till further instructions as the pandemic continued to spread. Airlines were also told to refund full fares to those who booked tickets during the first lockdown from 25 March to 14 April for travel between 25 March and 3 May but could not travel due to the lockdown.

## **7. Amazon India to use more rail routes for faster deliveries amid lockdown**

**Source: Money Control ([Link](#))**

Amazon India on 27 April said it will use 55 railway routes to transport goods between cities as the e-commerce major works on ways to ensure faster deliveries to customers amid the nationwide lockdown. Strengthening its partnership with the Indian Railways, the company would now be utilising 55 railway lanes. Last year, Amazon India had partnered with Indian Railways for inter-city transportation of e-commerce packages on 13 lanes. It had also set up pickup kiosks for customers in Kolkata and Mumbai.