

BBIL to manufacture CoroFlu a vaccine to cure Covid19

IT Correspondent Imphal, April 8

The Hyderabad based "Bharat Biotech International Limited (BBIL)" a vaccine manufacturing company, has begun working on the development and testing "CoroFlu", a unique intranasal vaccine against "Covid-19". "CoroFlu" will be based on FluGen, USA's flu vaccine known as "M2SR", which is a self-limiting version of the influenza virus that induces an immune response against the flu. FluGen's laboratory will insert gene sequences from SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes Covid-10, into M2SR so that the new vaccine will also induce immunity against the pathogen. BBIL's Business Development Head Raches Ella, said that "Bharat Biotech will manufacture the vaccine, conduct clinical trials, and prepare to produce almost 300 million (30 crore) dosages of vaccine for global distribution. Under the collaboration agreement, "FluGen", USA will transfer its existing manufacturing processes to Bharat Biotech to enable the vaccine for clinical trials.

Refinement of the "CoroFlu" vaccine concept and testing in laboratory animal models at University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA, is expected to take 3-6 months. Bharat Biotech, will then begin production scale-up for safety and efficacy testing in humans. "CoroFlu" could be in human clinical trials by end of current year.

Power Gird donates money to procure PPEs

IT News Imphal, April 8

Power Gird Corporation of India Limited has donated a sum of Rs. 45,00,000/- (Fortyfive lakh to the State Health Society, Manipu for procurement of full body PPEs (Personal Protective Equipments) in connection with containing the COVID-19 in the state of Manipur

Manipur maybe deleted from the list of COVID-19 map; Credit goes to Chief Minister and his team



N. Biren Singh @NBirenSingh · 9h
Ten (10) new ventilators installed at RIMS on 07/04/2020! Ready to overcome #COVID_19. Thanks to Dr.Shanta Singh, Director RIMS and other officials for your tireless efforts.



IT News Imphal, April 8

One more good news of the state of Manipur amidst coronavirus invasion across the globe is that the 23 years old girl from Singhat in Churachandpur district, who returned from China through Mandalay and reached Manipur of April 6 has been tested negative of coronavirus. She will be quarantined for 14 days even though found negative, said a source from RIMS. With the first COVID19 positive girl reported negative, the state now have only one positive case. The person who is presently undergoing treatment at RIMS is also reported to have been improved and health care service authority has confirmed that there was no community transmission of virus as of now following the test report of his family members. It is likely that the state of Manipur is likely to remove from the list of the Coronavirus affected state, a source close to Imphal Times said but added that precautionary

measures that has been taken up by Government of Manipur should be credited and should continue until a vaccine to kill the virus has been invented. On the other hand when people of the state are worried about the scarcity of ventilators and PPEs (Personal Protective Equipments), the state government of Manipur under serious supervision of the Chief Minister N. Biren Singh has been linking up all government and none government stakeholders to make sure that the state is not listed among the COVID-19 affected state. Except that he failed to fulfill the promises of distributing 4 kg of rice to each and every member of the state at free of cost from the April share of NFSA rice, almost all preparation for treatment in case the number of COVID-19 case rises is worth appreciating. Besides, being a poor state with limited resource Chief Minister N. Biren Singh has taken up measures to face the challenges of COVID -19 invasions. There were criticisms of

government hospital for not able to procure adequate numbers of life-saving ventilators, even though some private-run hospitals have some which was more than the government-run hospitals. What is more interesting is that Union Health Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh has tweeted that 10 new ventilators has been installed at RIMS. The tweet was re-tweeted by the Chief Minister of Manipur N. Biren Singh. He thank the Director of RIMS and other officials for their tireless effort and said that - "ready to overcome COVID-19". Source from RIMS said that there are a total of 36 ventilators including 3 Neonatal ventilators. More ventilators are also on the way, the source added. "Even though those ventilators will be given priority to COVID-19 patients, it will be used for other serious patients in needs of ventilators as the number of COVID -19 patient is just one", Director Shanta of RIMS told to this reporter when asked whether the ventilators are meant for COVID -10 patients only.

Manipur HC to begin online court proceedings

IT News Imphal, April 8

High Court of Manipur has decided to keep running the Court procedure through video conferencing. An order by the Registrar general of the High Court of Manipur, A Guneswar Sharma today issued guidelines for Court

Functioning through video conferencing during COVID-19 Pandemic as per directives of the Chief Justice of Manipur. According to the guidelines those learned joining the proceeding held by video conferencing should be in formal attire by keeping in mind that he or she is appearing in a court. It also directed to

maintain silent room for avoiding disturbances and stated that no third party shall intervene the proceedings without the permission of the Court. Details of how to registered and logged on as per order of the registrar can be held from the Imphal Times web site (www.imphaltimes.com)

'Music video on coronavirus awareness'

IT News Imphal, April 8

A music video based on Coronavirus awareness entitled 'Akiba Laanda Anani' was released by Chief Minister N. Biren Singh today in the presence of Deputy Chief Minister Y. Joykumar Singh, Ministers and MLAs at the lawns of Chief Minister's

Bungalow. Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister praised the efforts of music fraternity and different sections of the society in creating awareness regarding Coronavirus. Narendra Ningomba said, the music video was produced with a view to create awareness among the general public of government advisories on

Coronavirus and important messages of Stay Home, Stay Safe, Wash Hands regularly, Maintain Social Distancing etc. The album is produced by M. Chanu Imoinu of Sileima Productions. The song is written by noted lyricist Narendra Ningomba and sung by playback singer Shri Onam Swamikumar. Music director of the song is Rhythm Thiyam.

MPs resent suspension of MPLAD, to discuss the issue with PM

IT Correspondent Mumbai, April 8

While a majority of Congress MPs have resented suspension of the Member of Parliament Local Area Development (MPLAD) fund for two years (2020-2021/2021-2022) by the Central Government, NCP MPs also joined the protest and have decided to seek clarification from Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

NCP MP Supriya Sule, daughter of the party chief Sharad Pawar, said that while the decision to reduce MPs' salary by 30 per cent is welcome, it is not clear why the MPs fund has been suspended for two years, because this fund of Rs 5 crore is utilised for development work in respective constituencies by MPs.

In an official tweet from her handle @supriya_sule, she said, "I support the reduction in the MPs salary. WRT the suspension of the MPLAD funds for a duration of two years, I hope that the entire amount of MPLAD funds contributed by all Maharashtra MPs of both houses, are deployed in our state with concurrence of the state administration towards the welfare of our citizens". The centre has taken the decision to suspend MPLAD in view of the crisis arising out of "Covid 19". This is understood. But we too have a right to seek clarification. Modi is expected to have a dialogue with MPs soon and we will certainly raise this issue, she added.

Similarly Shiv Sena MP from Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg constituency (In Konkan

region of Maharashtra) said that "There was no need to utilise the two years MPLAD fund when one year's fund was sufficient. We understand that the fight against coronavirus is important, but other facilities should not be deprived which an MP offers through his funds," he said.

The Congress leaders-Ahmed Patel, Randeep Singh Surjewala, Manish Tewari, and Veteran CPM leader and party general secretary Sitaram Yechury have already reacted sharply to the decision to cut MPLAD saying it would undermine the role of MPs since they will not be able to carry out any development work.

Ahmed Patel "As a Member of Parliament, I welcome the government's decision to cut salaries of MPs. In this difficult time, this is the least we can do to help fellow citizens," Patel said on Twitter. "Apart from cutting salaries of MPs and ministers, the central government can save more than Rs 20,000 crore by scrapping the central vista redevelopment project and cutting down on non-Covid-19 publicity expenses," he also said.

Veteran CPM leader and party general secretary Sitaram Yechury also reacted sharply to the suspension of the MPLAD scheme. There is enough evidence that covid-19 is best fought at the state and local level, he said. The suspension of MPLAD goes against federalism, development, will weaken our fight. This government has continuously wasted public money on statues, extravagant personal publicity campaigns

and events," he added. Congress MP Shashi Tharoor "I used my fund to get urgently-needed rapid test kits and PPE Thiruvananthapuram's health workers. The Centre has allocated Rs 157 crore of Disaster Response Mitigation Funds to Kerala, which has 314 Covid-19 cases, while Gujarat, with only 122 cases, gets Rs 662 crore. Will this kind of imbalance also affect the reallocation of MPLADs funds," he asked.

However, senior party leader and former Union minister Jairam Ramesh has gone against the party's stand and welcomed the government's decision on MPLADs. "I welcome the decision on MPLADs. I have been arguing for long that the approximately Rs 7000 crore given to MPs & MLAs annually for development works should be used as a corpus for State funding of elections," Ramesh said.

The Union cabinet has decided to suspend the MPLAD fund for two years and effecting a 30% pay cut for all members of Parliament (MPs), including the prime minister and central ministers. The President, vice-president, and the governors have also voluntarily decided to forgo 30% of their salary for a year. MPs get a monthly salary of Rs.1,00,000. They are also entitled to a constituency allowance of Rs.70,000 per month and office allowance of Rs.60,000 per month. The non-operation of the MPLAD fund for two years will allow the government to channelize the earmarked corpus of Rs.7,900 crore to the consolidated fund of India.

Disabled body lauds government; urges to look into matter regarding free LPG

IT News Imphal, April 8

Disabled Development Association Manipur (DDAM) and State Platform of Disabled People's Organisations (SPDPO) have appreciated the government of Manipur Particularlyly the Chief Minister of Manipur and the Social Welfare Minister for releasing fund to the caregiver of the Disabled persons from the Chief Ministergi Shotharabasinggi

tengbang fund at a time when the disabled people of the state are facing extreme miseries due to the ongoing lockdown in order to contain the coronavirus. The DDAM however expressed unhappy to the inaction of the so call social workers as well as MLAs to the problem being face by the disabled people. It said some have no means for survival as they have stopped working due to the lockdown called.

On the other hand, when the disabled people have no place to earn even a single money gas agency are charging money against the assurance to provide free filled LPG cylinder for three months under the Ujjwala Yojana Gas Connection scheme by the government. President of the State Platform of Disabled People's Organisations (SPDPO) Md. Yunus Khan, urged the Chief Minister to look into the matter.

KSA serious over racial discrimination at Guwahati towards Manipuri nurses

IT News Imphal, April 8

Kangleipak Students' Association (KSA) has drawn the attention of the All Assam Students' Union to look into the matter of racial discrimination towards some Manipuri nurses who have been working at Guwahati by some people by calling them 'Coronavirus'. A statement issued today by

the student term such incident as unfortunate saying that at a time when the north east people should unite to fight the racial discrimination showed to the North east people at mainland Indian incident such racial behavior among some people in Guwahati is unfortunate.

The KSA recalled many racial discrimination issues towards the north east people that have been

happening at different part of the main land Indian state. The teasing and harassing of the north east people to the North east people has been frequent in mainland Indian and even students at many mainland Indian cities were not allowed to buy essential items.

The KSA appealed all North East people to jointly fight such racial attitude of the mainland Indian people.

★ Editorial

COVID-19: A crisis that humankind can solve

Among the 2 confirmed case of COVID-19 in Manipur, the first patient, who was tested positive on March 24 has been reported recovered. The Nijamuddin Markus incident, which alerted and panics the entire state, has also been normalized after family members of the 2nd positive case which was confirmed at RIMS were tested negative. The government is somehow relieved as there are no findings of any community transmission happening in the state. The good news is that all the other persons who had attended the religion congregation have also been tested negative, which means that the fear of community transmission still is not happening. With these certain development, fear psychosis among the people has been somewhat minimized. This containment to the spread of the deadly virus should not only be credited to the Chief Minister or his entire team but also to the people who have been co-operating to the measures being taken up by the government. While saying so are we people of the state secure from the pandemic COVID-19? Does the government of Manipur needs more stringent measures to make sure that Manipur remains safe un-infected from the invisible enemy of human kinds?

To be precise we the people in particular and the government in general have a lot of tasks ahead. The government needs to take more stringent measures to prevent spreading the virus as Manipur has already 2 positive cases (no matter one have been reported recovered). Health advisory issued earlier during initial stage of the COVID-19 pandemic needs to be reviewed. For example, the state government under the directives of the Union government have advice to people to maintain a distance of at least one metre while buying essential commodities and to use mask approved by the government. The strictures also appealed to stay indoor all persons at home but allowing only those in need to come out. Today, Scientist has started studying the characteristic of the Novel Coronavirus and find many more development day after tomorrow. Initial findings says people to distance only one metre when new findings says that the virus can travel two meters and can survive for three hours.

According to Manipur borne scientist serving at a decorated at US the virus can spread more parameters in rooms – where people enjoy party. The whole of the room may have been filled with the virus if someone affected cough or speak loud with sprinkling his saliva.

In view of the recent development Manipur Government needs to review the health advisory while continuing the total lockdown.

For long, despite the obvious virtues and sacrifices their work entails, the medical profession and professionals have been regarded as soft targets. Innumerable accounts of unfortunate incidents where aggrieved individuals and parties of the sick and the deceased have summarily held doctors responsible for the misfortunes to their dear ones are still rife the world over. In places such as ours, armed terrorists and banned extremist groups have been targeting the medical professionals for ransoms and monetary demands, often resorting to violent means to intimidate and frighten them into submission. These medical professionals have so far bore the brunt of such unwarranted and often violent intimidations with quiet calm and dignity, instead focusing on the very responsibility of saving lives they have been trained and sworn to perform.

Cut to the present- the world is in the midst of an unprecedented crisis and people the world over are bracing for the worst which is yet to come. While the frantic rush to find a cure is on, these silent angels are at the frontline of a war whose enemy is unseen and hitherto unknown. Many of these medical professionals have already lost their lives while many more are fighting for their lives. Amidst the chaos and already overstretched capacity for equipments, provisions and manpower, these brave souls are standing as a bulwark against the onslaught of COVID 19 with nothing much more than their unshakable moral strength and professional courage. The scenario in the state at present is slightly better, but tension is already mounting and there is a growing sense of concern with one more confirmed case of the dreaded Coronavirus infection. The unfortunate development which could have been prevented points to the fact that even with the strictest and most severe steps by the authorities, the ultimate decider of our own fates are ourselves. The present lockdown is expected to be imposed more severely and stringently, and should be so as some of us have failed to perform or neglected our social responsibilities in this time of great crisis thereby putting others at grave danger.

Indian Army ensures safe return of missing Arunachali youth from the Tibet Autonomous region of China

IT News
Imphal, April 8

Indian Army on 07 Apr 2020 successfully facilitated the safe return of an Arunachali Youth who reportedly had crossed over to the Chinese side in search of herbs on 19 Mar 2020.

It was reported in the media that, a 21 year old youth, Mr Togley Singkam along with two of his friends had gone to collect herbs in the area. On the same day, Mr Singkam was picked up by the Chinese security persons while his friends managed to escape. When the incident came to light, the Indian Army immediately

swung into action and approached the Chinese side utilizing the established border management mechanism. Owing to peace and tranquility that is existing in the region and the bonhomie that has developed between both the border guarding forces, Mr Singkam was handed over to the Indian Army on 07 Apr 2020. This has provided immense relief to the family members of Mr Singkam and also to the people of the area. The individual has currently been quarantined by the Indian Army in view of COVID-19 and subsequently will be handed over to his family after 14 days.

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By: Sanjenbam Jugeshwor Singh

Battling a pandemic as serious as COVID-19 requires drastic responses and political leaders and public health officials have turned to some of the most radical strategies available. What began with a lockdown of one city in China quickly expanded to the quarantine of entire province and now entire countries including Italy. While social isolation and curfews are among the most effective ways to break the chain of viral transmission. Some health experts say it's possible these draconian measures didn't have to become a global phenomenon. If health officials could have taken action earlier and contained and outbreak in Wuhan, where the first case were reported, the Global clampdown could have been at a much more local level. The key to early response lies in looking beyond centuries old strategies and incorporating methods that are familiar to nearly every industry from banking to retail to manufactures but that are still slow to be adopted in public health. Smartphone apps, data analytics and Artificial Intelligence (AI) all make finding and treating with an infectious disease far more efficient than ever before.

The connectivity we have today gives us ammunition to fight this pandemic in ways we never previously thought possible. And yet to date the Global public-health response to COVID-19 has only scratched the surface of what these new containment tools offer. Building on them will be critical for ensuring that the next outbreak never gets the chance to explode from epidemic to Global pandemic. Consider how doctors currently detect new cases of COVID-19. Many people who developed the hallmark symptoms of the disease – fever-cough and shortness of breath-physically visit a primary-care doctor, a health care provider at an urgent –care centre or an emergency room. But that's the last thing people potentially infected

'Information Technology' A tool for the containment of Covid-19

with a highly contagious disease should do. Instead, health officials are urging them to connect remotely via an app to a doctor who can triage their symptoms while they are still at home. The reality is that clinical brick-and-mortar medicine is rife with the possibility of virus exposure. The system we have in place is one in which everyone who is at risk is potentially transmitting infection. That is "petrifying". Instead, people could call a telemedicine centre and describe their symptoms to a doctor who can then determine whether they need COVID-19 testing –without exposing anyone else.

In Singapore, more than a million people have used a popular tele-health app called –MaNaDr, founded by family physician Dr Siaw Tung Yeng for virtual visits; 20% of the physician in the island country offer some level of service via the app. In an effort to control escalating cases of Coronavirus there, people with symptoms are getting pre-screened by physicians on MaNaDr and advised to stay home if they don't need intensive care. Patients then check in with their tele-health doctor every evening and report if their fever persist, if they have shortness of breath or if they are feeling worse. If they are getting sicker, the doctor orders an ambulance to take those people to the hospital. Dr Siaw says the virtual monitoring makes people more comfortable about staying at home, where many cases can be treated instead of flooding hospitals and doctor's offices, straining limited resources and potentially making other sick. This allows us to care across distance, monitor patients across distance and access their progression across distance. There is no better time for remote care monitoring of our patients than now. Other at home devices and services currently being used in the U.S allows patients to measure dozens of health metrics like temperature, blood pressure and blood sugar several times a day and the results are automatically stored on the

Cloud from which doctors gets alerts if the reading are abnormal. Telemedicine also served as a powerful communication tools for keeping hundreds of thousands of people in a specific region up to date with the latest advice about the risk in their community and how best to protect themselves. That can go a long way towards reassuring people and preventing panic and runs on health centres and hospitals. Beyond individual -level care, the data gathered by telemedicine services can be mined to predict the broader ebb and flow of an epidemic's trajectory in a population.

The COVID-19 pandemic may be the trial by fire that telemedicine finally needs to prove its worth. Despite the fact that apps and technology for virtual health visit have existed for several decades uptake in the country has been slow. Other tech innovations that haven't fully made their way to the public health sector could also play a critical role in controlling this pandemic –and future outbreaks. Taking a closer look at health related data, such as electronic health records or sales of over-the-counter medications can provide valuable clues about how an infectious disease like COVID-19 is moving through a population. Retail drugstores track inventory and sales of non-prescription fever reducer for example and any trends in those data might serve as an early albeit crude, harbinger of growing spread of disease in a community. And given the proliferation of health –tracking apps on smartphone, analysing data trends like a rise in average body temperature in a given geographical area could provide clues to emerging clusters of cases. Geo-tracking on phones while controversial because of privacy issues, can also streamline the tedious task of contact tracing, in which scientists try to manually trace infected patients , whereabouts to find as many people with whom they direct contact and who could have been infected. In countries with less

robust health care infrastructure smartphones can be critical for gathering information about emerging infections on ground. These type of real time data can rapidly provide a snapshot of where and how fast the disease might be spreading, to distribute health care works and equipment where they're needed most. It's all about catching these cases as early as possible to minimize the peak of a pandemic so the health system doesn't get overwhelmed. But it's not just about seeing the trends. Flattering the surge of an infectious disease also require action and that's where the advice gets muddier –but also where Big-Data and Artificial Intelligence (AI) can provide clarity. By deeply analysing the care that every COVID-19 patient receives, for example AI can tease out the best treatment strategies.

In case of COVID-19, that might include social distancing and avoiding large public gatherings. To help public health department better, prepare communities for this and future outbreaks, privacy issues however nest in every single byte of data about a person's health. So the power of AI methods in controlling outbreaks depends on how effectively data can be anonymised. Only when people are assured of privacy can algorithm help to navigate the next big hurdle. Predicting surges in cases that strain health care personnel and availability of supplies like ventilators, masks and gowns. If COVID-19 teaches public –health officials' one thing, it's that there are now tools available to help contain an infectious disease before radical measures like quarantines and curfews are needed. What we were doing 10 years ago and what we are doing now is vastly different. There is tremendous opportunity here and hopefully by (the next pandemic) the use of technology and data analysis is going to be light-years ahead of where it is today.

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DST approves funding for developing a gel for nasal passage as prevention for COVID 19

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Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB), a statutory body of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), is supporting a technology by the Department of Biosciences and Bioengineering (DBB), IIT Bombay for capturing and inactivation of novel corona virus, the causative agent of COVID-19, a report by PIB said. The report further said that the funding will help the team from the Department of Biosciences and Bioengineering, IIT Bombay develop a gel that can be applied to nasal passage, which is a major entry point of the corona virus. This solution is not only expected to protect the safety of health workers, but can also lead to reduction in community transmission of COVID-19, thereby helping disease management.

Given the contagious nature of COVID-19, health providers including doctors and nurses are at maximum risk while taking care of COVID-19 patients, particularly asymptomatic ones who cannot be detected and pose a greater risk in spreading the disease. The team is planning a 2-pronged approach to limit transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the causative agent of COVID-19. Primarily, since viruses replicate within host cells of the lungs, the first component of the strategy will

be to inhibit binding of viruses to host cells. While this is expected to reduce host cell infection, viruses will still remain active, therefore, raising the need to inactivate them. Secondly, biological molecules would be incorporated, which would inactivate the trapped viruses in a manner similar to that of detergents. Upon completion, this approach will lead to development of gels that can be locally applied in the nasal cavity. Prof. Ashutosh Sharma, Secretary, DST said, "Our health care workers and others working in the front-line of fight against the virus deserve a fool-proof, 200% protection. The nasal gel being developed in conjunction with other protective measures, will provide a strong extra layer of defense". Prof. Kiran Kondabagil, Prof. Rinti Banerjee, Prof. Ashutosh Kumar and Prof. Shamik Sen from the Dept. of Biosciences & Bioengineering at IIT Bombay will be part of this project. The team has expertise in the areas encompassing virology, structural biology, biophysics, biomaterials, and drug delivery and it is expected that the technology would be ready in about 9 months.

(For further details, contact Prof. Kiran Kondabagil, kiran.kondabagil@iitb.ac.in, Mob: 9619739630.)

Govt asks authorities to take stern action against those involved in black marketing during lockdown

IT News
New Delhi, April 8

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has asked authorities to take quick and stern action against individuals involved in hoarding and black marketing. Briefing media in New Delhi yesterday, Joint Secretary in Home Ministry Punya Salila Shrivastava said, the Home Ministry did a detailed review of the status of essential commodities and lockdown measures. The present status of essential goods and services is by and large satisfactory.

Joint Secretary in Health Ministry Lav Agarwal informed that Government has been adopting a strategy for cluster containment and for outbreaks that are amenable to management. He said,

this strategy is producing positive results, especially in Agra and Gautam Buddh Nagar in Uttar Pradesh, Pathanamthitta in Kerala, Bhilwara in Rajasthan and East Delhi.

He said, Indian Railways has prepared 40 thousand isolation beds in 2,500 coaches. Railways is making 375 isolation beds daily and this is going on across 133 locations across the country. Quoting a recent ICMR study, Mr Agarwal said, if one COVID-19 patient does not follow lockdown orders or practice social distancing, then the patient can infect 406 people in 30 days. The total number of COVID-19 cases in country has risen to 4,789 with 508 more positive cases reported yesterday. In all, 124 deaths have been reported so far.

The infographic provides a clear guide on how to protect oneself and others from COVID-19. It lists several 'Do's' and 'Don'ts' in a structured format. The 'Do's' include: wearing a face mask, avoiding hand-to-hand contact, avoiding touching the face, avoiding close contact with others, and avoiding public places. The 'Don'ts' include: not going to crowded places, not going to public places, and not spitting in public. At the bottom, it encourages everyone to fight coronavirus together and provides contact information for the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.