India will be under complete lockdown for 21 days: Narendra Modi

PM Narendra Modi declared a three-week nationwide lockdown starting midnight Tuesday, explaining that it was the only way of breaking the Covid-19 infection cycle. This essentially extended the lockdown from most states and Union Territories to the entire country and provided a more definite timeline. “Social distancing is the only way to break the cycle of infection,” he said.  
  
All other lockdown conditions, such as the availability of essential commodities, remain the same, the government clarified.  
  
In his second address to the nation on the Covid-19 outbreak, Modi told people to stay inside their homes for 21 days, warning that if they didn’t do so the country would be set back 21 years and families would be destroyed. His last address was on the outbreak was on March 19.

“This is like a curfew, and far stricter than the ‘Janata Curfew’ (on March 22),” the PM said. “Seeing the present conditions, this lockdown will be for 21 days. This is to save India, save each citizen and save your family. Do not step outside your house. For 21 days, forget what is stepping outside. There is a Lakshman Rekha on your doorstep. Even one step outside your house will bring the coronavirus inside your house.”

Modi later issued an appeal to the public to desist from panic buying as people began crowding markets to stock up before the midnight deadline. The government also issued a notification that said all essential services will remain open, as before, and all essential commodities and medicines would be available. Banks, ATMs, petrol pumps, hospitals and grocery shops will continue to function. However, all transport services — air, rail and roadways — will remain suspended until April 14.