

ADVERTISEMENT

ADVERTISEMENT

# THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

Wednesday, July, 15,  
2020 08:03:24 PM

Search



BSE 36051.81 ▲ 18.75(0.05%) NSE 10618.20 ▲ 10.85(0.10%)

## In reports its first avirus case

*case prompted a sympathetic message from the Pope and all but emptied Saint Peter's Square.*



Published: 06th March 2020 10:21 PM | Last Updated: 06th March 2020 10:21 PM

| A+ A A-

TAGS coronavirus COVID-19 VATICAN CITY



A man wearing a mask walks in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican. (Photo | AFP)

**By AFP**

VATICAN CITY: The Vatican on Friday reported its first coronavirus case and closed some offices to protect hundreds of the micro-state's priests and residents as the virus rages across surrounding Italy.

The confirmed case prompted a sympathetic message from the Pope and all but emptied Saint Peter's Square.

Advertisement

X

Skip Ad ►

Ad : (2:42)

Powered By PLAYSTREAM



The patient tested positive on Thursday for COVID-19 at the Vatican health clinic,

the Holy See's spokesman Matteo Bruni told AFP without giving more detail.

On Friday, some offices of the Secretariate of State -- the Vatican's central government -- were "closed as a precaution following a suspected case of COVID-19," another Vatican source told AFP.

The source said Vatican officials were awaiting the test's results but gave no other details.

Pope Francis, who is active on social media, told his 18.1 million Twitter followers that he wished to "express again my closeness to those who are ill with the coronavirus and to healthcare workers who are caring for them".

The Vatican and its 450 residents are entirely surrounded by Italy which is battling the most deadly virus outbreak outside of China -- 148 people have died in the past two weeks and over 3,800 people have been infected.

#### 'Happening very quickly'

The few tourists strolling around the normally crowded Saint Peter's Square in the Vatican on Friday sounded anxious about the rapid spread of the new illness.

"I am afraid because it is a new thing. There are many cases, many deaths," said Lucilia, a 41-year-old Brazilian nun who has spent nine years living in a small Italian village and was visiting the Vatican on her way back to Brazil.

"Everything is happening very quickly and we are scared because we are sure of nothing."

Most of the Vatican's employees live in the Lazio region, where 44 people have tested positive for the virus.

Pope Francis has recently suffered from a bad cold but reportedly tested negative for COVID-19.

The 83-year old has a personal doctor and does not visit the medical centre -- except for rare trips to greet staff.

#### 'Avoid dissemination'

The Vatican said on Thursday it was considering changes to Pope Francis's schedule "to avoid the dissemination" of the new coronavirus.

It did not say whether the Argentinian pontiff would be temporarily kept away

from crowds or whether he would stop shaking hands with visitors.

Francis has not been seen in public since announcing during his traditional Sunday prayer before crowds in Saint Peter's Square that he was skipping an annual spiritual refuge south of Rome because of a cold.

The pontiff has cut down his schedule and has spent most of his time at home, the Saint Martha's guest house in the Vatican.

"The cold with which the Holy Father was diagnosed is running its due course," Bruni told journalists Thursday.

Francis lost part of a lung as a young man and suffers from sciatica.

But he rarely cancels appointments and normally takes extra time to mingle with crowds.

The Vatican is expected to supply staff working in close contact with tourists with masks and gloves.

In Rome, priests are discouraging people to exchange the sign of peace and holy water fonts are being emptied.

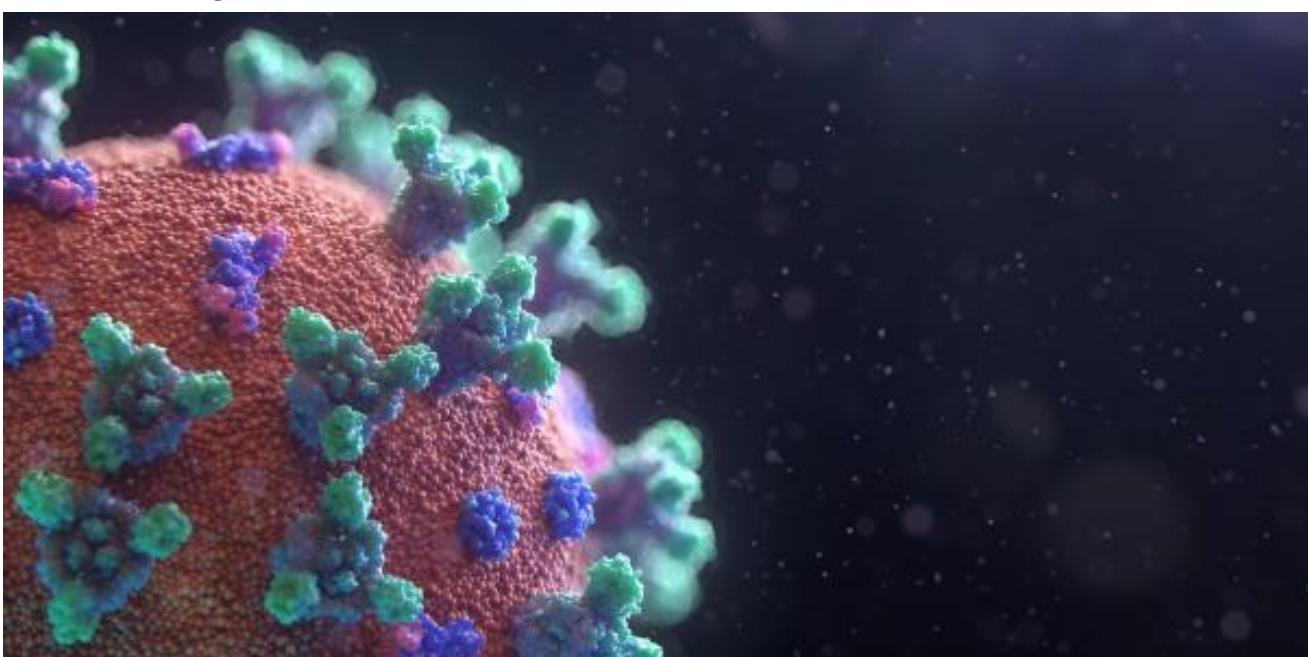
Stay up to date on all the latest World news with The New Indian Express App. Download now

---

 | India Matters



**Want to take a flight? Be corona-free for 3 weeks**



**Coronavirus can remain infectious in air for over 1 hour: UK expert**



CCTV monitoring, water coolers on trains soon as railways gear up to resume normal operations



Bengaluru woman's search for NRI husband costs her Rs 7 lakh

## Comments

Write a comment...

Name

Email

Post

ADVERTISEMENT



ADVERTISEMENT

## ■ Latest

SC refuses to entertain plea against 100 per cent domicile quota in J&K

Ministers should visit COVID-19 hospitals, instill confidence among patients, doctors: Karnataka Congress

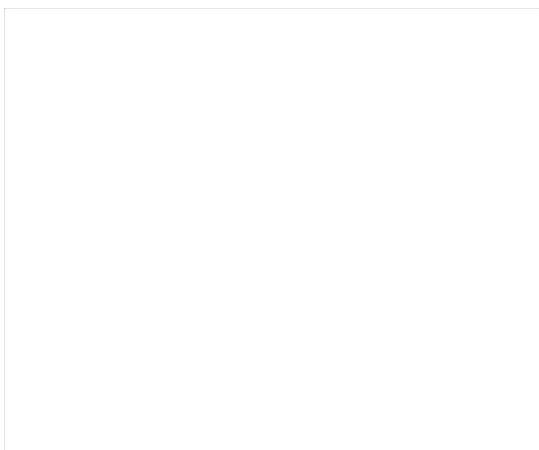
Watch Shakuntala Devi trailer: It's just how we like it, 'Drama or nothing'

Trump ends Hong Kong trade preferences, backs banking sanctions

Defamatory remark against Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti: SC extends protection to TV journalist Amish Devgan

Kerala gold smuggling case: Chennithala lashes out at Vijayan for 'clinging on' to power

ADVERTISEMENT



## ■ More From The Section



Young activists, localists top Hong Kong pro-democracy polls



Plea filed in Lahore HC seeking immediate ban on Tik Tok in Pakistan



15 Taliban terrorists killed in airstrike in Afghanistan



2020 will mark 'inflection point' in India-UK healthcare collaboration: Indian diplomat

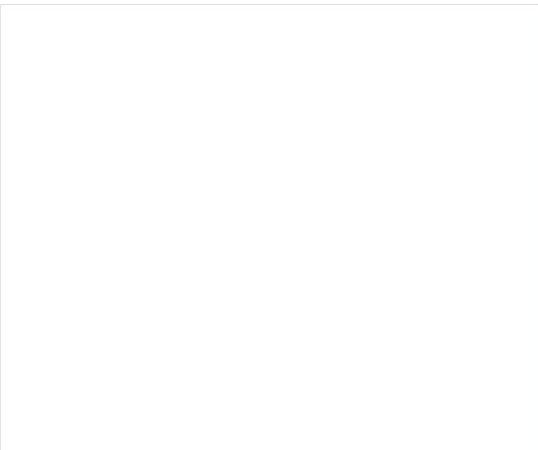


Chinese and Indian militaries reached 'progress' on further disengagement: China after Commander-level talks



System of local lockdowns would be used: New Zealand PM outlines plan for future COVID-19 outbreak

ADVERTISEMENT



## Videos

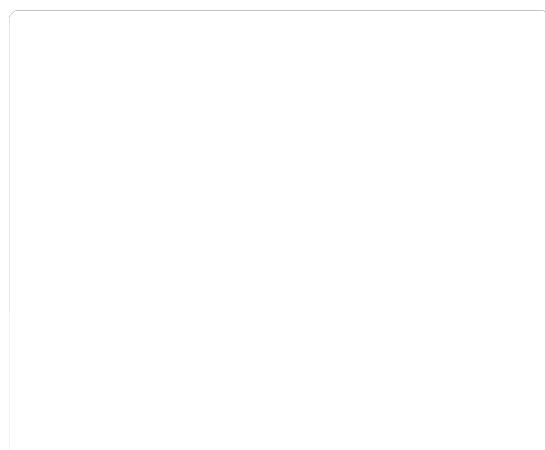


Life with COVID-19: Odisha artists go digital, perform online for audiences



Assam Floods: Six more dead, over 21.63 lakh people affected, Kaziranga inundated

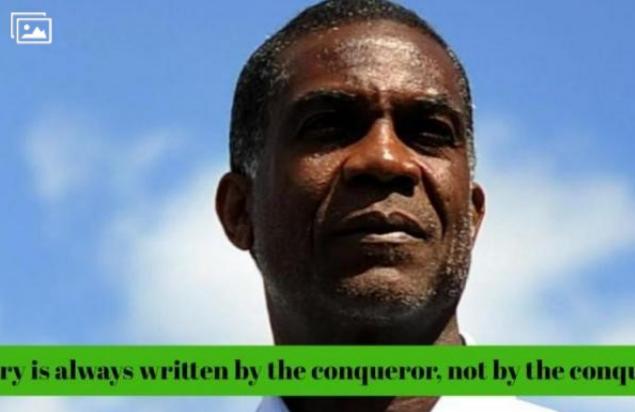
## Stories and Short Videos



## ■ Gallery



IN PICS: Assam floods affect lives of over 22 lakh people across 27 districts



**Cri** is always written by the conqueror, not by the conque

What did Michael Holding say? 7 strong quotes on racism, white privilege, 'black lives matter' movement by the West Indies great that you must read

## ■ Trending

Bengaluru hospital hands over Rs 9.09 lakh estimated bill to COVID-19 suspect

Power shutdown in parts of South Chennai on July 16, here's the list of areas

Student moves HC against UGC order on final exams

Seven doctors under 35 among 99 to have died of COVID-19 in India, another 1300 infected

Amberpet Hyderabad's worst COVID-19 affected suburb

FOLLOW US [f](#) [t](#) [p](#) [o](#) [y](#) [r](#)

Copyright - newindianexpress.com 2020

The Morning Standard | Dinamani | Kannada Prabha | Samakalika Malayalam | Indulgexpress | Edex Live | Cinema Express | Event Xpress

[Contact Us](#) | [About Us](#) | [Careers](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Search](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Advertise With Us](#)

[Home](#) | [Nation](#) | [World](#) | [Cities](#) | [Business](#) | [Columns](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Sport](#) | [Magazine](#) | [The Sunday Standard](#)