

1. Centre urges states to maintain supply chain of essential goods**Source: The Hindu, Business Line ([Link](#))**

The Home Affairs Ministry has yet again written to all State Chief Secretaries to take urgent steps to ensure smooth supply chain and availability of essential goods. Union Home Secretary, Ajay Kumar Bhalla has written to all State Chief Secretaries on various measures in this regard including fixing of stock limits, capping of prices, enhancing production, an inspection of accounts of dealers and other such actions. Under the Disaster Management Act, the Home Affairs Ministry has allowed manufacture/production, transport and other related supply-chain activities in respect of essential goods like foodstuff, medicines and medical equipment.

2. Govt caps expenditure for Ministries, Department**Source: The Hindu, Business Line ([Link](#))**

As cash is scarce, the Finance Ministry on 8 April announced capping expenditure for various Ministries and Departments barring Health, Agriculture, Railway and 14 others. Experts said such restrictions have been imposed for the first time in the recent past. "Keeping in view the present situation arising out of Covid-19 and the consequential lockdown, it is expected that the cash position of the government may be stressed in Q1 (April to June) of 2020-21," Budget Division of the Finance Ministry said in an office memorandum (OM). It is thus essential to regulate the government expenditure and fix the Quarterly Expenditure Plan (QEP) and Monthly Expenditure Plan (MEP) of various Ministries and Departments.

3. Coronavirus pandemic | Second India COVID-19 stimulus to focus on aid to small business**Source: Money Control ([Link](#))**

A second stimulus package India is poised to announce in coming days will be worth around Rs 1 lakh crore (\$13 billion) and focus on help for small and medium businesses weathering the coronavirus outbreak, two senior officials said on 9 April. "The second package could be focussed largely on MSMEs," one of the senior government officials, with direct knowledge of the plan told Reuters, using an acronym for micro, small and medium enterprises. The official said a separate package could be announced for bigger companies after assessing the extent of the hit they have faced due to the lockdown imposed to fight the outbreak. Last month, India outlined a Rs 1.7 lakh crore (\$22.6-billion) economic stimulus plan providing direct cash transfers and food security measures to give relief to millions of poor hit by the nationwide lockdown.

4. Coronavirus pandemic | After banks, insurers can also offer three-month moratorium on term loans

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

Similar to the Reserve Bank of India's directive to banks, the insurance regulator has permitted insurance companies to offer a three-month repayment moratorium for term loan borrowers amidst the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) said that this is due to cashflow problems being faced by borrowers and in line with the RBI directions. "In respect of term loans, insurers are permitted to grant a moratorium of three months towards payment of instalments falling due between March 1, 2020 and May 31, 2020. The repayment schedule for such loans and also the residual tenor, will be shifted across the board by three months subsequent to the moratorium period," said IRDAI.

5. FinMin allows states to borrow Rs 3.20 lakh crore from market

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

The Finance Ministry has allowed all states to borrow a cumulative Rs 3.20 lakh crore from market between April-December. The move comes amid states' demand for higher funds from the Centre to meet the expenses in dealing with COVID-19 pandemic. In a letter to the RBI, the ministry said that the Centre has decided to permit states to raise open market borrowing on the basis of 50 per cent the Net Borrowing Ceiling fixed for the year 2020-21 for financing the states's annual plan for the fiscal.

6. PM hints at lockdown extension, says situation like 'social emergency'

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

In an effort to shape a consensus on the ongoing nationwide lockdown, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 8 April told Parliament floor leaders that the situation in the country was akin to a "social emergency", and indicated the curbs were likely to continue beyond April 14. Interacting with them via videoconferencing, the PM said he would take a decision on extending the lockdown after a meeting with chief ministers on 11 April. The number of coronavirus cases in the country crossed 5,000 on 8 April, with 149 deaths, the data from the health ministry said. According to a government statement, the PM said "several state governments, district administrations, and experts had asked for an extension of the lockdown".

7. Oyo sends thousands on leave without pay, India escapes for now

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

Oyo Hotels & Homes is placing thousands of its employees globally on indefinite furlough as it tries to survive through the coronavirus pandemic, according to people familiar with the matter. Oyo said in a statement it's furloughing employees in countries excluding India without specifying numbers, adding that it's not considering job cuts at this time. The startup, one of the largest in SoftBank's portfolio, has more than \$1 billion of cash in the bank and is exploring options to remain viable over at least the next 36 months, one of the people said. It hasn't yet determined the precise number of workers to be furloughed because it is sorting through local labor laws in various countries, said the person, who didn't want to be named disclosing internal discussions. Founder Ritesh Agarwal told employees in a video message and a note that tough decisions are necessary for the health of the business, and assured workers Oyo would not make any job cuts anywhere in the globe "despite significant economic pressures."

8. Coronavirus lockdown: Rs 1-trn stimulus package for MSMEs on cards

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

A second stimulus package the Centre is poised to announce in coming days will be worth around Rs 1 trillion and focus on help for small and medium businesses weathering the coronavirus outbreak, two senior officials said on 8 April. Last month, the government outlined a Rs 1.7-trillion economic stimulus plan providing direct cash transfers and food security measures to give relief to millions of the poor hit by an ongoing 21-day nationwide lockdown. "The second package could be focused largely on MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises)," one of the senior government officials, with direct knowledge of the plan told Reuters. The official said a separate package could be announced for bigger companies after assessing the extent of the hit they have faced due to the lockdown imposed to fight the outbreak.

9. Coronavirus lockdown: Retailers, wholesalers come up with strategies for swift deliveries of essentials

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

As the acute shortage of labourers and poor availability of transport on the ground will take considerable time to get back to normal, offline and online retailers and wholesalers have come up with strategies to enable swift deliveries of essentials to consumers. DMart, which runs over 200 stores across the country, has launched 'store on wheels' — a service that will facilitate DMart trucks carrying essential grocery items to be parked in residential societies for three

hours. The retailer did not comment on whether the delivery personnel moving the trucks are facing resistance from local authorities.

10. Make private Covid-19 tests free, says Supreme Court

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

The Supreme Court asked the government to make Covid-19 testing by private laboratories free of charge in an interim order. Private lab charges are capped at ₹4,500 apiece while the test is free at government facilities. The bench of justices Ashok Bhushan and Ravindra S Bhatt said that it found prima facie substance in the claim by petitioner advocate Shashank Deo Sudhi that the charges may not be affordable for most people. “Private hospitals including labs have an important role to play in containing the scale of the pandemic by extending philanthropic services in the hour of national crisis,” the bench said.