



## Revisiting President Trump's Coronavirus Guidelines

A few days after President Donald Trump released a series of coronavirus guidelines to slow the spread that calls for a lockdown of America, including the closing of restaurants and schools, states like California, New York and New Jersey, have implemented strict rules on its residents. "Each and every one of us has a critical role to play in stopping the spread," Trump had said in the White House briefing room on March 16. And while his guidelines will be revisited after the initial 15 day proposal, the president warned the virus could affect American life well into the summer. The guidelines advise avoid eating in restaurants and bars along with no social gatherings over the number of 10. Meanwhile, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has advised officials across the United States to crack down on large gatherings of more than 50 people for at least eight weeks.

In New Jersey, Governor Phil Murphy has signed Executive Order No. 104, implementing aggressive social distancing measures to mitigate further spread of COVID-19 in New Jersey. Among the directives, Governor Murphy's Executive Order indefinitely closes all public and private preschool, elementary and secondary schools, and institutions of higher education, as well as closes all casinos, racetracks, gyms, movie theaters, and performing arts centers. The order also mandates that all non-essential retail, recreational, and entertainment businesses must cease daily operations from 8:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. All restaurant establishments, with or without a liquor license, are limited to offering only delivery and/or



take out-services only, both during daytime hours and after 8 pm.

"In order to slow the spread of COVID-19, we must take aggressive and direct social distancing action to curtail non-essential activities in the state," said Governor Murphy. "Our paramount priority is to 'flatten the curve' of new cases, so we do not overwhelm our health care system and overload our health care professionals who are on the frontlines of the response. My Administration continues to work closely with our communities, stakeholders, union representatives, and business leaders to ensure that we all do our part to win the fight against the novel coronavirus and emerge stronger than ever."

As the entire world is grappling with the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, "social distancing," "quarantine" "self isolation" and "flattening the curve" are some of the words one hears time and again. Here's a look at what these terms mean.

### What is social distancing?

Simply put, social distancing means avoiding crowded, public places. According to John Hopkins Medical Center, social distancing is deliberately increasing the physical space between people to avoid spreading illness. Staying at least six feet away from other people lessens your chances

of catching COVID-19. In an attempt to make social distancing a reality, sports events, cruises, festivals and other gatherings are being cancelled. These cancellations help stop or slow down the spread of disease allowing the health care system to more readily care for patients over time.

Other examples of social distancing that allow you to avoid larger crowds or crowded spaces are:

- Working from home instead of at the office
- Closing schools or switching to online classes
- Visiting loved ones by electronic devices instead of in person - Cancelling or postponing conferences and large meetings

#### **What is self-quarantine?**

People who have been exposed to the new coronavirus and who are at risk for coming down with COVID-19 might practice self-quarantine. Health experts recommend that self-quarantine lasts 14 days. Two weeks provides enough time for them to know whether or not they will become ill and be contagious to other people.

You might be asked to practice self-quarantine if you have recently returned from traveling to a part of the country or the world where COVID-19 is spreading rapidly, or if you have knowingly been exposed to an infected person.

Self-quarantine involves:

- Using standard hygiene and washing hands frequently - Not sharing things like towels and utensils
- Staying at home - Not having visitors - Staying at least 6 feet away from other people in your household
- Once your quarantine period has ended, if you do not have symptoms, follow your doctor's instructions on how to return to your normal routine.

#### **What is isolation?**

For people who are confirmed to have COVID-19, isolation is appropriate. Isolation is a health care term that means keeping people who are infected with a contagious illness away from those who are

not infected. Isolation can take place at home or at a hospital or care facility. Special personal protective equipment will be used to care for these patients in health care settings.

#### **What is "flattening the curve?"**

Flattening the curve refers to using protective practices to slow the rate of COVID-19 infection so hospitals have room, supplies and doctors for all of the patients who need care.

A large number of people becoming very sick over the course of a few days could overwhelm a hospital or care facility. Too many people becoming severely ill with COVID-19 at roughly the same time could result in a shortage of hospital beds, equipment or doctors.

On a graph, a sudden surge in patients over a short time could be represented as a tall, narrow curve.

On the other hand, if that same large number of patients arrived at the hospital at a slower rate, for example, over the course of several weeks, the line of the graph would look like a longer, flatter curve.

In this situation, fewer patients would arrive at the hospital each day. There would be a better chance of the hospital being able to keep up with adequate supplies, beds and health care providers to care for them.

It's important to know what to do if you feel sick. The coronavirus pandemic is making everyone aware of handwashing and protecting others from coughs and sneezes. Along with those essential steps, practices such as social distancing, and self-quarantine and isolation when appropriate can slow the rate of infection in a city, town or community.

The pandemic can seem overwhelming, but in truth, every person can help slow down the spread of COVID-19. By doing your part, you can make a big difference to your health, and that of others around you.

## **FIA Works With Consulate to Help Indian Students Cope Through Coronavirus Pandemic**

During these unprecedented times, the FIA is doing its part in ensuring that Indian Americans as well as Indian citizens - especially visiting senior citizens, students and those on work visas - are safe. Currently, the situation of Indians on student visas is of immediate concern. To ensure their safety, the FIA, along with the Consulate General of India in New York, is working diligently to reach out to those international students affected and displaced.

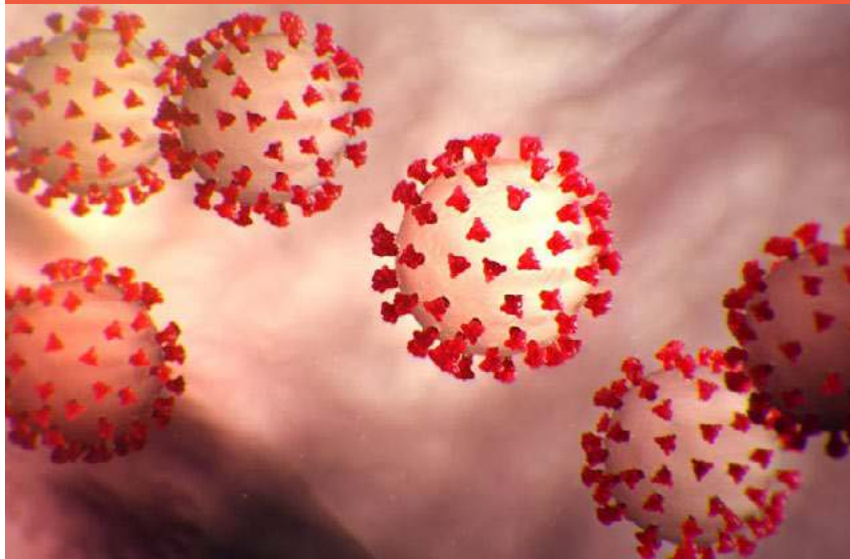
It is already known that, following the growing cases of the coronavirus (COVID-19), universities across the country have taken measures to shut

down on-campus operations for the entire semester and have moved classes online.

The Consulate is advising students who are staying in on-campus housing and are asked to vacate, to consult with their university or their network on how to find alternate accommodations.

Students are advised to check with their respective universities about how they can avail its health services, student health insurance, international student services, and any other essential service(s) that may be impacted.

Students are advised to read official campus



advisories or contact their Designated Student Official (DSO) for information on how short-term or long-term shifts to online courses will impact their F-1 or J-1 status. Those graduating in spring 2020 and traveling internationally, should contact their DSO for advice on how this may impact their graduation and application for OPT.

According to information received on March 20, 2020, the Consulate has worked with Blue Sky Hospitality Solutions to provide Indian students assistance for temporary accommodation at their hotels and resorts. The room is available for \$89 plus applicable taxes, which varies per city. (Maximum 2 people per room allowed).

Similarly, the Embassy of India in Washington, D.C. is in touch with the U.S. government on the issues being faced by Indian students. The Trump administration has indicated that it is closely monitoring the implications that this evolving situation may have for international students. The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) will continue to provide guidance on distance-learning for international students. SEVP recently confirmed that international students can temporarily engage in distance learning, either from within the U.S. or outside the country, in light of COVID-19, without affecting their visa status.

The FIA joins the consulate in urging everyone to cancel or postpone all non-essential domestic or international travel. This is an unprecedented situation, but we can successfully manage it by taking decisions with a calm mind. Everyone should take prudent health precautions and carefully review information and travel advisories.

According to an advisory issued on March 20, 2020, for Indian nationals in the U.S. by the Embassy of India in Washington, D.C., no international commercial passenger aircrafts will be allowed into India from midnight of 22 March, 2020 to 29 March, 2020. In view of these travel restrictions, all Indian nationals are advised to stay safe and isolated within the residential premises and follow social distancing norms and avoid any non-essential local travel. Indian nationals

are urged to approach the local health department officials in case any member of the family experience any of the symptoms mentioned in the CDC website <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>

Those who require an extension of visa in the U.S. during this restriction period, should refer to USCIS website <https://www.uscis.gov/visit-united-states/extend-your-stay>.

### **FIA's 'Namaste' Campaign**

This pandemic has not just changed how we live our lives but also how we greet. During this time, when social distancing is of essence, the FIA is running a 'Namaste' campaign, advising everyone to use it as a greeting instead of a handshake or an elbow bump. Namaste is not an alien concept to us Indians, and to a large number of Americans as well, thanks to yoga.

Namaste comes from Sanskrit and literally means "I bow to you," said with the accompanying pose at both greeting and parting. In Western yoga practice, namaste usually has spiritual applications, a way of recognizing one's inner divinity or peace. The Indian way of greeting has already been used on the global stage since the coronavirus health scare began.

- French President Emmanuel Macron and his wife Brigitte Macron used namaste gesture to welcome Spain's King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia as they arrived at the Elysee Palace in Paris, France.

- President Donald Trump and Irish Prime Minister of Indian origin Leo Varadkar greeted each other in the traditional Indian way of namaste instead of handshake during a meet at the White House amid coronavirus spread.

- Britain's Prince Charles was greeted by Patricia Janet Scotland, Baroness Scotland of Asthal with namaste gesture at Marlborough House, in London.

- King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands performed namaste greeting to Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi and Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs Airlangga Hartarto upon arrival at Halim Perdanakusuma International Airport in Jakarta, Indonesia.

- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu advised his citizens to adopt namaste as a way of greeting instead of shaking hands to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

- British TV Personality Floella Benjamin and Britain's Prince Charles do namaste instead of shaking hands, due to the coronavirus outbreak.

- German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa gestured namaste due to the coronavirus outbreak.

- So go back to your Indian roots, during these trying times, and say namaste. And keep calm. And wash those hands.

# FIA Celebrates Indian American Women for National Women's History Month

As the month of March began, the coronavirus health scare, which had already entered Seattle, Washington, and parts of California, began to spread across the country, forcing events to get cancelled. March is National Women's History Month. An important event celebrated every year on March 8 – International Women's Day – was also a casualty of the pandemic.

The International Women's Day is a day dedicated to honoring the achievements of women throughout history and all across the globe. On this day, women from all different backgrounds and cultures band together to fight for gender parity and women's rights. This year, International Women's Day occurs was celebrated with the special 2020 theme – EachforEqual.

The day has been observed in some shape or form since 1911. It was officially commemorated by the United Nations in 1975 and was officially recognized by the UN two years later. According to the National Women's History Alliance, states began declaring the whole month of March as Women's History Month all the way up until 1986, when a more national push finally made headway. The following year, Congress



declared March 1987 as the first official Women's History Month.

The FIA, in collaboration with the Consulate General of India in New York, has been celebrating International Women's Day at the Consulate for the past two years and honoring and celebrating women and their resilience and perseverance.

Last year, National Award-winning Bollywood actress Neetu Chandra and Darley Newman, host of the Emmy award-winning show, "Equitrekking," were among the celebrity guests at the event. Distinguished women addressed the gathering and





shared their personal experiences and struggles. Community leaders Sukhminder Kaur, Sheetal Trivedi, Arun Anand and Rina Shah were honored by the Consulate General and the FIA committee for their distinguished achievements and contributions to the society.

In 2018, the FIA and the Consulate honored Indian-American women who have carved a niche for themselves in their respective fields. Five prominent women addressed the gathering: television anchor Nisha Mathur, businesswoman and a Grammy-nominated musician Chandrika Tandon, author Myra Godfrey, social worker Ishita Chakraborty, professor Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and violinist

Daisy Joplin. The speakers highlighted the need for more representation by women in the professions and urged other women to take the leap.

Why is International Women’s Day celebrated on March 8?

International Women’s Day has a rich history dating back 108 years. The first glimpse of it was in 1909 when the Socialist Party of America celebrated 15,000 women who protested long work hours, low pay, and the lack of voting rights in New York City. It was originally called National Woman’s Day. The annual celebration spread across the world (officially celebrated in 1911), but it was Russia who unknowingly set the March 8 trend.



Although International Women’s Day became an official holiday in Russia in 1913, women still experienced difficulties caused by WWI. While men were off at war, women dealt with food shortages and a government who wouldn’t listen to them.

On March 8, 1917 (February 23 in the former Russian calendar), tens of thousands of Russian women took to the streets demanding change. The unified cry for help paved the way for Russian women to be granted voting rights soon after.