

India's Coronavirus Recovery Rate At 42.75 Per Cent: Health Ministry



NEW DELHI: The Health Ministry said today that the recovery rate of COVID-19 patients in India has gone up to 42.75 per cent after 3,266 patients were cured in the last 24 hours.

"The number of cases under active medical supervision is 86,110. So far, a total of 67,691 people have been cured. In the last 24 hours, 3,266 patients were found

cured. This takes our total recovery rate to 42.75 per cent," a ministry release said.

It said the centre is taking several steps along with the states and Union Territories for prevention, containment and management of COVID-19. "These are being regularly reviewed and monitored at the highest level," the release said.

5 Coronavirus Patients Die In Bangladesh Hospital Fire



DHAKA: Five coronavirus patients died in a hospital fire in the Bangladesh capital Dhaka on Wednesday, a fire service official said.

It was not immediately clear what caused the fire, said Zillur Rahman, a fire service director. Firefighters extinguished the flames in about an hour, Rahman said.

Five bodies were recovered from the makeshift isolation unit of the United Hospital treating COVID-19 patients, Rahman said. The dead included four men and a woman aged between 45 and 75, he said.

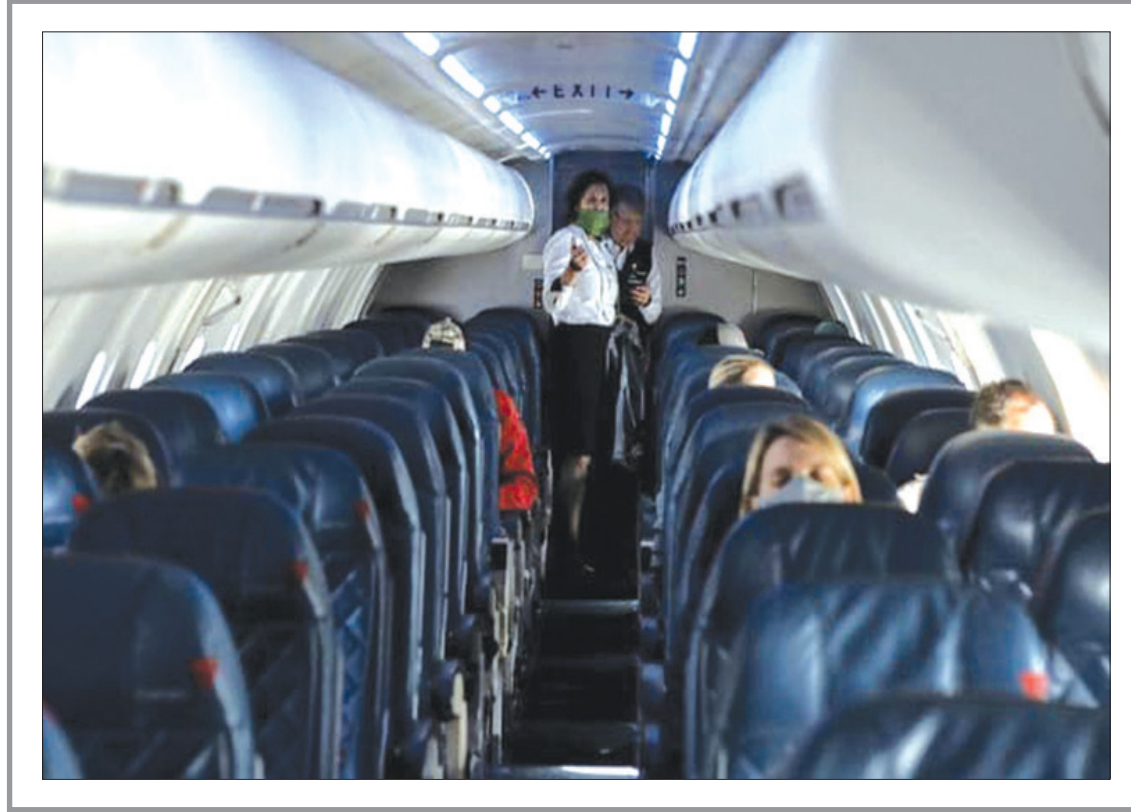
Hospitals are struggling to deal with a spike in coronavirus infections in recent weeks in Bangladesh, which has reported 38,292 cases

and 544 deaths. Some health experts are concerned that the real number of cases could be higher in a country of more than 160 million people where many have only limited access to healthcare.

Lax regulations and poor enforcement have often been blamed for large fires in the South Asian nation that have killed hundreds of people in recent years.

At least 25 people were killed in March last year when a fire broke out in a 22-storey commercial building in Dhaka's upscale area of Banani.

In February last year, an inferno in a centuries-old neighbourhood of Dhaka killed 71 people and injured dozens.



As Flying Returns, Airlines Seek To Quell Fears Over Cabin Air

PARIS: Jet manufacturers and airlines are launching an urgent initiative to convince nervous travellers that the air they breathe on planes is safe, believing this is critical to rebuilding a travel industry floored by the novel coronavirus.

Boeing has appointed former engineering and development chief Mike Delaney to head wider efforts to build confidence, and Airbus leaders say the industry is moving from an initial crisis phase to securing public trust.

That has triggered, among other things, a concerted effort to explain how cabin air filtration works in a bid to scotch the myth that the pressurised fuselage contains only static or recycled air.

Health officials are still quantifying various sources of transmission for COVID-19 disease caused by the virus, but attention focuses on the risk of catching it from airborne droplets from coughing or sneezing passengers as well as from touching infected surfaces.

The air-travel industry historically talks more about seat pitch than air quality. That's had to change as a result of the pandemic.

"It's about explaining what we do for the safety of passengers in the large sense: aircraft safety but also sanitary safety," Airbus engineering

head Jean-Brice Dumont said.

In an office building, air is exchanged about four times every hour. On a modern jet aircraft, that rises to 20 to 30 times.

"The air system on an airplane is as good as anything you will be exposed to," Delaney said.

Air circulation is only one of several techniques for reducing potential for the virus to spread on board including rigorous cleaning of the plane and screening passengers for signs of illness, he added.

In most cases compressed air is fed from the clean part of an engine - untainted by fuel which is added later - to air conditioning packs and from there to fans in the cabin ceiling.

Both planemakers say cabin air pours downwards not lengthways through the fuselage, reducing risks of infection. Half that air is then recycled through hospital-grade HEPA filters designed to remove some 99.97% of contaminants including viruses. The other half is flushed outside through valves.

Planemakers say cabin air is renewed every two to three minutes, though scientists caution that in reality, the air is always a blend but the quicker the rate, the faster old air is diluted.

"The air turns over very, very quickly in the aircraft in terms of

air-exchange rate. From that point of view the aircraft systems are very good," said Professor Byron Jones of Kansas State University, who has helped recommend air standards.

HIGH OCCUPANCY But airflow isn't the only part of a complex equation.

"The biggest challenge you have on an aircraft is the extremely high occupant density. You have got a lot of people crammed into a small space, and you have to get a lot of air in there to ventilate that space to maintain the air quality," Jones said.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say the virus is thought to spread between people in close contact or less than 6 feet apart, around half the width of many cabins. Air currents over such short distances are said to be hardest to predict. Passengers have some control through the individual air outlets nicknamed "gasps" above each seat.

On average, twisting them on makes things "a little bit better, but there is no guarantee," Jones said. Although filtered, the pinpoint blasts of air could in a worst case push nearby virus particles across a passenger's face. On the other hand, the air shower could have the positive effect of limiting sideways movements of air.

UNESCO's New Task Forces To Help 2.7 Million Teachers In India Hit By COVID-19 Lockdown

LONDON: An estimated 2.7 million teachers in India, who have been impacted by the COVID-induced lockdown, are untrained to deal with the altered situation, new research from the UNESCO revealed on Thursday, as it unveiled new task forces to tackle the teachers' training across the world.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation data, launched at the Teachers of the World Unite virtual summit this week, highlighted that 9.1 million teachers across the world, who have been impacted by the pandemic-related school closures, of the total 63 million affected teachers, are untrained in coping with the challenge.

At the summit, UK-based

all, and finding solutions to keep children learning where there is no internet," she said.

The nine task forces will lend governments and international bodies the expertise and varied perspectives of teachers from every continent on key policies such as providing reliable internet access for all, solutions to keep children learning where there is no internet, and a safe environment for teachers and students to return to when schools reopen.

"In examining these key issues, it is vital that we are able to hear from teachers in India who can provide their unique perspectives from the frontlines in these unprecedented times," added Giannini.

The nine areas to be cov-



Varkey Foundation announced the nine new teacher task forces on coronavirus and the future of education, which will be coordinated in collaboration with UNESCO's Teacher Task Force.

"New data from the UNESCO's teacher task force show 2.7 million teachers in India who have been impacted by coronavirus school closures are untrained. The data reveal the scale of the challenge as teachers are forced to adapt to remote learning when many lack the training needed," said Stefania Giannini, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education.

"I, therefore, welcome these nine new teacher task forces launched by the Varkey Foundation as a member of UNESCO's Global Education Coalition. These task forces will examine a number of crucial issues in India, not least training for teachers to teach online, providing reliable internet access for

ered include reliable internet access for all; solutions to keep children learning where there is no internet; no education cuts; a safe environment for teachers and pupils; lost school days should not turn into a lost generation; training to teach online; training to safeguard children online; nutritious free meals; and fast-track ed-tech strategies.

The virtual summit to unveil these was opened by Sunny Varkey, the Indian-origin Founder of the Varkey Foundation and the Global Teacher Prize.

During the session, the UNESCO's Teacher Task Force also presented teachers with a draft toolkit of practical tips and checklists for school leaders to ensure they are supported and protected as schools begin to re-open.

Participants were able to provide feedback to help improve this toolkit before a wider release. PTI

Heatwave Continues In North India, Mercury Nears 50-Degree In Rajasthan

NEW DELHI: Parts of northern and western India reeled under scorching heat on Wednesday, with temperatures hovering near the 50 degree-mark in Rajasthan, while the IMD said no immediate respite is likely from the ongoing heatwave conditions.

In the national capital, the mercury settled six notches above normal in most areas. Palam remained the hottest with a maximum temperature of 47.2 degrees Celsius, marginally less than Tuesday's 47.6 degrees Celsius.

In large areas, a heatwave is declared when the maximum temperature is 45 degrees Celsius for two consecutive days and a severe heatwave is when the mercury touches 47 degrees Celsius for two days on the trot.



In small areas, like the national capital, a heatwave is declared if the temperature soars to 45 degrees Celsius even for a day, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

The Safdarjung Observatory, which provides representative figures for Delhi, recorded a maximum temperature of 45.9 degrees Celsius.

The IMD said the weather stations at Lodhi Road and Ayanagar recorded maximum temperatures of 45.1 degrees Celsius and 46.7 degrees Celsius, respectively.

Severe heatwave conditions prevailed in Rajasthan. Churu was the hottest place in the state with a maximum temperature of 49.6 degrees Celsius, according to the meteorological (MeT) department.

On Tuesday, Churu had recorded a high of 50 degrees Celsius - the district's second-highest maximum temperature in the month of May in the last 10 years.

Ganganagar, Bikaner and Kota recorded maximum temperatures of 48.9 degrees Celsius, 48 degrees Celsius and 47.2 degrees Celsius, respectively, on Wednesday.

The last time the mercury touched the 46-degree mark at the Safdarjung weather station was on May 19, 2002, said Kuldeep Srivastava, the head of the regional forecasting centre of the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

The all-time record for Safdarjung in May is 47.2 degrees Celsius. It was recorded on May 29, 1944.

NEWS MAKER

Liquor Baron Hires 180-Seater Plane To Ferry Three Family Members, Help

BHOPAL: A Bhopal-based high net worth individual hired a 180-seater A320 plane of a private carrier to ferry four family members to New Delhi, in a bid to avoid crowd at the airport and in flight amid the COVID-19 outbreak, officials said on Thursday.

The person, who is a liquor baron, chartered the aircraft to send to Delhi his daughter, her two children and their maid, who were stuck in Bhopal since the last two months due to the coronavirus-induced lockdown,

sources said. The plane arrived here from Delhi on Monday with crew only and flew back with just four passengers for whom it was specially hired, they said.

"The A320 180-seater plane arrived here on May 25 to carry four members of a family, probably due to the coronavirus scare. It was chartered by someone and there was no medical emergency, an airline official said, refusing to divulge any further details. Bhopal's Rajabhoj Airport



Director Anil Vikram could not be contacted for comments. According to aviation experts, the cost of hiring an Airbus-320 is about Rs 20 lakh.

Domestic commercial flight services resumed from Monday, after a nearly two-month break due to the coronavirus-enforced lockdown. PTI

FOR MILLIONS, THIS IS WHAT #CONFINEMENTCOOKING #BAKECORONA LOOKS LIKE.

Millions in West Bengal and Odisha are battling the devastation of a cyclone and the threat of COVID-19. Please donate. Help them overcome this double disaster.

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