



A woman takes a photo of Trevi fountain, May 3. On May 4 is scheduled a partial easing of restrictions of movement imposed by the lockdown during the coronavirus pandemic. (AP)

Coronavirus

'Terrifying situation'

Crowded Indian jails prompt virus threat

NEW DELHI, May 4, (AP): The spread of the coronavirus in India's notoriously crowded prisons has prompted authorities to impose jail lockdowns and release thousands of pretrial detainees on parole, as health experts worry that the cramped facilities are serving as breeding grounds for the disease.

Although there are no official numbers on how many inmates have been infected by the virus, India's correction facilities are slowly recording more infections and have temporarily banned visitors.

On Thursday, authorities locked down Nagpur Central Jail in coastal Maharashtra, among the Indian states worst hit by the pandemic. It was the eighth prison in Maharashtra to be locked down. The move came after 19 inmates in Indore Central Jail in central Madhya Pradesh state tested positive for the virus on Tuesday. Around 250 others who came in contact with them were shifted to a temporary jail.

"It is a terrifying situation. If measures aren't taken soon, then things can become extremely difficult," said **Madhurima Dhanuka**, head of the Prison Reform Program for the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative.

Considering its population of 1.3 billion, India has done relatively well so far in containing the coronavirus, confirming around 37,000 infections, including 1,223 deaths. On Friday, the government extended the lockdown it had announced in late March for another two weeks, but eased restrictions in some low-risk areas and is now trying to gradually reopen some industries, including agriculture and manufacturing.

Health experts, however, fear that crowded facilities such as prisons can prove deadly, threatening the lives of detainees and guards, as well as the outside population.

Experts

The virus has spread rapidly in overcrowded prisons across the world, leading governments to release inmates en masse. United Nations experts and the World Health Organization have urged governments to reduce their prison populations during the pandemic.

In the Philippines, which has some of the most congested jails in the world, a Supreme Court justice said Saturday that nearly 10,000 poor inmates had been temporarily freed by reducing the amounts of their bail.

Some of the inmates, who could not afford to post bail, were released to the custody of local officials, underscoring the urgency to ease overcrowding in jails.

In March, India's top court said that it was "difficult for prisoners to maintain social distancing" and ordered that detainees convicted of crimes with jail terms of no more than seven years be given parole. Many states started releasing thousands of inmates.

Attempts to reduce the prison population, however, were not enough, critics say.

Indian prisons are highly overcrowded. According to the latest data by the National Crimes Record Bureau in 2018, India has some 450,000 prisoners, exceeding the country's official prison capacity by about 17%. Prisons in New Delhi and neighboring Uttar Pradesh state have the highest occupancy rates, at over 50% above capacity.

Making matters worse, "the health facilities in prisons are not up to the mark," said Dhanuka.

The official data shows that only 4% of total prison expenditure was spent on inmates' medical needs in 2018. It also shows a 40% shortage of medical personnel in Indian prisons.

Dhanuka said the combination of a low health care budget, a shortage of doctors and "horrible hygiene facilities" has created ideal conditions for the coronavirus to spread in prisons.

While the government said it already has released thousands of prisoners and plans to set more free, worried families whose loved ones are still in jail are distraught.

In April, the family of Mian Qayoom, a 73-year-old human rights lawyer from disputed Kashmir who is locked up in New Delhi's Tihar jail, wrote to authorities to urge them to release him on parole due to his ailing health.

The family said that Qayoom was a diabetic with a serious heart condition.



Dhanuka



In this photo provided by the Vilanova nursing home, resident Mr Chatal smiles during a fake wedding with a nurse on April 25, 2020, in Corbas, central France. The nursing staff of a care home in Lyon decided 45 days ago that rather than lock residents in their rooms as the government urged, the staff would lock themselves in the home with residents so as not to deprive the elderly of their freedom. The home has had zero virus cases so far. (AP)

Europe

Virus being used to curb press: An international media rights group said Sunday the coronavirus pandemic is being used by governments around the world to increase restrictions on press freedoms.

In a report issued to coincide with World Press Freedom Day 2020, the International Press Institute concluded that in both democratic and autocratic states the "public health crisis has allowed governments to exercise control over the media on the pretext of preventing the spread of disinformation."

Ahead of this year's event, UN Secretary General **Antonio Guterres** said the COVID-19 crisis has underscored the importance of a robust and free press. (AP)

Czech TV teams up with CNN: A private Czech television station has joined forces with CNN to create a news channel in the Czech Republic.

The Czech FTV Group and CNN International Commercial launched the channel, CNN Prima News, on Sunday.

CNN Prima News is the ninth channel that FTV Prima operates. Its broadcast includes local news covered by Prima reporters together with international news from CNN. The channel has also launched a website. (AP)

Prez protests pro-Nazi salute: Croatia's leftist president walked out of a state ceremony in protest Friday after one of the participants wore a T-shirt displaying a salute used during World War II by a pro-Nazi regime in the country.

"This is a deliberate provocation," **Zoran Milanovic** said. "I don't want to be part of it."

The salute is often displayed by Croatia's far-right extremists. Many glorify the WWII Croatian state although tens of thousands of Serbs, Jews, Roma and anti-fascists were killed in its concentration camps. (AP)

Danes arrest 1 man: Danish police carried out a raid in Copenhagen and arrested a man suspected of involvement in Islamist terrorism, authorities said Thursday, adding he likely acted alone.

Flemming Drejer, the operative head of Denmark's Security and Intelligence Service, known by its Danish acronym PET, said the suspect was trying to acquire weapons and munition, and was planning to carry out "one or several attacks."

Copenhagen Police Chief Inspector Joergen Bergen Skov said the man is suspected under the Scandinavian country's terror laws and will face a pretrial custody hearing on Friday behind closed doors. The suspect was not identified. (AP)

Vatican closes latest probe: The Vatican has formally closed its latest investigation into the 1983 disappearance of an employee's 15-year-old daughter

Britain

Army veteran's 100th birthday celebrated

PM speaks on brush with death

LONDON, May 4, (AP): Prime Minister Boris Johnson has offered more insight into his hospitalization for coronavirus, telling a British newspaper that he knew doctors were preparing for the worst.

The 55-year-old Johnson, who spent three nights in intensive care during his week of treatment in a London hospital after falling ill with COVID-19, told The Sun newspaper he was aware that doctors were discussing his fate.

"It was a tough old moment, I won't deny it," he said. "They had a strategy to deal with a 'death of Stalin'-type scenario."

Johnson couldn't believe how quickly his health had deteriorated and had difficulty understanding why he wasn't getting better. Medical workers gave him "liters and liters of oxygen" but he said the "indicators kept going in the wrong direction."

"But the bad moment came when it was 50-50 whether they were going to have to put a tube down my windpipe," he told the newspaper. "That was when it got a bit...they were starting to think about how to handle it presentationally."

The remarks were Johnson's most candid yet on his brush with death, though he acknowledged when he left the hospital that his fight to survive "could have gone either way, as he paid tribute to the two nurses who never left his bedside for 48 hours.

Jenny McGee from New Zealand and Luis Pitama from Portugal, he said, embodied the caring and sacrifice of National Health Service staff on the front lines of the pandemic, which has already killed 28,131 people in Britain.

Reflected

Johnson's close call is reflected in the name that he and fiancée Carrie Symonds gave to their newborn son. Wilfred Lavrie Nicholas Johnson was named after Johnson and Symonds' grandfathers and after Dr. Nick Price and Dr. Nick Hart - the two doctors who saved the prime minister's life.

Johnson's actions since leaving the hospital suggest the NHS has a powerful new advocate as it seeks to reverse a decade of austerity that has left Britain's doctors and nurses struggling to treat the flood of coronavirus patients with inadequate supplies of protective gear. Dozens of NHS workers have died in the outbreak.

The interview follows an emotional video made by Johnson after being released from the hospital on April 12.

Johnson called the NHS "unconquerable" and "the beating heart of this country" after seeing its response to the outbreak first-hand. He also lauded the courage of everyone from

doctors to cooks.

The prime minister returned to work on April 27.

Meanwhile, a British army veteran shuffled the length of his garden 100 times - and walked away with the hearts of a nation.

Capt. Tom Moore celebrated his 100th birthday on Thursday, having raised some 30 million pounds (\$37 million) for the National Health Service after completing a challenge to mark the milestone, one garden lap at a time. His sunny attitude in a dark moment brought smiles to a country locked down amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tired

"My legs may be tired, but my mind is racing and I'm hoping to be back very soon with other ways in which I can help people, help others," he said. "Please always remember, 'Tomorrow Will Be A Good Day.'"

Moore's family used social media to seek donations to support health care workers as a way to thank the doctors and nurses who took care of him when he broke his hip. But as he walked, the public watched and just kept donating.

Moore, who uses a walker while putting in his paces, completed 100 laps of his 25-meter garden earlier this month.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson described him as a "point of light."

"You have touched our hearts, lifted our spirits and enabled millions to show their support for the wonderful men and women of our unique NHS," Johnson said. "Because of their extraordinary courage and dedication our country will get through this difficult time and, in doing so, fulfil your optimism that tomorrow will indeed be a better day."

As his birthday arrived, Capt. Moore celebrated his appointment as the first Honorary Colonel of the Army Foundation College, Harrogate, Queen Elizabeth II sent a card.

And in the sky, the Royal Air Force organized World War II-inspired flypasts featuring a Spitfire and a Hurricane - which he observed while sheltering under a red plaid blanket in the garden. He waved as they thundered past.

"I'm one of the few people here who've seen Hurricanes and Spitfires flying past in anger," he told the BBC. "Fortunately today they're all flying peacefully."

Moore, who had planned to raise a far humbler sum of 1,000 pounds, thanked the public for their generosity - and said that they had done a wonderful thing for him.

"I felt a little frustrated and disappointed after I broke my hip and it knocked my confidence," he said. "However, the past three weeks have put a spring back in my step."

an anonymous tip to the missing girl's family suggested her body might be buried in the Teutonic cemetery inside the walls of Vatican City. (AP)

Ex-president's daughter removed:

The daughter of Kazakhstan's former president, once viewed as his heir-apparent, has been dismissed from her post as Speaker of the country's senate.

Dariga Nazarbayeva was removed Saturday by an order from President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev; she also lost her seat in the senate.

No reason was stated for the dismissal. Nazarbayeva became senate Speaker in March 2019 on the same day that her father, Nursultan Nazarbayev, unexpectedly resigned. (AP)

Africa

Anti-apartheid Goldberg dies:

South African anti-apartheid activist **Denis Goldberg** has died at his home near Cape Town, aged 87.

Goldberg was a prominent member of the now-ruling African National Congress and stood trial alongside Nelson Mandela. He spent 22 years in prison for his involvement with the ANC's fight against apartheid, the racist system of oppression imposed by the white minority government.

When his fellow accused were sent to Robben Island, as a white prisoner Goldberg was separated from them and imprisoned in the capital, Pretoria.

Goldberg's niece, Joy Noero, said the liberation stalwart died peacefully Wednesday after having lung cancer and diabetes.

Goldberg had continued his activism in post-apartheid South Africa and was a critic of former president Jacob Zuma, who stepped down in 2018 and faces multiple allegations of corruption.

Goldberg was a critic of the ANC's performance in government and the socio-economic conditions of the largely black poor majority in South Africa, one of the world's most unequal countries. (AP)



Goldberg

Virus could worsen hunger crisis:

Zimbabwe, where millions of people already face acute hunger, could sink deeper into crisis as the coronavirus pandemic takes a toll on the country's troubled economy and food supply, United Nations agencies say in a new report.

The southern African nation is "one of the world's top global food crises," the U.N. children's agency, the World Food Program and the Food and Agriculture Organization said in the report released Monday.

More than 4 million rural people, about a third of Zimbabwe's population, "are in need of urgent action," the report says.

More than half of Zimbabwe's 15 million people need food assistance due to droughts, floods and worsening economic problems, according to WFP, which was already assisting about 3.5 million people well before the pandemic. (AP)

I. Coast opp leader sentenced:

Ivory Coast opposition politician Guillaume Soro vowed to press ahead with his presidential candidacy in the October election after being sentenced Tuesday in absentia to 20 years in prison on charges of embezzling public funds and money laundering.

Soro, who has been living in Europe, diverted his plane in the air instead of returning home to Ivory Coast last December when it became clear that Ivorian authorities had issued an arrest warrant for him.

The former prime minister and National Assembly president also faces charges of attempting to destabilize the West African economic powerhouse in a separate criminal case.

Soro quickly reiterated his plans Tuesday to run anyway in October, and he lashed out at Ivorian President Alassane Ouattara, a one-time political ally whom Soro now accuses of trying to eliminate him through politically motivated charges. (AP)

Lat/Am

Venezuela says it foiled attack:

A Venezuelan official said that an armed group launched an invasion before dawn on Sunday by boats through the port city of La Guaira outside the capital of Caracas.

Interior Minister Nestor Reverol said on state television that Venezuelan forces overcame the attackers and that there were casualties.

He did not say who the attackers were, but said they came from neighboring Colombia. He also didn't indicate how many attackers were involved or what sort of boats and weapons they used.

Reverol called them "mercenary terrorists" intent on overthrowing Venezuela's government and creating "chaos." Officials said the attack took place in La Guaira, about 20 miles from Caracas and home to the nation's largest airport. (AP)

Bolivia air force plane crashes:

A Bolivian air force plane flying a humanitarian mission crashed minutes after take-off in the Amazonian region, killing all six occupants, including four Spaniards who were being ferried to catch a flight to their homeland, the Defense Ministry said Saturday.

The Beechcraft Baron, a twin-engine propeller plane, went down in a marshy area on the outskirts of Trinidad, a city in the northeast of the country, the announcement said.

The statement identified the Spaniards as Francisco José Gallegos González, Yandira Olivera Velarde, Delis Salvatierra Velarde and Alba Aparicio Formas. It said the plane was crewed by an air force captain and lieutenant. (AP)

US testing deportees:

A planeload of 89 Guatemalan deportees that arrived Thursday all tested negative for the coronavirus before boarding their flight from Texas, Guatemalan officials said Thursday.

The major change in how the US handles its deportation flights to Guatemala comes after two weeks in which Guatemala refused to accept more flights.

Guatemala's foreign ministry said Thursday's flight did not signify that flights had officially resumed and it did not know when there would be another one, perhaps suggesting it was a test.

The government had suspended the flights after at least 44 deportees on an April 13 flight from Louisiana tested positive for the virus.

That had been the first day of resumed flights after a previous suspension that followed a March 26 flight on which the majority of the deportees also tested positive. (AP)



Guterres



Milanovic