A word from Ambassador...  

April 3, 2020

Members of the Indian community, and in particular, Members of the student community

The past few weeks have been challenging, and we have seen a rapid rise in the number of COVID-19 cases all over the World, including in Ukraine and in India. Worldwide cases have crossed 1 million, and the whole World is fighting to control the spread, and overcome the dreadful COVID-19 pandemic. You must be keeping track of the various preventive measures being undertaken by India to contain the spread of COVID-19 in India, and the call for complete lockdown of the entire country for a period of 21 days, i.e., until April 14th. This decision, as you know, was taken on the advice of health sector experts and experiences of other countries. 21 days of complete lockdown is essential to break the chain of infection. As part of the lockdown measures, Indian government also, has suspended all international passenger flights until April 14th.

Embassy has been reaching out to members of the Indian community over the past many weeks, to ensure your wellbeing and safety, and to convey that all fellow Indians must undertake necessary precautions and hygiene measures. We have taken note of your concerns, and those of your families. From the feedback and messages received from the Indian diaspora, two major concerns have emerged:

I. **Students want to go back to India and be with their respective families:**

   Let me assure you, we understand your anxiety, and that of your parents to be together back in India. Your concerns are being conveyed regularly, and I would like to mention, that PM Modi recently held a videoconference with Indian Ambassadors across the World, and particular attention was given to problems faced by Indian students in foreign countries. At the same time, most of you are studying to be doctors yourselves, and I am sure you understand that what emerges from the collective experience in fighting this pandemic so far, is that we need to restrict movement, protect ourselves and stay safe wherever we are. Moreover, with the state of the lockdown in India at present, it would not be feasible to travel back to your respective hometowns. As Prime Minister has emphasized, with patience and precautions, restraint and resolve, we will break this pandemic. Any update on travel to India will be immediately conveyed.
II. Access to groceries, pharmacies, medical care, etc:

The safety and health of every Indian is the paramount priority of the Indian Embassy. Thankfully, essential supplies are available in Ukraine, and I am confident that all of you are taking necessary precautions while going out to purchase groceries, etc. I also appreciate the efforts of the educational consultants across Universities in Ukraine, to continue to provide necessary support to students in this regard. The Embassy has been coordinating these efforts, and I have also taken additional steps such as:

- On April 1, I met the Ukrainian Foreign Minister H.E. Mr Dmytro Kuleba, who assured his personal support in ensuring safety of all Indians in Ukraine.
- I have also requested the Heads of all Regional State Administrations in Ukraine where Indians are studying, as well as Rectors of various Universities to take measures to ensure safety of and access to essential care to every Indian.
- I have also conveyed the same to the Minister of Interior Affairs and the National Police.
- Embassy helplines and emergency contacts on telephone, twitter and Facebook have been accessible throughout, and are monitoring any concerns raised by our fellow Indians, to reach out in case of emergency or necessity.

COVID-19 hit the World when we were least prepared for it. Even the most advanced countries with the best of healthcare are struggling to provide the ideal care in these trying times. However, Ukrainian government initiated the necessary quarantine and social distancing measures quite early, and as responsible residents in Ukraine, I am sure we are following the norms laid down by the Ukrainian government, and contributing our bit in overcoming this pandemic. These are challenging times for all of us. We are all separated from our motherland, from family, and are having to take extra-ordinary measures. However, we will overcome this. Please do not resort to panic, do not spread misinformation, stay safe, stay indoors. Practice yoga, take steps to boost your immunity, most of you are staying in hostels, so take necessary precautions, at the same time, help each other out. Our friends whom we live with, are our family here in Ukraine. And so is the Embassy.

Once again, take care. Namaskar and Jai Hind!

Yours,

Ambassador Partha Satpathy