Daily COVID-19 Updates

Together We Can Wipe Out the Colonies of Coronavirus

A unified and coherent work plan will help us triumph over the coronavirus enemy and wipe out its growing colonial empire

- *Ritika Singh*

You must have heard of the comparison that is drawn between the current Covid-19 situation and the world war times. The global leaders and experts are calling it a global warfare against a common enemy which is severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) or popularly called coronavirus causing Covid-19 disease. The war analogy persuades people and countries to unite, however, the current pandemic needs to be looked at from a different lens. The present global crisis is not a war crisis but close to an act of colonialism by the coronavirus factory. Let us not forget that the virus ceases to survive without a host. It needs a living body to multiply and thrive. Without the annexation of the human body (or animals), the virus is powerless and ineffective. However, display of negligence and disunity at this time could invite the virus to convert the well-functioning and independent bodies into coronavirus colonies. What is required is alertness, awareness and a strong coordinated plan of action by the authorities so that we can prevent the coronavirus from spreading and multiplying its empire.

Humanity has faced various epidemics in the past and may do so in future too. Large chunks of human populations have been wiped out by pathogens and influenza since the origin of human settlements. Black death, the most terrible and one of the earliest epidemics known to mankind, killed somewhere between 30-60% of the European population. The bacterium travelled across continents and washed away 75 million to 200 million humans from the face of the earth. Others like smallpox, typhoid, tuberculosis and Spanish flu have all travelled across continents as well and killed thousands and millions. Looking at the last 10 years, epidemics like SARS, H1N1, MERS and Ebola are just a few out of many unknown to have surfaced and then controlled or eradicated.

Then, how is SARS-Cov2 different from others? Well, in terms of the genetic properties it may be similar to other viruses like SARS or H1N1 but the intensity and incidence of the coronavirus has proved to be very different from the rest. For example, unlike SARS (which also comes from the coronavirus family) the

SARS-CoV-2 symptoms are not distinct from seasonal flu making detection and early containment quite challenging. The virus is less deadly but highly contagious when compared to disease like Ebola. Even though the number of global cases of Covid-19 till now is less than the H1N1 flu of 2009 the mortality rate is much higher in the case of former. To summarise, the Covid-19 like pandemic is not unknown to humanity and is less fatal than other viral diseases yet the disease has shackled this generation by infecting millions.

The delay in response and poor preparedness in even developed nations like the United States, Italy and the United Kingdom prevented nipping of the virus in the bud. The first quarter of the year has seen a rampant outbreak of coronavirus, starting from Wuhan in China. Countries with the best healthcare system and public health policies in place have crumbled in containing the virus and protecting people. The number of cases around the globe has crossed 1.4 million and is rising, not to mention the epicentre has shifted from China to Europe and the United States. The hospital capacities in cities like New York and Detroit have crossed the tipping point as the virus spread. Due to the disruption in trade and global supply chain there is an acute shortage of medical supplies like personal protective equipment (PPE) and clinical and diagnostic equipment. The challenges faced by the financial and economic system of the countries and upcoming consequences are unfathomable.

Now is about now

The only mantra to defeat coronavirus is to act now without an inch of delay. We must do everything that can be possibly done. Researchers have been working relentlessly to create a vaccine which will build an immune response in the body but till then social-distancing is the only *rambaan*. India's story of Covid-19 cases has been different from trends seen in other countries. This is because the government took proactive measures before the first Covid-19 case was detected on 30th January 2020. Learning from the experience of the affected countries, India was quick in screening and quarantining international travellers. Most importantly, declaring 21 days nationwide lockdown on the 24th of March was the much needed intervention. Our healthcare system is not as resilient as the developed nations and therefore lockdown was necessary to slow down the spread of virus and reduce the burden on the hospitals and medical staff. India was relatively better prepared and implemented containment measures on time. This was also reiterated by the World Health Organization (WHO) which called India's response as "impressive". Having said

that, as a developing country with a majority of workers in the informal sector, dependent on daily wages for livelihood, the task in front of India is simply mammoth. The Union and state governments have to work in a coordinated manner to tackle coronavirus by strengthening healthcare infrastructure and also rolling out welfare measures to minimise the economic and social impact of lockdown.

The government has started ramping up its testing facilities. It is trying to secure more testing kits so that there is a clarity obtained on the spread of virus in the country. Learning from the experience of South Korea, the focus is now on testing more people using antibodies tests which are cheaper and less time consuming. ICMR has already circulated an advisory in this direction. The state of Kerala has started a drive thru pop-up testing facilities for greater testing coverage and surveillance of both symptomatic and asymptomatic cases. This model of testing has to be expanded to cover at least the hotspot regions. Pooled testing can be carried out in less affected areas for larger coverage per million of population and cost effectiveness.

As per the national level data of the last 10 days, the number of covid-19 cases have doubled in every 4 days. Going by this trend and extensive testing results, the government needs to ramp-up the existing infrastructure, supplies and medical staff to be able to handle 10,000-15000 cases in the upcoming week. The government has been expanding the existing hospital capacity and developing additional infrastructure facilities to quarantine or treat patients with mild/non-critical symptoms. State governments have been advised to be prepared for the crisis and prevent hospitals from overwhelming. Around 51 army hospitals are being prepared to treat coronavirus infected patients. The Indian Army is also helping in transport of essential supplies across the nation. Private hospitals are being directed to earmark isolation wards for covid-19 patients. Indian Railways has taken up the target of converting 5,150 coaches into isolation wards. Ventilators are being procured in large numbers. The government is planning to source cheap ventilators from innovative tech start-ups like Nocco Robotics which has already built a prototype at less than half the usual price. The government is working aggressively to procure essential medical supplies and equipment.

Keynes, one of the greatest economists of all time once wrote, "In the long run we are all dead". This Keynesian theory fits well today more than any other time. In the short run, the country must resort to a mix of expansionary fiscal and

monetary policy to counter the economic impact of lockdown and perhaps not stress much on the long run consequences. On the fiscal front, the central government has rolled out a relief measure worth INR 1.7 trillion as a first step. In addition to the cash transfer, the package incorporates distribution of 5 kilograms of rice or wheat and 1 kilogram pulses for next three months under Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Ann Yojana to 80 crore people from the lower income strata. In addition, the Home Ministry has approved a release of INR 11, 092 crore to all state governments under state disaster relief fund (SDRF). Subsequently, the states are allowed to utilise INR 29,000 crore under SDRF allocation for the fiscal year 2020-21 to provide food and accommodation to the migrant workers displaced due to the nationwide lockdown. The relief measures are further complemented by the food and cash allocation undertaken by various state governments. While the earlier package dealt with the poor and migrant workers targeting the informal sector, small organised firms and construction sector, healthcare, farmers and women. it is time that a more generous package is doled out for the rest of the sectors which will encourage them to spend. While it is not rational to compare India's economic relief package to the ones by the developed and bigger economies like the U.S, the government of India must not worry about the fiscal slippage and future fiscal targets as now is about now. Policy experts Vijay Kelkar and Ajay Shah in their book 'In Service of the Republic' have written "...*a sharp enlargement of the deficit occasionally, when the economy is faring badly, is perfectly healthy and legitimate*".

During the time of pandemic, it is critical that all state governments and UTs interact and coordinate with each other and the centre. A unified and coherent work plan will help us triumph over the coronavirus enemy and wipe out its growing colonial empire. Above all, we need leaders who stand tall and motivate administrative workers, health professionals and others in their states to fulfil their duties during the difficulties. Our Prime Minister has displayed statesmanship through his live communication and public addressal that has facilitated a constant flow of information from topmost to the bottommost echelon of the society. Not to mention, his request to bang thalis and light candles has lit a strong emotional connection between people and filled them with optimism and hope which is absolutely crucial in our fight against Covid-19.

The author is former Young Professional at the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM)

World Health Organization

- "On the 1st of January, just hours after we were notified of the first cases, WHO activated its Incident Management Support Team, to coordinate our response at headquarters, regional and country level". - Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (DG, WHO)

- "On the 5th of January, WHO officially notified all Member States of this new outbreak, and published a disease outbreak news on our website".

- "On the 10th of January, we issued a comprehensive package of guidance to countries on how to detect, test and manage potential cases, and protect health workers".

- "On the same day, we convened our strategic and technical advisory group on infectious hazards to review the situation. We have been engaging with journalists since the beginning, responding to media enquiries around the clock".

- "In early February the UN Crisis Management Team was activated, to coordinate the entire machinery the UN to support countries as effectively as possible".

- "Through WHO's network of 6 regional offices & 150 country offices, we've worked closely with governments around the world to prepare their health systems for #COVID19 & to respond when cases arrive".

- "We issued a Strategic Preparedness & Response Plan, which identified the major actions countries need to take & the resources needed to carry them out. Governments & partners rose to the challenge. More than 800M dollars has been pledged or received for the response".

- "Through our daily situation reports & these regular press briefings, we've kept the world informed about the latest data, information & evidence. We've held regular briefings with our Member States, to answer their questions & learn from their experiences".

- "We've worked with many media & tech companies: Facebook, Google, Instagram, LinkedIn, Messenger, Pinterest, Snapchat, Tiktok, Twitter, Viber, WhatsApp, YouTube & more to counter myths & misinformation with reliable, evidence-based advice".

- "The WhatsApp chatbot now has more than 12 million followers & is available in 7 languages, including Hindi & Portuguese, which are launching today. The Viber chatbot has more than 2 million followers, in three languages & four more to launch next week".

- We're working hard to ensure supplies of essential medical equipment for frontline health workers. So far, we've shipped more than 2M items of personal protective equipment to 133 countries & we're preparing to ship another 2M items in the coming weeks".

- "Today we are launching the UN COVID19 Supply Chain Task Force, to dramatically scale up the supply of these life-saving tools, and match supply with needs".

Corona Warriors from every part of India

India Fights Corona (Updates)

- पिछले 24 घंटों में कोरोना वायरस के 540 नए मामले सामने आए हैं और 17 मौतें हुई हैं। भारत में कोरोना वायरस के मामलों की संख्या बढ़कर 5734 हो गई है(इसमें 5095 सक्रिय मामले, 473 लोग ठीक हो चुके हैं/ छुट्टी दे दी गई है और 166मौतें शामिल हैं):स्वास्थ्य और परिवार कल्याण मंत्रालय

- अब तक 1,30,000 नमूनों का टेस्ट किया जा चुका है। इनमें से 5,734 नमूनों का टेस्ट पॉजिटिव पाया गया। पिछले 1-1.5 महीनों में पॉजिटिव रेट दर 3-5% के बीच है। इसमें पर्याप्त वृद्धि नहीं हुई है। कल हमने 13,143 नमूनों का टेस्ट किया: भारतीय चिकित्सा अनुसंधान परिषद

- राज्य सरकारें लॉकडाउन के काम में जुटी हुई हैं। कल गृह मंत्रालय ने जो कंट्रोल रूम बनाया है। कल उसके द्वारा 300 से ज्यादा समस्याओं का निदान किया गया। नॉर्थ ईस्ट के लिए लगाई गई हेल्पलाइन 1944 भी सुचारू रूप से सेवाएं प्रदान कर रही है: गृह मंत्रालय की प्रवक्ता पुण्य सलिला श्रीवास्तव
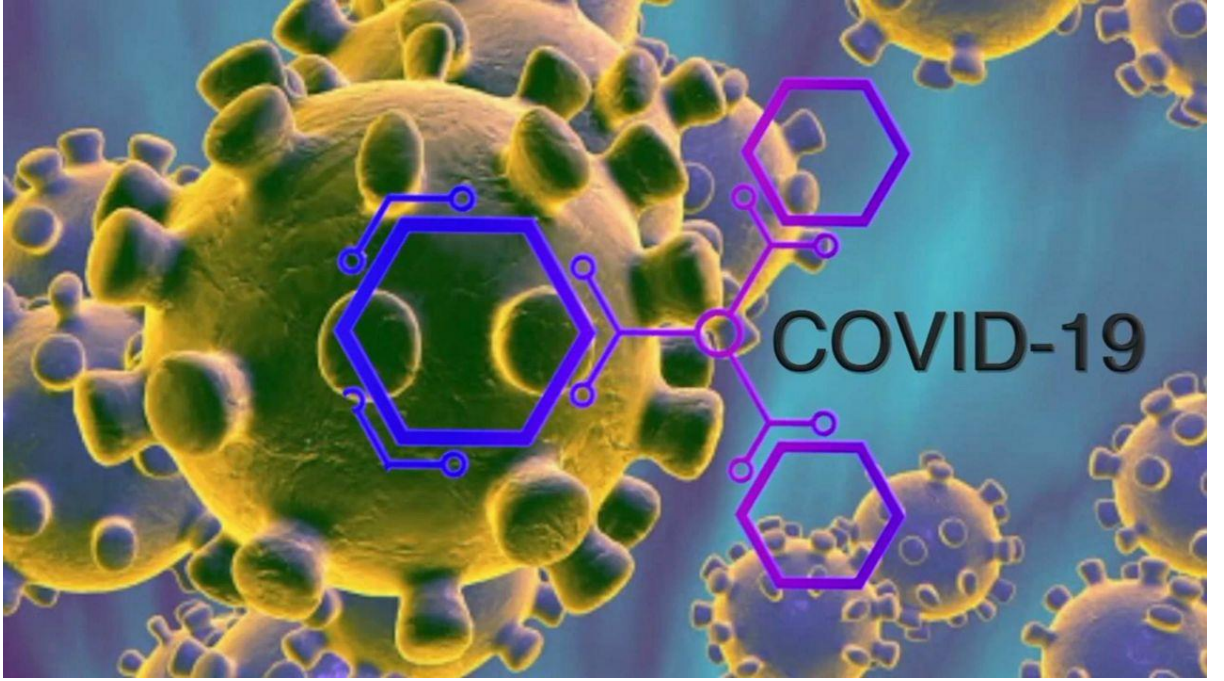
- उत्तर प्रदेश: गाजियाबाद के मोहन नगर की सेवियर सोसाइटी को पूरी तरह से सील कर दिया गया है। इलाके में सेनिटाइजेशन का काम किया जा रहा है। सोसाइटी के अंदर ही लोगों को जरूरी सामान की डिलीवरी की जा रही है।

- दिल्ली: एम्स के डॉक्टरों ने लोगों को मास्क बांटे। राजधानी दिल्ली में कल घर से बाहर निकलने से पहले लोगों के लिए मास्क लगाना अनिवार्य कर दिया गया।

- दिल्ली उच्च न्यायालय ने उच्च न्यायालय और अधीनस्थ न्यायालयों का ग्रीष्मकालीन अवकाश निलंबित कर दिया है। राष्ट्रीय राजधानी के न्यायालय जून के महीने में कार्य करेंगी।

- डॉक्टरों की शिकायत पर दिल्ली पुलिस ने तुरंत FIRदर्ज कर ली थी।जो शख्स है उसको गिरफ्तार कर लिया है।डॉक्टर कोरोना की लड़ाई में फ्रंटलाइन पर हैं मैं उन्हें आश्वस्त करना चाहूंगा कि उनको पुलिस का पूरा समर्थन है: सफरजंग की 2डॉक्टरों के साथ दुर्व्यवहार पर दिल्ली पुलिस PROएम.एस. रंधावा

- बृहन्मुंबई महानगर पालिका (BMC)ने पुष्टि की है कि इलाके में जरूरी सेवाओं की डोर-टू-डोर डिलीवरी आज या कल तक शुरू हो जाएगी।

- ओडिशा ने लॉकडाउन 30 अप्रैल तक बढ़ाया। ओडिशा के मुख्यमंत्री नवीन पटनायक ने केंद्र सरकार से 30 अप्रैल तक ट्रेन और हवाई सेवा शुरू ना करने का अनुरोध किया है। राज्य में शैक्षणिक संस्थान 17 जून तक बंद रहेंगे।

- बिहार में आज 12 नए Coronavirus पॉजिटिव केस (सिवान में एक परिवार के 10 लोग) मिले। अब राज्य में कुल पॉजिटिव केस 51 हो गए हैं: बिहार स्वास्थ्य विभाग के प्रधान सचिव संजय कुमार

- आज भारत सरकार और तमिलनाडु के बीच एक बहुत ही अच्छी पहल की शुरुआत हुई है, आरोग्य सेतु IVRF को लॉन्च किया गया है। जैसे ही आप एक बार मिस कॉल देते हैं ये तभी एक्टिवेट हो जाएगा, आपकी लोकेशन की पहचान कर ली जाएगी. इस पर हेल्थकेयर के लिए मदद और गाइडेंस उपलब्ध होगी। आज इसकी पायलट योजना थी इसे दूसरे राज्यों में भी जल्द ही लागू किया जाएगा। ये नॉन-स्मार्टफोन के लिए भी है: केंद्रीय मंत्री रविशंकर प्रसाद

- महाराष्ट्र में आज कोरोना वायरस के 162 नए मामले सामने आए हैं, राज्य में कोरोना वायरस पॉजिटिव मामलों की संख्या बढ़कर बढ़कर 1297 हो गई है: महाराष्ट्र स्वास्थ्य विभाग

- गुजरात में COVID19 के 55 नए पॉजिटिव केस मिले, जिनमें 50 मामले अहमदाबाद से, 2 सूरत से, 1-1 मामला (दाहोद ,आनंद और छोटा उदेपुर) से। अब राज्य में पॉजिटिव मामलों की कुल संख्या 241 है: गुजरात स्वास्थ्य विभाग

- राजस्थान में आज 47 नए पॉजिटिव केस पाए गए (जिनमें 4 विस्थापित शामिल हैं) - बांसवाड़ा से 2,जयपुर से 11,जैसलमेर से 5, झुंझनू से 7,जोधपुर से 3,टोंक से 7, झालावाड़ से 7, बाड़मेर से 1 मिले हैं। राज्य में COVID19 पॉजिटिव मामलों की कुल संख्या बढ़कर 430 हो गई है:राजस्थान स्वास्थ्य विभाग

COVID-19 Updates (Worldwide)

- 1st time UN Security Council to hold video-teleconferencing session today to discuss COVID19 situation.

- Sri Lanka: Indian expats in Colombo help local community with essential supplies delivered at their doorsteps during COVID19 crisis; Country has 138 active cases with seven deaths so far.

- US' top infectious disease expert Anthony Fauci says People should never shake hands again.

- US Prez DonaldTrump thanks India, PM Narendra Modi on decision to allow export of anti malaria drug Hydroxychloroquine to US.

- Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro thanks PM Narendra Modi & people of India for helping Brazil tackle COVID19 outbreak by providing raw materials for Hydroxychroloquine production.

- New York recorded single-day high for coronavirus deaths yesterday. Governor Andrew Cuomo says 779 people died in last 24 hrs, bringing total COVID19 death toll to 6,268.

- Iran says 117 new virus deaths take overall toll past 4,000: AFP

- British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Thursday began a fourth day in intensive care "improving" in his battle with coronavirus, as his government prepared to extend a nationwide lockdown introduced last month.

- More than 1.5 million cases of #coronavirus registered worldwide. Of the 1,502,478 infections, 87,320 people have died across 192 countries and territories since the epidemic first emerged in China late last year: AFP

कोरोना वायरस पर केन्द्रित आलेखों के मुख्य बिंदु

कोविड-19: चुनौतियों से निपटने की राह

कोविड-19 की वैश्विक महामारी से उभरी चुनौतियाँ भारत के सामने भी पैर पसारती दिख रही हैं. दुनिया के इतने बड़े भूभाग को प्रभावित करने वाली यह अपने आप में पहली घटना है. विश्वयुद्ध के दौरान भी दुनिया के इतने देश प्रभावित नहीं हुए थे. आज हालात ऐसे हैं कि दुनिया के अनेक विकसित देश इस महामारी की विभीषिका से उबरने का रास्ता नहीं निकाल पा रहे. इस वायरस के खतरे ने दुनिया को घुटने टेकने पर मजबूर कर दिया है. हालांकि तुलनात्मक रूप से भारत में कोविड-19 का असर अमेरिका तथा यूरोपीय देशों की तुलना में अभी काफी कम है. किंतु इसका यह कतई अर्थ नहीं है कि भारत में खतरा कम है. हमें समझना होगा कि असर कम होना और खतरा कम होना, दोनों अलहदा बातें हैं. असावधानियाँ और सामाजिक दूरी बरतने में की गयी अनुशासनहीनता हमें भी उसी कतार में खड़ा कर सकती है, जिसमें अभी इटली और अमेरिका सहित अनेक देश खड़े हैं.

ऐसा माना जा रहा है भारत में कोविड-19 का खतरा कम्युनिटी स्तर पर नहीं फैला है. आंकड़ों के मुताबिक़ भारत में 5 अप्रैल तक लगभग 90 हजार कोविड-19 के टेस्ट हुए हैं, जिसमें 3200 के आसपास पॉजिटिव केस मिले हैं. इस आंकड़े के आधार देखें तो भारत में कुल टेस्ट के लगभग 3.5 फीसद लोग पॉजिटिव पाए गये हैं. जबकि अमेरिका, इटली, स्पेन और जर्मनी में पॉजिटिव पाए गये लोगों का आंकड़ा भारत की तुलना में काफी अधिक है. इटली, अमेरिका, स्पेन और जर्मनी जैसे देशों में कुल टेस्ट में पॉजिटिव मामलों का औसत भी भारत के पॉजिटिव मामलों से काफी अधिक है. फौरी तौर पर यह भारत के लिए एक राहत पहुंचाने वाला तथ्य है. हालंकि एक यह भी मांग उठ रही है कि भारत में रेंडम टेस्ट की संख्या बढाई जानी चाहिए. स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय के मुताबिक़ सरकार इस दिशा में कदम बढ़ चुकी है. सरकार प्रतिदिन 10,000 टेस्ट की क्षमता को 20,000 तक पहुंचाने की योजना को लगभग अंतिम रूप दे चुकी है। ऐसे में संभव है कि भारत में 'रैपिड टेस्टिंग' के माध्यम से अधिक से अधिक सेंपल टेस्ट किया जा सके.

Source:https://www.spmrf.org/covid19-the-way-to-meet-challenges/

India Fights Corona

"Anganwadi teachers, the unsung sheroes of COVID times".

Ahmedabad station of Western Railway becomes 1st station on Indian Railways to install 'WALK THROUGH MASS SANITIZING TUNNEL'.

COVID-19 Pandemic

India's help with key medicine won't be forgotten: Donald Trump

US President Donald Trump thanked India for its decision to export anti-malaria drug hydroxychloroquine to assist in his country's fight against novel coronavirus.

"Extraordinary times require even closer cooperation between friends. Thank you India and the Indian people for the decision on HCQ. Will not be forgotten! Thank you Prime Minister @NarendraModi for your strong leadership in helping not just India, but humanity, in this fight!" he tweeted.

Govt launches e-platform to train 1.5cr Covid warriors

The department of personnel and training (DoPT) has announced the launch of an online learning platform to train doctors, nurses, paramedics, government officers, police organisations and civil defence workers to combat Covid-19.

The online iGOT learning resource is expected to equip all front-line workers with the training and updates in coping with the pandemic. Appropriate training will also prepare them for the subsequent stages of the pandemic. "By giving Covid-19 training to other potential second line workforce, India will be better prepared for the emergent situations," a DoPT release said on Wednesday.

The target group is doctors, nurses, paramedics, hygiene workers, technicians, auxiliary nursing midwives, Central and state government officers, civil defence staff, police organisations, National Cadet Corps (NCC), Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), National Service Scheme (NSS), Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS), Bharat Scouts & Guides (BSG) and other volunteers.

RSS Swayamsevaks serving needy people during 'Lockdown'

Myth Busters

MYTH BUSTERS
COVID-19

my GOV
मेरी सरकार

❌ **MYTH**

✅ **FACT**

Eating food cooked in mustard oil will protect you against coronavirus
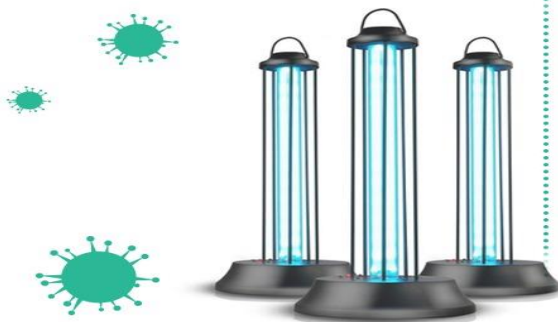
There's no such evidence that eating food cooked in mustard oil will protect you against coronavirus.

MYTH BUSTERS
COVID-19

my GOV
मेरी सरकार

❌ **MYTH**

✅ **FACT**

An ultraviolet disinfection lamp can kill coronavirus

UV lamps should not be used to sterilize hands or other areas of skin as UV radiation can cause skin irritation.

Prepared by:

Adarsh Tiwari

Abhay Singh

Manujam Pandey