

GOVERNMENT

India announces 21-day lockdown as COVID-19 measure, dealing blow to already-weakened economy

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Narendra Modi is prime minister of India

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

India has announced a national lockdown for three weeks, a move that comes less than 24 hours after the United Kingdom initiated a similar response to curbing the spread of the deadly COVID-19 coronavirus.

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi told the nation of 1.4 billion that India needs to act fast to prevent the viral growth of COVID-19 even as advanced countries such as Italy and the United States struggle to cope with the upward tick in patients flocking to hospitals. India currently has 500 diagnosed cases, including 39 who have recovered and nine fatalities.

"If we are not able to manage the upcoming 21 days, we will be pushed back by 21 years," Mr. Modi said in the 29-minute broadcast. "This is applicable for everyone, including the Prime Minister."

Most parts of India have already been under some sort of partial lockdown. But the latest announcement will require all residents to stay indoors, venturing out only for groceries or emergencies.

Already weakened prior to the coronavirus, India will now face another blow to sectors such as automotive, retail, real estate, banking and hospitality.

India's affluent consumers typically spend on cars, travel, fine dining, watches and jewelry, real estate, fashion, and leather goods and accessories.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the nation as imposes a 21-day lockdown to prevent the spread of COVID-19