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India West

Over 40 Indian Americans, Indian Nationals Die of COVID-19 in U.S.; Sewa International Launches 24/7 Blood Plasma Registry

- India-West Staff Reporter Apr 12, 2020

More than 40 Indian Americans and citizens of India have reportedly lost their lives due to the deadly coronavirus and the number of those having tested positive for the dreaded disease is likely over 1,500, according to Indian American community leaders in the U.S., now the global COVID-19 hotspot, reported PTI April 11.

New York, which has emerged as the epicenter of COVID-19 in the U.S., along with adjoining New Jersey, account for majority of the death cases reported so far. The two states have one of the highest concentrations of Indian Americans in the country.

Among those who have died from coronavirus in the U.S., at least 17 are from Kerala, 10 from Gujarat, four from Punjab, two from Andhra Pradesh and one from Orissa, said the PTI report. The majority are over 60 years of age, except for one who was of 21 years of age.

According to a list of COVID-19 deaths compiled by PTI from various community leaders, more than a dozen Indian Americans have died in New Jersey, and at least 15 have succumbed to the disease in New York.

Reports of the deaths of four Indian Americans have also come from Pennsylvania and Florida, while there has been confirmed deaths of at least one Indian American in both Texas and California.

Among those who lost their lives were Hanmantha Rao Marepally, CEO of Sunnova Analytical Inc., who passed away in Edison, New Jersey, said PTI.

Chandrakant Amin, a popular community activist in New Jersey City, has also died of the novel coronavirus at the age of 75, the PTI report said.

More than 50 friends and family members of Mahendra Patel, 60, joined his last rites through an online video platform last week, PTI reported, after city officials in New Jersey told them that not more than nine of them could attend the funeral in person. At least one Indian American died inside his home in New Jersey.

Indian American community leaders have started online and social media campaigns to find plasma donors to help in the treatment of those in serious condition. At least two of them were successfully able to find a plasma donor on April 10.

Meanwhile, people have been stepping up to help in different ways. Ajit, Sachin and Sanjay Modi from Rajbhog Sweets, said PTI, have been providing free vegetarian food at Jersey City Medical Center.

Several local restaurants in New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, Florida, and Pennsylvania are also distributing food to their nearest hospitals.

World Hindu Council of America volunteers have been supplying free meals to Lowell General Hospital ER workers in Boston and to first responders and doctors in Indianapolis. It also distributed 85,000 gloves to the local police, fire, and emergency medical technicians in New Jersey.

Sewa International in Houston launched a national registry for COVID-19 blood plasma. The Sewa Plasma Registry (www.sewacovidplasma.org) is a 24/7 service that offers a national registry for both donors and recipients under the Convalescent Plasma Therapy program with live phone and social media support. “Our mission is to bring together matching blood donors and COVID-19 patients seeking the plasma, in-time and save lives, and we are open round-the-clock to serve” said Sewa International president Prof. Sree Sreenath in a press statement. The registry is run by Sewa volunteers. Users of the registry can call (302) 659 - SEWA / (302) 659 - 7392 or contact via email: plasmasupport@sewausa.org.