Twitter Thread by <u>Jugal</u> / ■■■■





IMP ■ INVESTIGATION

India's lockdown was called world's largest, strictest etc. $\underline{@}$ BBC, we wanted to know how the govt planned it.

So, what're we looking at?

Govt docs that reveal every department/agency who was consulted by PM Modi before imposing #lockdown.

#Thread



How did we access the docs? Well, for months my colleague Arjun Parmar and I filed RTI applications with the relevant govt depts - State & Centre. Hundreds in fact. We then filed appeals, then filed second appeals..phew!

Background - this day last year, India had less than 600 cases and nine deaths. Some European & Latin American nations (with way higher numbers) had imposed lockdowns.

China, with thousands of deaths and cases by March 2020, never imposed a national lockdown.

One more thing - India started monitoring and preparing it's response to coronavirus from January 8, 2020. It was repeatedly mentioned that none other than PM was personally leading the effort.

Let's start with what we've got now.

India's lockdown was imposed by an <a>@ndmaindia order. Who heads NDMA? Prime Minister.

So we asked NDMA - who all were consulted before lockdown? Also, how many NDMA meetings did the PM attend? Their response.

NIL to both. Yes, NIL.





Coming to @PMOIndia - our RTI applications were met with little or no info. A clause that is not even an exemption clause was used to not give info. We're contesting these decisions and shall see how it goes.

Am giving you an example below ■

PMOIN/R/E/21/00344

RTI No. : RTI/860/2021-PMR Name of the Applicant : Shri Arjun Parmar

BBC

Date of Application : 22.01.2021

Pt. No.	Information Sought	Response
a.	On March 24 2020, the Prime Minister addressed the nation on vital aspects relating to the menace of COVID-19 where he said, from 12 midnight today the entire country, shall go under complete lockdown, this lockdown in the country will be for 21 days. Provide the following information Before declaring the said national lockdown on March 24, 2020, state the names of all / any Chief Ministers/Governors / Lt. Governors / Central or State Ministres / Cabinet Committees / Ministries / Authorities / Advisers / Think tanks / Individual experts with whom PM/PMO/delegated central authority discussed / consulted on some / any / all aspects of the national lockdown.	The information sought by the applicant is vague and roving in nature. Therefore, the same may not come under the definition of information under Section 2(f) of the RTI Act, 2005.
b.	Provide copies of relevant communication containing minutes of the meetings and/or recommendations as per Section 2(f) of RTI Act, 2005 with respect to the above point.	

they

प्रयोग कुमार/PARVEEN KUMAR बार संपित एका के.सो.सू.क./Under Seawslary & СРЮ प्रधानमंत्री कार्यात्वर/Prime Minister's Office गई दिल्ली/New Delhi



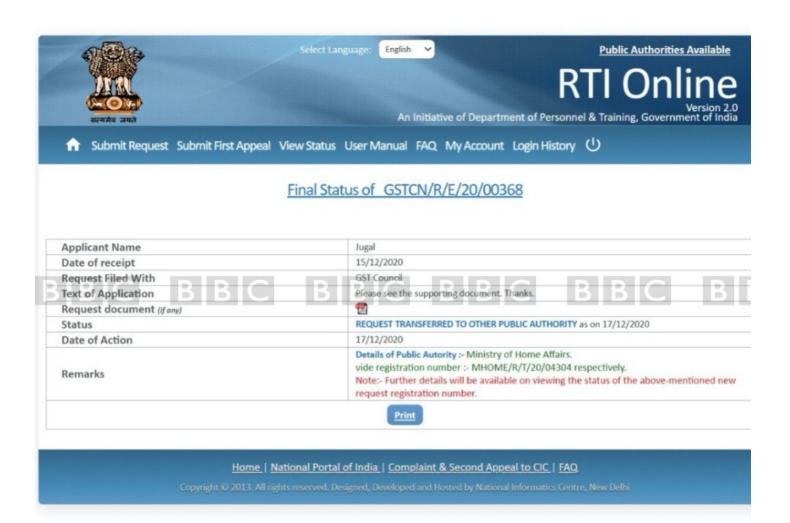
Like the PMO, so many key ministries/depts chose to transfer our RTI applications directed at THEM to the @HMOIndia - including @rashtrapatibhvn @MoHFW_INDIA @AgriGol @ICMRDELHI.





Coming to key economic ministries like <u>@minmsme</u> <u>@MoCA_GoI</u> <u>@GST_Council</u> <u>@rsprasad</u> - they said they had no information on consultations.

<u>@FinMinIndia</u> depts transferred our apps to MHA. But when MHA sent them all back, admitted it had no info on consultations.

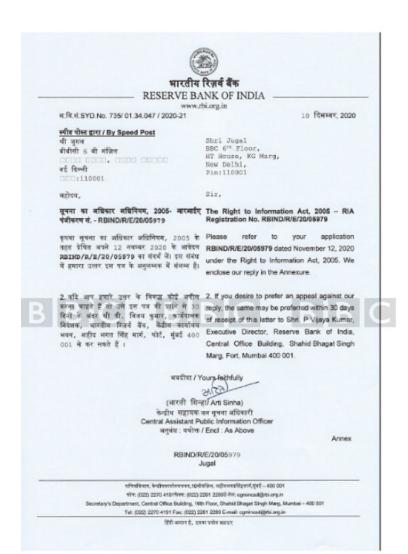




What about specialist bodies like <u>@RBI</u>, SEBI, <u>@NCDCgov</u> or Dept of Military Affairs (remember domains of disaster management, AFMS doctors etc)?

They had no information on consultations.

In fact, nothing to show they were EVEN INFORMED before lockdown.



RBIND/R/E/20/05979 Jugal

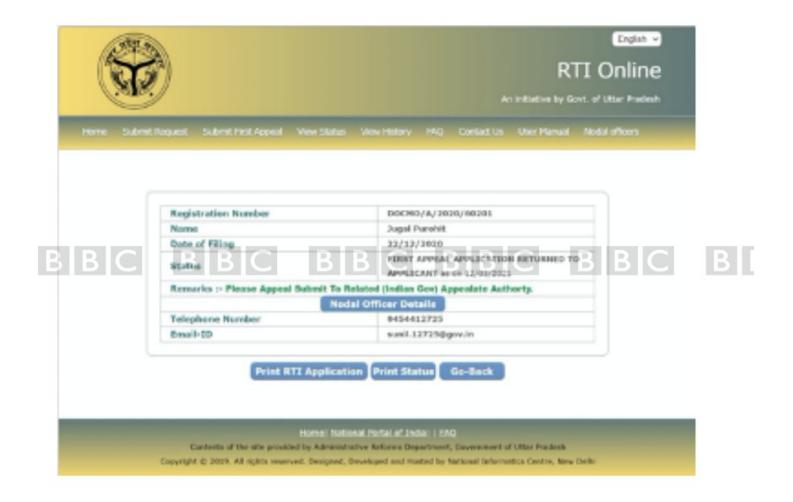
Sr. No.	Information Sought	Our Reply
	On March 24 2020, the Prime Minister addressed the nation on "vital aspects relating to the menace of COVID-19" where he said, "Keeping in mind health sector experts and experiences of other countries, the nation is about to take a very important decision today. From 12 undingth today the entire country shall go under complete lockdownthis lockdown in the country will be for 21 days. The next 21 days are of great importance for us. As per health experts, a period of at least 21 days is critical to break the infection cycle of Coronavirus."	
	Based on Section 2(F) of the RTI Act 2005 where information means material in any form including records, documents, memos, emails, opinions,	
3	advices, circulars, press releases, orders, logbooks reports, papers, models, data material in electronic form that may be held by this office, you are requested to share information on the following aspects:	B C B
a.	Please state whether or not this office/any other relevant authority delegated by this office had discussed the issue of lockdown, planning and its impact with the Prime Minister/Prime M	We do not have any information to provide.
b.	If so, kindly share information in the form of copies of the communication or recommendation(s) made by this office/relevant authority delegated by this office to the PMPMO/relevant authorities with regards to the lockdown and its impact or any other aspect.	We do not have any information to provide.
C.	Please state whether or not this office was informed/made aware by the PM/PMO/relevant authorities about this decision to enforce a nationwide lockdown	We do not have any information to provide.



To state administrations now.

CMs/Govs from Assam, Delhi, Punjab, Gujarat, UP, DONER (centre's bridge to North East) all of them had nothing to show they knew.

*UP CMO threw our application out when it was asked about its own prep and info.





Remember migrant workers crisis?

Over 1 crore workers had to return home post lockdown.

<u>@LabourMinistry</u> could not produce ONE DOCUMENT to show it had given any suggestions/foreseen the crisis/provided means to avert it - before the lockdown came.

.@NITIAayog's @RajivKumar1 told my colleague Nidhi Rai that @narendramodi 'consulted everyone' before lockdown.

Proof?

Well even NiTi Aayog's own documents don't support what Rajiv Kumar is saying.

We asked them TWICE.

Four days before the #lockdown - PM met CMs.

In the release issued afterwards, we found no mention of the word 'lockdown'. When we asked PMO if the topic was even broached, no information was provided. <u>@HMOIndia</u> asked us to see the press release again.

From Jan to March 2020, I located many bold pronouncements by Modi govt.

It was claimed India had adequate PPEs, isolation beds, masks. Then, on Feb 22, 2020 - 2 days before Trump arrived, @drharshvardhan claimed India had 'stalled' entry of coronavirus.

We met many citizens - from a young project manager whose both parents tested positive in April & a nurse who became jobless and was nabbed by police - who were desperate.

They were looking to their government.

Found it absent.

India suffered - whichever way you see.

Without lockdown, would suffering have been more? We don't know.

To be fair, few govts world over did well against the virus.

Q remains - why did India dive into something MINUS it's best & relevant experts on board?

Our digital documentary is out now.

@BBCHindi: https://t.co/W2bwjcZn8B

@bbcnewsmarathi: https://t.co/kGrilse7C4

@bbcnewsgujarati: https://t.co/XVkxMsvy5F

Hindi Text:

https://t.co/9HNKJnvmyx

https://t.co/IFpnXr4IL7

Marathi Text:

https://t.co/g9990wX6DE

And yes - you must know this.

We requested the Modi Govt to put its point of view forward and waited for <a>@PrakashJavdekar <a>@MIB_India for OVER THREE FULL WEEKS.

1 मार्च 2021 को हमने सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्रालय को संपर्क किया ताकि इस ख़बर पर वो सरकार का पक्ष रख सकें. लेकिन अभी तक न तो मंत्री प्रकाश जावड़ेकर और न ही सचिव अमित खरे ने इंटरव्यू के लिए अपनी सहमति दी है.

On March 1, 2021 we reached out to the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting so that they could put the government's viewpoint on this story forward. However so far neither the minister, Prakash Javadekar nor the Secretary, Amit Khare have agreed to be interviewed.

Here's the story on other outlets:

@bbcnewspunjabi: https://t.co/I7SbWS7Quw

@bbctamil: https://t.co/87TJo61GTI

And now, investigation into @narendramodi government's #lockdown planning goes global. Please watch■■



Sorry - here's the concluding part.

