Twitter Thread by Manasa Manjunath



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1. The entire world is looking at #India ‘s comparatively low #COVID19 numbers with suspicion. Having lived in #Germany & been to #India last month, here’s a thread of my personal experience and why #India is doing better despite higher population density.

2. Let’s start with how international arrivals are handled. Before flying to #India self-declaration form should be filled out online & Aarogya Setu app installed. #Bengaluru further required Apthamitra & Quarantine watch apps. COVID -ve result is required to reduce quarantine.

3. We(husband & I) both took RT-PCR test 2days before flying & took a hard copy of our -ve certificates. During check in at the #Frankfurt airport our self-declaration forms were checked & phones too to ensure we had installed the required apps. Our contact details were noted.

4. While flying out all restaurants except McDonalds were closed in #Frankfurt airport. Only bakeries were open. Safety enforcement was quite lax even as many lined up at the test center at the airport. There were few hand sanitising stations & no one to enforce mask wearing...

5. & social distancing. Infact, no one at the ticketing office had a mask on. Other than the check-in, there were no other new protocols for international fliers. We went through immigration & boarded just as normal. We flew through #Dubai & the flight to Dubai was mostly empty.

6. On landing in #Dubai passengers travelling to #India were again checked for the self-declaration form, apps & details again noted. Flight to #Bengaluru was full! When we arrived in Bengaluru there was an airport official immediately outside the plane monitoring everyone.

7. We were asked to form 2 lines with ample social distancing. We walked up to 2 thermal screening stations where all incoming passengers were screened. Then our individual temperatures & oxygen levels were noted. Next our #COVID19 -ve tests & self-declarations were collected

8. All this before immigration. After immigration & baggage collection just before we exited, our passports were checked again and we were asked to quarantine 7days at home. Hand sanitising stations were there at 100-200m intervals throughout the airport. Each 1 we tested worked

9. Contrast this with #Germany , Germany also requires a self-declaration form be filled out before flying. COVID -ve certificates became mandatory only this Monday. At check-in our self-declaration form was checked. Plenty of hand sanitising stations right from entry to boarding

10. Immigration & boarding were as usual. We had a direct flight to #Frankfurt this time & the flight was packed. When we arrived in Frankfurt there was no monitoring of the arrivals for social distancing/otherwise. No thermal or any other kind of screening of passengers.

11. At the immigration I was asked to show my self-declaration. My husband wasn't asked for even that. Apart from that there were no other #COVID19 protocols in place. I don't remember seeing a single hand sanitising station from the plane till immigration.

12. There was 1 hand sanitising station immediately after immigration. Between immigration & baggage claim there were some (I didn't see more than 4/5) hand sanitising stations positioned randomly. At baggage claim there were 2 hand sanitising stations for 5 baggage carousels

13. 1 of them didn't even work. This wouldn't be alarming if #Frankfurt were a small airport. But it is #Germany 's biggest & the international hub for #Lufthansa . The #COVID19 protocols except for closing restaurants & duty free and adding some hand sanitising stations is lax.

14. Let's talk about public behaviour. Everywhere I went in #Bengaluru (after quarantining at home for a week) people wore masks in public - in shops, on roads, even people riding bikes & in their own cars. Police on the roads & store employees also enforced mask wearing.

15. Some took off their masks in malls for a picture but they came right back on after. #Malleswaram 8th cross market was the only place where the mask wearing was shoddy with roadside vendors mostly just wearing it around their necks. Perhaps to pull up quickly when police came.

16. In #Stuttgart until December masks were worn only inside shops. Most people on the roads walked around with their masks adorning their elbows and no social distancing in sight. Can't comment on present situation as we've been quarantining at home and are yet to step out.

17. All shops on #MGRoad #BrigadeRoad & #CommercialStreet strictly monitored their customers. Temperatures were checked & hands must be sanitised before entering. Some even noted down contact details. Most shops in malls & otherwise also required hand sanitisation on entry.

18. Many even had a limit on the number of customers allowed inside. Even the small stores in #Malleswaram 8th cross market provided hand sanitisers & enforced mask wearing although there were no temperature checks or restriction on the numbers inside the stores.

19. Until December in #Stuttgart only supermarkets & some stores had hand sanitisers at the entry but use wasn't mandatory or monitored. In a couple of cases the sanitisers were even empty or out of function. Customer numbers were limited only when lockdown first lifted in June.

20. #India is often criticized & ridiculed in international media and among westerners as a poor third world country. But my personal experience showed that not only has the #Indian govt put in place strict #COVID19 protocols but the public is just as vigilant and cooperative.