





## Wants firms to deter staff from taking smoke breaks as they are 'social-distancing disruptors'

The central government has asked companies to avoid the central air conditioning system at workplaces, develop special leave policy for the Covid-19 pandemic and rearrange work set-up. These are a part of the safety guidelines to be followed during the pandemic.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Harsh Vardhan released the 'Covid-19 safe workplace guidelines for industry and establishment' framed by the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), which has put forth a series of measures in a bid to reduce the impact of Covid-19 on businesses.

"Every person (with or without symptoms) in the workplace should be considered a potential source of infection and all planning has to be geared with this in mind. All the risk factors, including those associated with various worksites and the tasks workers perform at those sites, must be taken into account," according to the 'general principles' of the guidelines.

The strategy document calls for a structural modification in the workplace, which includes installation of physical barriers such as clear glass, or other suitable partition, between workstations as well as deterring employees from taking "cigarette breaks as they



The ESIC has asked companies to come up with a business continuity plan in case of an outbreak of Covid-19 at workplaces or in the community where workers live. Here are a few suggestions:

- Be prepared to change business practices to maintain critical operations
- Plan for interrupted supply chains or delayed deliveries
- Plan on how to continue essential business functions in case you experience higher absenteeism
- Prepare to institute flexible workplace and leave policies
- Cross-train employees to perform essential functions

are social-distancing disruptors”.

While demanding more outdoor air ventilation, it said companies should avoid central air conditioning and instead use "individual air conditioners with HEPA filters when absolutely necessary".

“Encourage workers with symptoms of Covid-19 to inform their supervisor and stay at home and seek medical attention. Promote the message that workers should stay at home even if they have mild symptoms. Allow workers to stay at home to look after family members with

Covid-19 and to self-monitor," the ESIC's guidelines stated.

The guidelines said the human resource policy of companies should be accommodative and should "reflect the core concern for safety of all", while adding that health cover should be provided to all — be it through the ESIC or a private mediclaim policy.

The ESIC has asked establishments to cancel all non-essential meetings and move to digital mode for it. "If possible, hold meeting in open spaces," it said, adding that non-essential travel should also be discontinued. The

guidelines talk about disallowing employees from going to the cafeteria and encouraging them to carry their own food and eat at their desks.

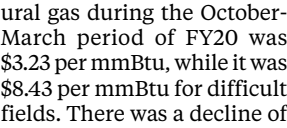
“Arrange transportation of employees from home to work, if possible... Encourage workers to avoid public transport and walk or cycle to work,” it added.

The guidelines ask companies to do a risk assessment for work-related exposure to Covid-19 and to classify workers depending upon their exposure to risk, along with firming up a plan to deal with sickness at the workplace.

September period.

In a huge setback to producers like Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India (OIL), the central government on Wednesday cut the price of domestic natural gas to \$1.79 per million metric British thermal unit (mmBtu) for the October-March period of the current financial year, down 25 per cent from \$2.39 permmBtu in the April-

The government also reduced the ceiling price for gas produced from deepwater, ultra-deepwater and high pressure, and high-temperature areas by 28 per cent to \$4.06 per mmBtu for the period under review, as compared to \$5.61 per mmBtu during April-September. The current prices are the lowest since the new pricing system was implemented in November 2014.



45 per cent and 52 per cent, respectively, in one year. Though not a positive sign for producers, dip in natural gas prices may help the fertilizers, electricity, CNG sectors and consumers with piped gas connections.

This comes at a time when a committee with representatives ONGC, OIL, GAIL and the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC) are expected to come out with a report on setting a floor price

for natural gas. The report is expected to be submitted before the ministry of petroleum and natural gas in a fortnight and if it is accepted, the ministry is expected to move a Cabinet note for setting a floor price.

Natural gas prices are revised every six months in India and are based on a formula that is a weighted average of global benchmarks like Henry Hub, Alberta gas, NBP and Russian gas.

## ICICI, HDFC Bank announce sops ahead of festive season



**Aditya Puri, MD and CEO of HDFC Bank, said online businesses are seeing good growth**

At a time when most sectors in the economy are struggling because of the Covid-induced slowdown, the country's largest private sector lender, HDFC Bank, has said that its business is back to pre-Covid levels and it sees a great future because it has managed to build a strong balance sheet.

If you talk to the automobile industry, steel industry, FMCG industry, see semi-urban India, rural India, motorcycle segment, gold loan segment, tractor segment, and online market places, the growth is pretty good. However, there are also some sectors that will take a little longer, said Aditya Puri, managing director and chief executive officer of HDFC Bank.

We are confident about the future. We have achieved pre-Covid levels. And in a few segments, we will exceed the pre-Covid levels, Puri added.

Echoing this sentiment, Anup Bagchi, executive director of ICICI Bank, said as far as the bank's customers are

are concerned, the overall spends are at 90 per cent of pre-Covid levels, and if adjusted for travel and tourism it was above pre-Covid levels in September. The e-commerce segment is seeing around 130-140 per cent spends of the pre-Covid levels. And, the bank is expecting 40-45 per cent jump in expenditure during the festive season thanks to pent-up demand. Normally, the bank sees around 30 per cent business growth during the season.

Both the banks have announced sops for customers aimed not only at reviving demand and credit growth, but at improving top lines of merchants and partners.

These include offers on expenditure, typically done

and others. The bank is also offering attractive interest rate on home loans, lower processing fees, tailor made equated monthly installments (EMIs) on auto loans, no cost EMI on consumer finance loans.

"The festive offers are available for retail consumers as well as business customers with discounts on processing fee on loans, reduced EMIs, gift vouchers and more benefits. The bank has tied up with leading brands to present these offers to its customers," ICICI Bank said.

Parag Rao, country head – payment business and merchant acquiring services at HDFC Bank, said, “Consumers have held back on purchases during the lockdown and there is a lot of pent-up demand that has built up in the system. In the past 2-3 months we have seen renewed customer interest and buying patterns. We see this continuing through the festive season as well.”

HDFC Bank is expecting to do better than the previous festive season. Last year, disbursed its highest ever two-wheeler loans through 'Festive Treats'. It also disbursed record amount of personal loans, and saw highest spends through debit, credit cards. "This year, we believe, that it will be bigger and better because we have more partners and brands," Rao said.

Last year, a lot of business for the bank was generated by walk-ins at branches. This year, however, customers have shifted online.

A couple of days ago, the country's largest lender, State Bank of India (SBI), came out with its festive offers wherein it waived processing fee for customers applying for car, personal and gold loans through digital banking platform YONO.

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**NOTICE**

Pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company is scheduled to be held on Friday, November 6, 2020 to, inter-alia, consider and approve the Unaudited Standalone and Consolidated Financial Results of the Company for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter ended 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2020.

The said notice may be accessed on the Company's website [www.bosch.in](http://www.bosch.in) under "Shareholder Information" section and may also be accessed on the websites of the Stock Exchanges at [www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com) and [www.nseindia.com](http://www.nseindia.com).

For Bosch Limited  
Rajesh Parte  
Company Secretary & Compliance Officer

Place: Bengaluru  
Date: 30.09.2020