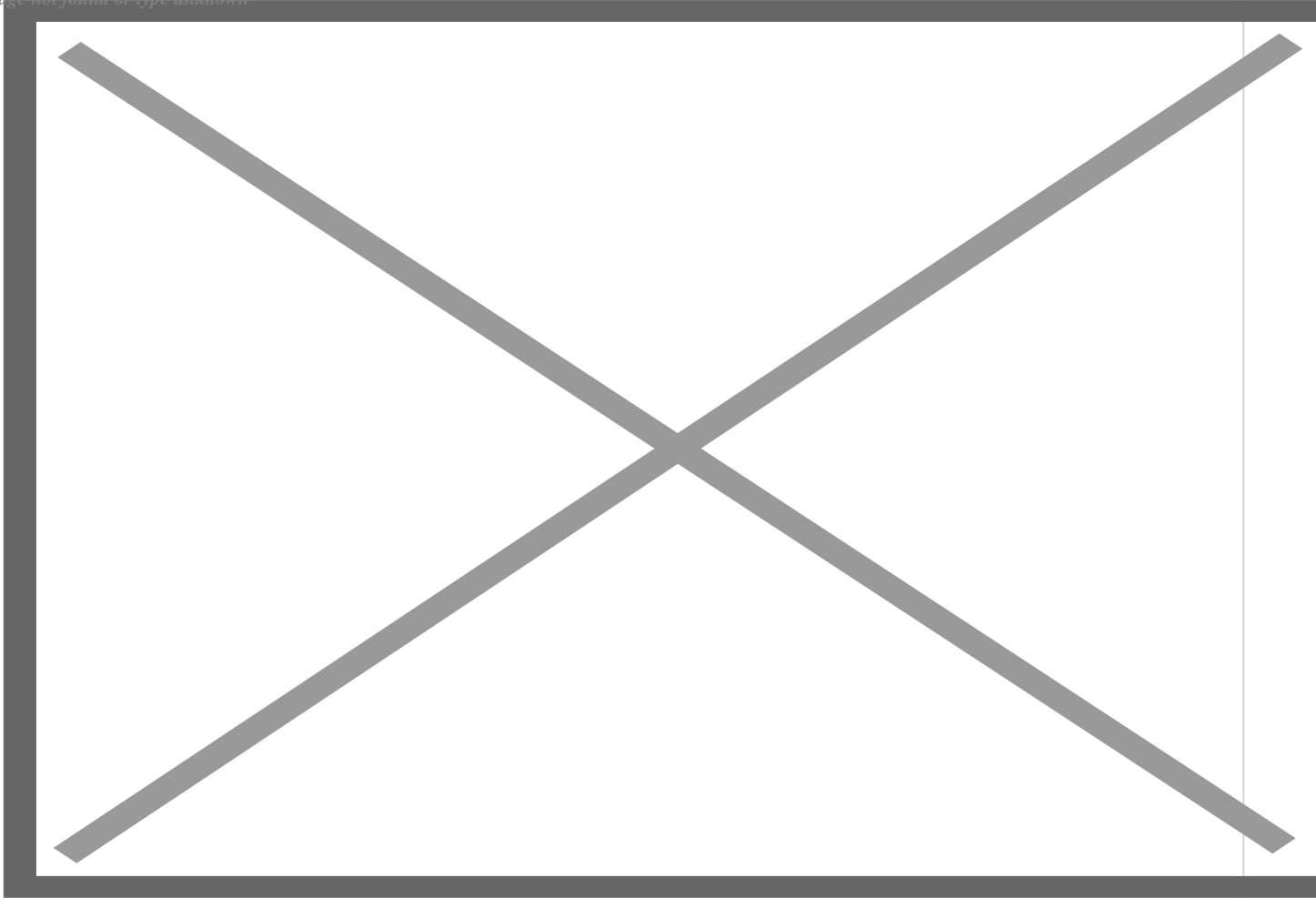


U.S. to restrict travel from India to limit COVID-19 spread

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Washington, May 1 (RHC)-- The United States will restrict travel from India beginning May 4th, the White House said on Friday, citing a devastating rise in COVID-19 cases in the country and the emergence of potentially dangerous variants of the coronavirus.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said President Joe Biden's administration made the determination on the advice of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The policy means most non-U.S. citizens who have been in India within the last 14 days are not eligible to travel to the United States. Permanent U.S. residents and family members and some other non-US citizens are permitted to return to the United States under the order.

With 386,452 new cases, India now has reported more than 18.7 million cases since the pandemic began, second only to the United States. India's health ministry on Friday also reported 3,498 deaths in the last 24 hours, bringing the total to 208,330. Experts believe both figures are an undercount, but it is unclear by how much.

The U.S. action comes days after Biden spoke with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi about the growing health crisis in his country and pledged to immediately send assistance.

The U.S. has already moved to send therapeutics, rapid virus tests and oxygen to India, along with some materials needed for that country to boost its domestic production of COVID-19 vaccines. Additionally, a CDC team of public health experts was expected to soon be on the ground in India to help health officials there move to slow the spread of the virus.

"We as a country have made a commitment to the people of India to support them," Vice President Kamala Harris, who is of Indian descent, said on Friday. "And we've made already a commitment in terms of a dollar amount that will go to PPE and a number of other things," she said. "But it is tragic" she added, "And, you know, my prayers go to the people on the suffering, the blatant suffering that is happening."

The White House waited on the CDC recommendation before moving to restrict travel, noting that the US already requires negative tests and quarantines for all international travellers.

Other restrictions are in place on travel from China, Iran, the European Union, the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, Brazil and South Africa, which are or have been hotspots for the coronavirus.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/noticias/internacionales/255893-us-to-restrict-travel-from-india-to-limit-covid-19-spread>



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