

## Coronavirus impact: Markets in Maharashtra in shutdown mode

Several markets in Maharashtra will remain shut for the next three days. The Federation of Trade Associations of Pune (FTAP) has decided to keep all markets in Pune shut for the next three days to reduce or slow down the impact of the Coronavirus outbreak. Fattchchand Ranka, president, FTAP, said that barring essential commodities such as foodgrains and vegetables and medicines, all other shops including jewellers, hosiery, clothes, automobiles, plywood, timber, stainless steel, non ferrous, metal, plastic, paper, electric and electronics, machinery and welding, computers, toys, watches, cycles, in different parts of Pune will remain closed. This means nearly 40,000 shops in the city will remain shut till March 19. Ranka said that a review shall be taken on March 19 and if necessary, the traders will take steps in the interests of the citizens. Tulsibaug- another well known street market in the city has also been shut for three days in keeping with the directives of the district collector to avoid over-crowding. FTAP has some 82 different trade associations under its wing. The Pune APMC however shall continue to function normally. Market Committee Chief administrator BJ Deshmukh has already declared that all section of the Market Yard shall continue to function as usual. Popatlal Oswal, president, Pune Merchants Chamber said that wholesale markets for foodgrains, jaggery, pulses and which fall under the Essential Commodities shall remain open and function normally. Walchand Sancheti, former president, Pune Merchants Chamber said that the decision has been taken by the traders to avoid panic among citizens. Maharashtra State Agriculture Marketing Board (MSAMB) officials stated that both market committees and weekly farmer markets shall continue to function as usual. Maharashtra has some 110 weekly farmer markets in 12 cities which allow farmers to sell directly to consumers at designated spots. The local civic bodies here are expected to provide space to these markets while the MSAMB facilitates the farmers or Farmers Producers Companies to organise them. Meanwhile the Bombay Sugar Merchants Association has issued a statement urging consumers not to panic about sugar. The supply of sugar from Sangli, Kolhapur and other parts of Maharashtra sugar mills is sufficient and adequate. There is no shortage of sugar in the Mumbai APMC market, Mukesh Kuvediya, secretary, Bombay Sugar Merchants



Association said. The administration is taking sufficient measures to prevent the outbreak of Coronavirus in the market, he said. Meanwhile, the state government implemented Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code in Nagpur and Nashik. The aim is to prevent the spread of deadly virus. The Maharashtra government announced a Rs 45 crore to districts in the wake of coronavirus pandemic. The chief minister Uddhav Thackeray has allocated Rs 15 crore to the Konkan region, Rs 10 crore to Pune and Rs 5 crore each to Amravati, Nagpur, Aurangabad and Nashik.

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