

High level Group of Ministers reviews current status, and actions for prevention and management of COVID-19

Posted On: 11 MAR 2020 7:21PM by PIB Delhi

On the directions of the Hon. Prime Minister, a high level Group of Ministers (GOM) was constituted to review, monitor and evaluate the preparedness and measures taken regarding management of Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), in the country. A meeting of the GoM was held here today under the chairpersonship of Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare. Sh. Hardeep S. Puri, Minister of Civil Aviation, Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, Minister of External Affairs, Sh. Nityananda Rai, Minister of State for Home, Shri Mansukh Mandaviya, Minister of State (I/c), Ministry of Shipping, Chemicals and Fertilisers and Sh. Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Minister of State, Health & Family Welfare, members of the GOM, were present.

A presentation of the status of the COVID-19 was made to the GOM. The actions taken for prevention and management of COVID-19 in India were presented, which included information about the various travel advisories in view of the evolving global situation regarding COVID-19, including the additional two issued on 10th March, 2020. As a measure of prevention, it is reiterated that as per the Travel Advisory, passengers with travel history to China, Hong Kong, Republic of Korea, Japan, Italy, Thailand, Singapore, Iran, Malaysia, France, Spain and Germany should undergo self-imposed quarantine for a period of 14 days from the date of their arrival, and their employers should facilitate work-from-home for such employees during this period.

The meeting was attended by Secretaries and other senior officials of the relevant Ministries/Departments.

Ms. Preeti Sudan apprised the GoM that the States/UTs are advised to do rigorous IEC and make people aware about the precautions, symptoms and helpline numbers. The identification of additional quarantine facilities, development of isolation wards, training of health workers & doctors are also being undertaken by the States/UTs. Regular handholding, monitoring, advisories, guidelines etc. is being done with the States/UTs. She reiterated that the universal screening is being done for the travellers from 12 countries for all the flights from China, Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia, Nepal, Indonesia, Iran and Italy at the earmarked aero-bridges.

GoM undertook elaborate discussions on the various other precautionary measures which may be considered in the interest of the citizens of India. GoM expressed their satisfaction with the actions taken, preparedness and efforts put together by various Ministries/Departments and States/UTs to combat Novel Coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

Cabinet Secretary also took a meeting with Secretaries of the concerned Ministries, representatives from Army, ITBP, here today. It was decided that all States/UTs should be advised by MoHFW to invoke provisions of Section 2 of Epidemic Disease Act, 1897 so that all advisories being issued from time to time by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare/State/UTs are enforceable. Also, 83 passengers who arrived from Italy today are quarantined at the Army Facility at Manesar.

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(Release ID: 1606050)