

Dr Harsh Vardhan reviews status, actions and preparedness on COVID-19

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Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health and Family reviewed the status, actions taken by States\UTs, and their preparedness regarding prevention, containment and management of COVID-19, here today. Ms. Preeti Sudan, Secretary (HFW), Dr Balram Bhargava, DG (ICMR), Shri Arun Singhal, Spl. Secretary (H), Shri Sanjeeva Kumar, Spl. Secretary (H), DGHS; Shri G V V Sarma, Member Secretary (NDMA); Dr Randeep Guleria, Director, AIIMS; Dr Minakshi Bhardwaj, MS of Dr RML Hospital; Dr. Sujeet Singh, Director NCDC; Dr Raman Gangakhedkar, Scientist, ICMR; and officials of the Ministry were present during the meeting.

Dr Harsh Vardhan was apprised of the emerging international and national status on COVID-19, and the steps by Government of India and the states/UTs for prevention, containment and management of COVID-19. He reviewed the status and preparedness of the States/UTs in terms of quarantine facilities; isolation wards, adequacy of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), masks, testing kits etc. He also advised the states/UTs for maintaining hygiene and cleanliness in the hospitals and adhere to all laid down protocols for containment and management of COVID-19. He reviewed the steps taken by various States for social distancing in great detail. The measures taken for avoiding non-essential travel and mass gatherings was also reviewed by Dr Harsh Vardhan.

The Union Health Minister discussed the further measures to be taken for strengthening capacities of the states, mass awareness among the people for prevention through social distancing, work-from-home etc. Management of quarantine facilities was discussed in detail at the review meeting.

Outcomes of the discussion of the meeting held today shall be put up to the Group of Ministers (GOM) on COVID-19, at their meeting tomorrow.

Dr Harsh Vardhan has directed for scaling up capacity of the 24x7 Control Room Helpline (011-23978046) by adding more lines and additional human resource, to serve the queries on COVID19 through the Control Room.

In addition, as part of efforts of the Government to evacuate Indian citizens from COVID-19 affected countries, an Air India flight from Milan, Italy arrived in Delhi this morning carrying 218 evacuees. These evacuees are quarantined at the ITBP camp at Chhawla, as per protocol. In addition, the third batch of 236 evacuees from Iran has arrived today; they are being quarantined at the Army facility in Jaisalmer. They have already been tested prior to their departure from Iran. All are reported to be asymptomatic at present. Also, a total 265 passengers coming from COVID-19 affected countries have been quarantined at Trivandrum, Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bengaluru and Hyderabad.

As of now, 23 new cases have been detected since the last update. Of these, 17 are from Maharashtra, 2 from Telangana, 1 from Rajasthan and 3 from Kerala. Both deceased patients had pre-existing co-morbidities. Contract tracing of these cases is being rigorously pursued. So far, this has led to identification of more than 4000 contacts who have been put under surveillance.

The Buldana patient, who was in a private hospital and whose sample was taken and who died yesterday, has tested negative for COVID-19.

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