

# States/UTs empowered for management of COVID-19

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Government of India has taken a number of proactive and timely measures such as travel restrictions, universal screening of passengers at airports and seaports, suspension of visas and self-quarantine measures to effectively prevent, contain and manage COVID-19.

The identification of additional quarantine facilities, development of isolation wards, training of health workers & doctors, ensuring adequate equipments, PPEs, medicines, masks etc., are being strengthened further in all States and UTs.

Cabinet Secretary today reviewed preparedness and actions taken with Chief Secretaries of various States through a video conference. He emphasized on strengthening preventive and control measures with adequate number of isolation wards, need to enhance quarantine facilities and ensure that arrivals from the identified countries are quarantined as per the laid guidelines, and also reviewed the steps taken for mass awareness regarding COVID- 19.

To check the shortages and black-marketing, Government of India has declared masks and hand sanitizers as essential commodities under Essential Commodities Act up to June 30, 2020. Under the Essential Commodities Act, States can ask manufacturers to enhance their production capacity of these items, to make the supply chain smooth.

Few states have also utilised the enabling provision for infectious disease management as provided under Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897. Under the Act, the States may take, or require or empower any person to take some measures and by public notice prescribe such temporary regulations to be observed by the public.

Under the Disaster Management Act, the States/UTs can now draw funds from the State Disaster Response Fund, in addition to the funds from the state government and the NHM. Ministry of Home Affairs has issued detailed guidelines to States/UTs in this regard.

In addition, the network of labs equipped to test COVID-19 have been expanded to 52, in total.

Also, 12,29,363 passengers have been screened from 11,406 flights at the 30 designated airports. In addition, instructions to enforce quarantine for all incoming passengers as per the guidelines are being implemented.

There are 84 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the country, as of now. Of these, 10 have recovered and been discharged. Contact tracing of these cases has led to identification of more than 4000 contacts who have been put under surveillance. Efforts are on to identify further contacts of these cases.

It is reiterated that Indian nationals are strongly advised to avoid all non-essential travel abroad and refrain from travelling to countries reporting high cases and deaths as mentioned in our Travel Advisories. All incoming international passengers returning to India should self- monitor their health and follow the required DO's and DON'Ts as detailed by the Government.

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