

**Press Information Bureau
Government of India
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**

05-May-2020

GoM reviews current status, preparedness and actions for management of COVID-19

Dr. Harsh Vardhan emphasizes that use of technology is integral for the containment strategy for COVID-19

The 14th meeting of the high level Group of Ministers (GoM) on COVID-19 was held at Nirman Bhawan, here today, under the chairpersonship of Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare. Sh. Hardeep S. Puri, Minister of Civil Aviation, Dr. S. Jaishankar, Minister of External Affairs, Sh. Nityananda Rai, Minister of State for Home, and Sh. Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Minister of State, Health & Family Welfare were present, along with Sh. Bipin Rawat, Chief of Defence Staff and Union Home Secretary Sh. Ajay Kumar Bhalla.

A detailed presentation on the present status of COVID-19 cases globally and within the country was made to the GoM. The Group of Ministers (GoM) had in depth deliberation on containment strategy and management aspects of COVID-19, as well as the measures being taken by the Centre and various States. GoM was informed that all districts in the country have been divided into three categories i.e. Red Zone (130 Districts), Orange Zone (284 Districts) and Green Zone (319) Districts. The green category represents the districts which have not reported any case since last 21 days. States have been asked to follow and further strengthen their contingency plans to combat COVID-19 on the basis of classification of the districts. Several other measures about strengthening capacity of states including devoting adequate resources for creating Dedicated COVID-19 Hospitals, equipping the medical institutions with adequate number of PPEs, ventilators and other essential equipment etc., were also discussed in detail.

GoM was apprised that as of now the death rate is around 3.2% while recovery rate is more than 25%, which may be taken as a positive effect of the Lockdown in the country along with the cluster management & containment strategy. Various recommendations of Government of India for the containment zone management pertaining to indicators, root causes and action required are already shared with the States/UTs for better and effective management of COVID-19 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

GoM was also informed that genome sequencing of strains of the novel coronavirus isolated from patients in different parts of the country has been initiated.

The Empowered Group-3 looking after ensuring essential medical equipment such as PPEs, masks, ventilators etc., apprised the GoM regarding the adequacy and availability of PPEs, masks, ventilators, drugs and other essential equipment against the requirement. GoM was informed that domestic manufacturers have reached the production capacity of nearly 2.5 lakh PPEs per day and

about 2 lakhs N95 masks per day which is sufficient to meet the requirement of the country in near future. In addition, manufacturing of ventilators by domestic manufacturers has also been started and orders have been placed. Steps have been taken to maintain the quality norms for PPEs, masks and ventilators. Adequate quantity of oxygen cylinders is also being procured. GoM highlighted the need for ensuring that stringent measures of quality control were ensured for PPEs, mask, ventilators etc. Random batch sampling for ensuring compliance and adherence to the quality standards laid down were also stressed upon by the GoM.

Union Home Secretary Sh. Ajay Kumar Bhalla, Chairman of Empowered Group -11 informed the GoM that they are monitoring and supervising the strategic issues arriving out of the measures taken so far in containing the pandemic. He also apprised the GoM that at different stages during lockdown, decisions on graded liberalisation were taken after consultations with stakeholders, cutting across various ministries and other Empowered Groups.

A presentation was made by Sh. Ajay Sawhney, Secretary (MeITY) and Chairman of Empowered Group-9, dealing with technology solutions and data management for combatting COVID-19. Various aspects pertaining to the performance, impact and benefits of Arogya-Setu application were discussed during the meeting. It was informed close to 9 crore users had downloaded the app as on 4th May, 2020. People have informed about their health status on the application which has helped in tracing those suffering with any symptoms for COVID-19 containment. GoM was also informed that mechanism have also been devised to reach out to the people who have landline or featured phones through Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) in local languages for better results. GoM expressed satisfaction over the work done by the Ministries and the Empowered Groups.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan stated that the use of technology is integral for the containment strategy and is helping the States to manage the COVID-19 in a more effective manner.

GoM was also informed that under Prime Minister Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP) as on 4th May, 2020, the following progress is made:

- Under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, 29.38 lakh MT has been distributed to 58.77 crore beneficiaries by 36 States/UTs as first month (April) entitlement and 5.82 lakh MT has been distributed to 11.63 crore beneficiaries by 20 States/UTs as second month (May) entitlement so far. In total, 66.08 lakh MT food grain has been lifted by 36 States/UTs from Food Corporation of India so far.
- An amount of Rs. 6868.74 crore has been transferred to Ujjawala (PMUY) beneficiaries. 4.98 crore PMUY cylinders have been booked and 4.72 crore have been delivered during April-May, 2020.
- Financial sanction for 8.18 crore beneficiaries' (Farmers) for Rs. 2000/- each, has been generated during 20-21 and Rs. 16,364 crore have been released under DBT Cash Transfers to farmers during 20-21.
- As support for Senior citizens, Widows and Divyang, first instalment of funds @Rs.500 per beneficiary has been released for all 2.812 crore accounts of eligible beneficiaries, amounting to Rs. 1405 crore. The next instalment of Rs. 500 will go in second fortnight.

- As on date, 20.05 crore women Pradhan Mantri Jan DhanYojana accounts are being credited @Rs. 500 per account as cash transfers under PMGKP.
- 9.27 lakh members of EPFO had availed the facility of online withdrawal amounting to Rs. 2895 crores.

Ms. Preeti Sudan, Secretary (HFW), Sh. Rajesh Bhushan, OSD/Secretary (HFW), Sh. H. Vardhan Shringla, Secretary (Foreign Affairs), Sh. Ravi Capoor, Secretary (Textiles), Sh Pradeep Singh Kharola, Secretary (Civil Aviation), Sh. P. D. Vaghela, Secretary (Pharmaceuticals), Sh. AnupWadhawan, Secretary (Commerce), Sh. Anshu Prakash, Secretary (Telecom), Prof. Balram Bhargava, DG-ICMR, Sh. Anil Malik, Addl. Secy (MHA), Dr. Neeta Verma, DG-NIC, Lt. Gen. Anup Banerji, DG-AFMS, Dr. Rajiv Garg, DGHS, Sh. Lav Agarwal, JS (MoHFW) and along with other officials from M/O Pharma, I&B, Textiles, NIC, DGCAwere also present.

For all authentic & updated information on COVID-19 related technical issues, guidelines & advisories please regularly visit: <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/>.

Technical queries related to COVID-19 may be emailed at technicalquery.covid19@gov.in and other queries on ncov2019@gov.in and via tweets to @CovidIndiaSeva.

In case of any queries on COVID-19, please call at Ministry of Health & Family Welfare helpline no. : +91-11-23978046 or 1075 (Toll-free). List of helpline numbers of States/UTs on COVID-19 is also available at <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/coronavirushelplinenumber.pdf> .