

# Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi continues to monitor the MPox situation in view of its declaration as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern by WHO

## Dr. P.K. Mishra, Principal Secretary to Prime Minister chairs high level meeting to review preparedness of Mpox

### Advises enhanced surveillance for prompt detection

### Testing Labs to be in state of readiness

### Awareness campaign to be taken up regarding preventive public health measures against the disease

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Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has been continuously monitoring the MPox situation.

As advised by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Dr. P. K. Mishra, Principal Secretary to Prime Minister, chaired a high-level meeting to review the status of preparedness for Mpox in the country and related public health measures.

It may be noted that the World Health Organization (WHO) has again declared Mpox Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2024 in view of its prevalence and spread across many parts of Africa. As per an earlier statement from WHO, globally since 2022 from 116 countries, 99,176 cases and 208 deaths had been reported due to Mpox. Subsequently, they have reported that Mpox cases have been steadily increasing in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Last year, the reported cases increased significantly, and already the number of cases reported so far this year has exceeded last year's total, with more than 15, 600 cases and 537 deaths. Since the 2022 declaration of Public Health Emergency of International Concern by WHO, 30 cases were reported in India. The last case of Mpox was detected in March 2024.

The high-level meeting was briefed that as of now, there is no reported case of Mpox in the country. As per

the present assessment, the risk of a large outbreak with sustained transmission is low.

Principal Secretary to Prime Minister was informed that Mpox infections are generally self-limiting lasting between 2-4 weeks; Mpox patients usually recover with supportive medical care and management. Mpox transmission happens through prolonged and close contact with an infected patient. It happens largely through the sexual route, direct contact with body/lesion fluid of the patient, or through the contaminated clothing/linen of an infected person.

It was informed by the Health Secretary that the following steps have already been taken in the last one week:

- A meeting of experts was convened by the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) on 12<sup>th</sup> August, 2024 to assess the risk for India. A Communicable Disease (CD) Alert on Mpox issued earlier by the NCDC is being updated to capture the newer developments. Sensitization of the health teams at International Airports (Ports of Entry) has been undertaken.

It was also informed that today morning, a Video Conference was convened by the Director General Health Services (DGHS) with more than 200 participants. The health authorities at state level including the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) units in the States and at the Ports of Entry etc. were sensitized in this regard.

Principal Secretary to Prime Minister, Dr. P. K. Mishra directed that surveillance be enhanced and effective measures be taken for prompt detection of cases. He further directed that the testing laboratories network should be geared up for early diagnosis. Presently 32 labs are equipped for testing.

Dr P.K. Mishra directed that the protocols for prevention and treatment of the disease may be disseminated on a large scale. He further emphasised an awareness campaign amongst the healthcare providers regarding the signs and symptoms of the disease and the need for timely notification to the surveillance system.

The meeting was attended by Dr. V.K. Paul, Member NITI, Shri Apurva Chandra, Secretary (Health & Family Welfare), Dr Rajiv Bahl, Secretary (Health Research), Shri Krishna S Vatsa, Member Secretary (National Disaster Management Authority), Shri Sanjay Jaju, Secretary (Information & Broadcasting) and Shri Govind Mohan, Home Secretary designate, along with officers of other ministries.

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