

Measures to Control Spread of Novel Coronavirus

Posted On: 11 FEB 2020 3:06PM by PIB Delhi

Government has taken note of the outbreak of Novel Coronavirus in China and has taken measures to monitor the situation in India. As of now, three confirmed cases of novel Coronavirus disease have been reported from Kerala. All the cases are clinically stable.

Screening of passengers has been initiated at all 21 airports. Universal screening has been made mandatory for all flights from China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Thailand. Instructions have been issued to park these flights at earmarked aero-bridges to facilitate screening. Screening has also been initiated at all major sea ports and minor ports wherein crew and passengers from China are expected. Besides this, screening has been initiated in border crossings.

First Travel advisory was issued on 17th January 2020 and as situation is evolving, the travel advisories are accordingly getting revised. Extant advisories provide that:

- i. Existing visas (including eVisa already issued) are no longer valid for any foreign national travelling from China to India.
- ii. People having compelling reasons to visit India may contact Indian Embassy in Beijing or Indian Consulates in Shanghai or Guangzhou.
- iii. People have already been advised to refrain from travel to China through an earlier advisory. People traveling to China henceforth will be quarantined on return.

The government has conducted training for the officers of ports, airports and border crossing points and has sensitized them on management of higher risk pathogens such as Ebola and Coronavirus. Thermal scanners and hand held thermal detectors have been placed at 21 airports. Additional doctors, nurses and paramedic staff have been deployed at the airports for smooth, effective and convenient screening of passengers.

Guidelines on clinical management, infection prevention control, surveillance and sampling etc. have been disseminated to the States and also made available on the website of the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. An information pamphlet providing relevant information is also provided to the passengers. In-flight announcements are being made and self-declaration forms are being filled up by all passengers. Signages have been displayed at prominent locations at airports and ports. The risk is communicated through media including social media.

A group of ministers consisting of Minister of External Affairs, Minister of Civil Aviation, Minister of State of Home Affairs, Minister of State of Health and Family welfare, Minister of State of Shipping under the chairmanship of Union Health Minister has been constituted and the first meeting held on 03.02.2020. Cabinet Secretary has taken multiple meetings with all related Ministries such as Health, Defense, MEA, Civil Aviation, Home, Textiles, Pharma, Commerce and other officials including with State Chief Secretaries. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is constantly reviewing the evolving scenario. Video Conferences has been held with Chief Secretaries and also with Secretaries, Health of the States almost every alternate day.

Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) has been geared up to track and follow up passengers coming from China, Hong Kong, Thailand and Singapore. National Institute of Virology, Pune is the nodal Laboratory for testing high risk pathogens. 14 other laboratories are also testing samples. Sufficient stock of Personal Protective Equipments (PPE) is maintained. A 24x7 Control Room has been activated. Government is monitoring the situation closely.

The Minister of State (Health and Family Welfare), ShAshwini Kumar Choubey stated this in a

written reply in the Rajya Sabha here today.

MV

(Release ID: 1602762)