

Effect of Coronavirus Outbreak and Precautions taken

Posted On: 11 FEB 2020 2:57PM 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.

In view of the fact that large number of cases were recorded in Wuhan City of Hubei province in China, Government of India initiated steps to evacuate students and professionals working in Hubei province. Accordingly, 645 persons were evacuated and have been kept in two Quarantine Centres, [(243 kept at Manesar (DG, AFMS) and 402 Chawla Camp (ITBP)]. The samples collected from all evacuees have tested negative. All evacuees are being monitored and are clinically stable.

As of now, three confirmed cases of novel Coronavirus disease have been reported from Kerala. All these cases have been hospitalized, receiving treatment and are also reported to be 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.

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.

World Health Organization (WHO) has issued various guidelines pertaining to nCoV outbreak. All guidelines are available on the website of WHO.

Ministry has issued guidelines to support states on Surveillance and contact tracing, Surveillance at Points of Entry, Laboratory samples collection, packaging and transport, Clinical management protocol and Infection prevention and control in healthcare facilities.

Screening of passengers has been initiated in 21 airports, all major and minor seaports and borders crossing and integrated check posts. 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.

Gram Sabhas have been conducted in villages adjoining the borders to create awareness amongst people about the disease and precautions to be taken in collaboration with Panchayati Raj Ministry.

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.

Risk communication material has been prepared and is widely disseminated even in regional languages through states. Required awareness in community is ensured through technical briefings by experts in radio and Television. Daily Press briefing is being held by Ministry of Health and information is being shared through social media. A 24x7 Control Room is operational (011-

23978046).

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.

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.

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(Release ID: 1602756)