

# Ex-Servicemen play their part in providing succour to people in their fight against COVID-19

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As the nation continues to battle Coronavirus (COVID-19), the Ex-Servicemen (ESM) belonging to Army, Navy and Air Force are assisting the civil administration and providing their services voluntarily and selflessly.

It is being coordinated by Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare (DESW), Ministry of Defence (MoD). The Veterans are being contacted through the Kendriya Sainik Board and a network of 32 Rajya Sainik Boards at state level and 403 Zila Sainik Board all over the country.

## **Karnataka**

Brig Ravi Munniswamy (Retd) who is coordinating the effort across Karnataka is spearheading a team of 45 veteran bicycle riders in Bengaluru, who through a WhatsApp group are providing medicine and essential supplies to old and infirm in the city. Besides, several Ex-Servicemen volunteers in Dharwad, Davanagere, Shivamogga, Hassan, Mysuru and Kodagu are assisting in distribution of food and lock-down management.

## **Andhra Pradesh**

Around 300 Ex-Servicemen volunteers are assisting the State Police in Andhra Pradesh. Some of the Ex-Servicemen associations like Tadepalligudem, West Godavari district association and 28 Air Defence Regiment ESM organization at Mangalagiri are distributing food and essential commodities among the poor. Shri Chaitanya ESM Association, Bheemunipatnam is assisting the Police in ensuring lock-down measures.

## **Uttar Pradesh**

According to Brig Ravi (Retd), the Zila Sainik Boards in 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh are assisting with a team of ESM in monitoring of ration distribution, community surveillance and running of community kitchen for the needy besides assisting the senior veteran ESM also. They have already identified and contacted 6,592 ESM from Army Medical Corps in the state and put them on standby for any contingency.

## **Punjab**

Brig Satinder Singh (Retd), Director Rajya Sainik Board, Punjab has informed that they have employed 4,200 Ex-Servicemen as Guardians of Governance who are present in every village of Punjab for data collection and community surveillance.

## **Chhattisgarh**

Air Cmde A N Kulkarni, VSM (Retd) who is coordinating the response in Chhattisgarh has informed that so far only a handful of ESM have been employed to provide assistance to State Police in Bilaspur, Janjgir and Korba.

## **North-East**

Brig Narain Dutt Joshi, SM (Retd) is ready with 300 ESM volunteers to assist in 19 Districts of Assam. Whereas Col Gautam Kumar Rai (Retd) at Shillong has 79 volunteers ready to assist the civil administration. Brig JP Tiwari (Retd) from Tripura has reported that the list of ESM volunteers has been shared with the State and district administration and they are on standby for any task assigned to them.

## **Jharkhand, Haryana, Uttarakhand**

Similarly Brig Pathak (Retd) from Jharkhand, Col Rahul Yadav (Retd) from Haryana and Brig KB Chand (Retd) from Uttarakhand have done the same in their respective states. At a time when entire nation is under lockdown, the response from retired personnel of Army, Navy and Air Force as well as volunteer community service by Ex-Servicemen association, is very praiseworthy.

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**ABB/SS/Nampi/KA/DK/Savvy/ADA**

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