

# Union Home Secretary reviewed the COVID-19 situation in NCT of Delhi

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Union Home Secretary, Shri Ajay Bhalla, as part of a regular process, reviewed the situation of COVID-19 in Delhi today. The meeting was also attended by Dr. V.K. Paul, Member, NITI Aayog, Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Director General, ICMR, Chief Secretary and other senior officers Government of NCT of Delhi (GNCTD) and Commissioner of Police, Delhi.

GNCTD made a presentation on the present situation of COVID-19 in Delhi, which is witnessing 3<sup>rd</sup> surge in cases. While the new COVID cases and total active cases are going up, the administration is focusing on testing, contact tracing and treatment. The recent surge in the number of active cases was attributed to the festival season, which has witnessed greater movement of people, accompanied by laxity in adhering to the basic principles of safe COVID behavior. The hospital bed situation was reported to be comfortable with 57% of the 15,789, dedicated beds being vacant. It was, however, highlighted both by GNCTD officials and Commissioner of Police, Delhi that there has been no let up in enforcement and awareness generation.

The strategy to contain spread of COVID-19 in Delhi, especially keeping in view the festival season and decreasing temperatures accompanied by rising pollution was discussed at length with representatives of MoHFW and the health experts who were present in the meeting. It was decided to concentrate efforts in certain key areas, such as targeted RT-PCR testing in sensitive and critical zones such as restaurants, market places, barber shops / salons, etc; gear up the availability of medical resources including beds, ICUs, and ventilators as a pre-emptive measure; ensure high degree of contact tracing and monitoring of quarantined contacts, so as to suppress and break the chain of transmission. It was also decided to enhance enforcement selectively, accompanied by greater awareness creation through targeted IEC (Information, Education and Communication) campaigns; and ensuring that all cases under home isolation were monitored and shifted to hospitals well in time, before any deterioration in their medical condition. It was also emphasized that the Metro travel should be carefully regulated, strictly in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) that has been issued in this regard.

Concluding the meeting, Home Secretary, while appreciating the efforts of GNCTD officials, emphasized that the strategies for containment of spread of COVID-19 in Delhi should be strictly enforced and implemented. He stressed the need for reaching out to the residents of Delhi to sensitize them about safe COVID behavior through RWAs, Mohalla and Market Committees, public announcement systems, message on police vehicles, etc. He also informed that the situation in Delhi would be reviewed again in the coming week, along with other districts of the National Capital Region (NCR).

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