

Union Health Secretary reviews the status of passengers coming from UK to India and found positive with 10 States/UTs where the flights from UK to India land

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Shri Rajesh Bhushan, Union Health Secretary, reviewed the status of passengers coming from UK to India and found positive in the States/UTs of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Goa, Punjab, Gujarat and Kerala and their response measures in a meeting held through Video Conferencing today, in the presence of DG, ICMR, Health Secretaries from the States/UT, NHM MD, Ms Arti Ahuja, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Health, Dr Sujeet Singh, Director, NCDC, and other senior health officials.

The Standard Operating Procedure issued by this Ministry on 22.12.2020 for Epidemiological Surveillance and Response in the context of new variant of SARS-CoV-2 virus detected in United Kingdom was discussed in detail in the meeting.

The States/UTs were advised to access the details of passengers from UK to India from the online portal AIR-SUVIDHA and Bureau of Immigration. States/UTs were also asked to send the samples of those found positive to the laboratories identified for genome sequencing.

The list of six identified Laboratories along with the contact details of their nodal officers was also shared with the states. the laboratories are: CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology New Delhi; CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad; DBT- Institute of Life Sciences, Bhubaneswar; DBT-InStem-NCBS, Bangalore; DBT-National Institute of Biomedical Genomics (NIBMG), Kalyani, West Bengal; ICMR- National Institute of Virology, Pune. The number of such designated labs would increase over time and their details would be shared with the States/UTs.

The concerns related to logistics etc raised by the states were clarified in the meeting. The states were also advised to co-ordinate with the respective Airport Health Offices (APHOs) and surveillance officials in their state in order to ensure adherence to the SOPs.

MV/SJ

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