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National Disaster Management Authority  
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Dated, the 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2020

To

All Chief Secretaries/UT Administrators

**Sub : Steps to be taken regarding Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

Sir/Madam,

You are aware that the number of infections of Coronavirus(COVID-19) has crossed 95,000 across the globe. We need to gear up the efforts to contain the transmission of the infections. In continuation of my d.o. letter dated 4.2.2020, I would like to state the following.

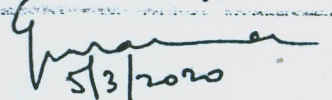
2. Your attention is drawn to the 'Containment Plan' brought out by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare with particular reference to cluster containment, which requires identification of containment zone and buffer zone around each epicenter.
3. While you may be aware of the regular meetings being taken by the Cabinet Secretary and the decisions taken by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare through regular Video Conferences, I am summarizing the important action points which need to be taken up by relevant agencies, without spreading panic:-
  - i) All States/UTs must step up sensitization trainings for first responders, especially on basis of dealing with biological emergency (involving all major first response stakeholders).
  - ii) Make people aware of the travel advisory being constantly updated by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Circulate public hygiene and awareness etiquette as well as Do's and Don'ts on social media outreach platforms.
  - iii) State should conduct tabletop discussions and exercises on isolation, Quarantine, infection control, confinement measures, mass screening mechanism, home isolation, amalgamation of Public Health and Law Enforcement drills, risk communication, surge capacity and networking as well as intersectoral coordination involving all stakeholders, public health and medical experts. Private Sector Health Service Providers must also be brought on board to enhance system-wide preparedness.
  - iv) If necessary to issue the directive to avoid public gathering in confined spaces as much as possible. Mass gatherings may be rescheduled or postponed and held after adequate risk assessment.

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- v) Widely propagate strategy of social distancing and personal hygiene. Awareness campaigns in schools, may be started immediately. A decision on temporary school closures may be taken by the State/UT administration after risk assessment.
- vi) Hospitals dealing with international patients and medical tourism are at potentially high risk. Hence adequate segregation mechanism for patients arriving or under treatment from these countries needs to be in place. Special care for the needs of the elderly is needed.
- vii) If the situation worsens, issue directives on work from home options for major corporates and offices. All international / national work related travel must be avoided unless absolutely necessary.
- viii) Psychosocial care helpline and SOP for panic prevention needs to be in place with help of expert agencies.
- ix) All States/UTs must ensure to take all adequate measures to maintain business continuity, essential services and avoid panic and spreading of rumours by having a clear communication strategy for interaction with the media.
- x) The DDMA's may be instructed to hold coordination meetings with credible NGOs and other civil society organisations, in order to see that the community cooperation is enhanced.

4. In view of the above, it is suggested that the Relief Commissioners/SDMAs and the District Disaster Management Agencies may be taken on board, so that concerted measures are taken to curtail the virus transmission.

Yours faithfully,



5/3/2020

(G V V Sarma)  
Member Secretary