

MHA issues fresh guidelines for Surveillance, Containment and Caution

By TIOL News Service

NEW DELHI, JAN 27, 2021: MINISTRY of Home Affairs (MHA) issued an Order today with Guidelines for Surveillance, Containment and Caution, which will be effective from February 1, 2021 and to remain in force upto February 28, 2021.

The main focus of the Guidelines is to consolidate the substantial gains that have been achieved against the spread of COVID-19 which is visible in the steady decline in number of active and new cases in the country over the last four months. It is, therefore, emphasised that to fully overcome the pandemic, there is need to maintain caution and to strictly follow the prescribed containment strategy focussed on surveillance, containment and strict observance of the guidelines/ SOPs issued by MHA and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW).

Surveillance and Containment

Containment Zones, if required, shall be carefully demarcated by the district authorities at the micro level, taking into consideration guidelines prescribed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) in this regard. Within the demarcated Containment Zones, containment measures, as prescribed by MoHFW shall be scrupulously followed.

Local district, police and municipal authorities shall be responsible to ensure that the prescribed Containment measures are strictly followed and State/ UT Governments shall ensure the accountability of the officers concerned in this regard.

COVID-Appropriate behavior

State/ UT Governments shall take all necessary measures to promote COVID-19 appropriate behaviour and ensure wearing of face masks, hand hygiene and social distancing.

National Directives for COVID-19 Management shall continue to be followed throughout the country, so as to enforce COVID-19 appropriate behavior.

Strict adherence to the prescribed SOPs

All activities have been permitted outside Containment Zones, except for the following, which will be subject to strict adherence of SOPs, as indicated below:

Social/ religious/ sports/ entertainment/ educational/ cultural/ religious gatherings have already been permitted upto a maximum of 50% of the hall capacity, with a ceiling of 200 persons in closed spaces; and keeping of the size of the ground/ space in view, in open spaces. Now such gatherings will be allowed subject to SOP of the State/ UT concerned.

Cinema halls and theatres have already been permitted upto 50% of seating capacity. Now they will be permitted to operate at higher seating capacity, for which a revised SOP will be issued by Ministry of Information & Broadcasting in consultation with MHA.

Swimming pools have already been permitted for use of sports persons. Now swimming pools will be permitted for use of all, for which a revised SOP will be issued by Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports (MoYA&S) in consultation with MHA.

Business to Business (B2B) exhibition halls have already been permitted. Now all types of exhibition halls will be permitted, for which a revised SOP will be issued by the Department of Commerce in consultation with MHA.

For further opening up of international air travel of passengers, Ministry of Civil Aviation (MOCA) may take a decision in consultation with Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) based on the assessment of the situation.

SOPs, as updated from time to time, have been prescribed for various activities. These include:Â movement by passenger trains; air travel; metro trains; schools; higher educational institutions; hotels and restaurants; shopping malls, multiplexes and entertainment parks; yoga centres and gymnasiums, etc.Â These SOPs shall be strictly enforced by the authorities concerned, who shall be responsible for their strict observance.Â

Local restrictions

There shall be no restriction on inter-State and intra-State movement of persons and goods including those for cross land-border trade under Treaties with neighbouring countries. No separate permission/ approval/ e-permit will be required for such movements.

Protection of vulnerable persons

Persons above 65 years of age, persons with co-morbidities, pregnant women, and children below the age of 10 years are advised to take necessary precautions.

Use of Aarogya Setu

The use of Aarogya Setu mobile App will continue to be encouraged.