KERALA INSISTS ON MANDATORY COVID TESTS FOR PRAVASI MALAYALEES FROM ABROAD

Thiruvananthapuram, June 17: Kerala Chief Minister, Shri Pinarayi Vijayan today announced that pre-flight Covid tests are mandatory for all those coming back to the State from overseas, irrespective of whether they are taking flights under the Vande Bharat mission or chartered flights arranged by various organisations. Private airlines are already insisting on Covid negative results before allowing passengers to fly back home.

Briefing the media, the Chief Minister said, "Right from the beginning of the Vande Bharat mission, we have been requesting the Central government that pavasies should come back to Kerala only after testing. The State had insisted on Covid tests for all, including for those who are flying back on chartered flights. Those flying by Spice Jet are already doing it. Covid test is mandatory and it's the same norm for all. It is not safe for the passengers to have a few infected people among them. If doing PCR test for passengers is difficult, let them do antibody tests. The True Nat testing is cheaper and gives results faster which is suitable for travellers. Government of India should make arrangements for testing through Embassies in countries where facilities for testing is not there. The airline companies can also work with the health department to facilitate the tests."

The Chief Minister added that it is really unfortunate that a misinformation campaign is being done and even a Central Minister is also a part of it. "Do not try to play politics using the health of the public during a disaster. Some attempts are being done to undermine our security when people are coming from other states."

"We welcome all pravasies to come back, whether they come from abroad or from other states, whether they are sick or not and will provide the necessary treatment. There is no change in our stance. At the same time, the government must be vigilant to prevent an outbreak. If we do not take adequate precautions, the spread of disease will be out of control. The Centre should explore the possibility of arranging separate flights for those infected. At present, 1.5% of the people who come here from abroad are Covid positive. When the number of passengers increases by more than 200,000, the number of Covid positive cases are likely to increase drastically and this can lead to community spread.

CM requests for extension of flights to Kerala to avoid multiple quarantines

Chief Minister, Shri Pinarayi Vijayan today demanded that long haul flights to major cities in India may be extended to an airport in Kerala to facilitate the pravasies from undergoing multiple quarantine in two places. He also requested for changes in quarantine rules to enable them to reach Kerala earlier.

The Chief Minister said, "People who come from countries that require more than ten hours of travel often have to travel to Delhi, Mumbai or Bangalore. There are plenty of travellers to Kerala on these flights. Considering this, the central government should direct the airlines to extend these flights to any airport in Kerala. Moreover, passengers who reach these places are quarantined there and when they come to Kerala, they should go to quarantine again. In such cases, special criteria should be established. If the flights cannot be extended to Kerala, the state is of the view that those who book their tickets to Kerala within five days of their arrival, should be permitted to travel home for further quarantine."

Large aeroplanes should be used for flying long distances over 10 hours and if Air India does not have enough aircraft, it should consider hiring aircraft from other companies.
 The CM also asked the central government to provide emergency financial assistance to the expatriate Indians who have lost their jobs following the Covid outbreak. "With the loss of jobs, they have also lost their social security in those countries".
 Minister of Health & Social Justice, Smt K K Shailaja; Revenue Minister, Shri E Chandrasekharan, and Chief Secretary, Dr Vishwas Mehta IAS, were also present for the briefing.

Kerala Covid-19 Tracker: 90 recoveries & 75 new cases today, 1,351 patients under treatment

Thiruvananthapuram, June 17: Chief Minister, Shri Pinarayi Vijayan has informed that 75 new cases of Covid-19 were confirmed in the State today even as 90 patients under treatment for the same has tested negative.
The Chief Minister also said that so far there have been 20 deaths in the State due to Covid and till yesterday, 277 Keralites outside the State have lost their lives to the virus. "This gives an indication that the situation is serious and we should do everything possible to avoid the spread of the virus."

24 patients from Palakkad district, 16 in Alappuzha district, 14 from Kozhikode district, 11 in Thrissur district, 10 from Thiruvananthapuram district, five in Pathanamthitta district, four from Kollam district, three in Kottayam district, two from Ernakulam and one in Kannur district, are those who have recovered from Coronavirus.

53 people who came back from other countries (Kuwait-14, Saudi Arabia-13, UAE-12, Qatar-4, Oman-4, Bahrain-3, Russia-2 & Kazakhstan-1) and 19 who returned from other states (Maharashtra-8, Delhi-5, Tamil Nadu-4, Andhra Pradesh-1 & Gujarat-1) are those who tested positive. Three have got infected through primary contact, one person each in Malappuram, Ernakulam and Kannur districts.

The district wise list of those infected are 14 people in Kollam district, 11 from Malappuram district, nine in Kasargod district, eight from Thrissur district, six each in Palakkad and Kozhikode districts, five from Ernakulam district, four each in Kottayam and Kannur districts, three each from Thiruvananthapuram and Wayanad districts, and one each in Pathanamthitta and Alappuzha districts.

So far, 2,697 people have been diagnosed with the disease in Kerala and 1,351 patients are still under treatment in different hospitals across the State.

1,25,307 persons are currently under surveillance in various districts of the state. Of these, 1,23,318 are under observation at their homes or institutional quarantine centres and 1,989 are under isolation in hospitals. 203 people were admitted to the hospital today.

5,876 samples were tested today. So far, 1,22,446 samples have been sent for testing and the results of 3,019 samples are awaited. As part of Sentinel Surveillance, 33,559 samples were collected from high-risk priority groups and 32,300 samples were negative.

Today, three new places in Kasargod district were declared as hotspots and three places were excluded from the list. There are presently 110 hotspots in Kerala.

date

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