

Centre rushes 50 High Level Public Health teams to Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Punjab for COVID-19 control and containment measures

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The Central Government has constituted 50 high level multi-disciplinary public health teams and deployed them to 50 districts across Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Punjab in view of the recent very large numbers of daily new COVID-19 cases and daily mortality being consistently reported by these States. The teams are being rushed to 30 districts of Maharashtra, 11 districts of Chhattisgarh and 9 districts of Punjab to assist the State Health Department and local authorities in COVID-19 surveillance, control and containment measures.

The two-member high level team consists of a clinician/epidemiologist and a public health expert. The teams will visit the States immediately and monitor the overall implementation of COVID19 management, especially in testing, including surveillance and containment operations; COVID Appropriate Behavior and its enforcement; availability of hospital beds, sufficient logistics including ambulances, ventilators, medical oxygen etc., and COVID19 Vaccination progress.

Three senior officers from Govt of India have been appointed as nodal officers for the three states of Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Punjab. Shri Vijoy Kumar Singh, AS&FA, Ministry of Textile is the nodal officer for Punjab; Ms. Richa Sharma, Addl. Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change is the nodal officer for Chhattisgarh, whereas Shri Kunak Kumar, Jt. Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban affairs is the nodal officer for Maharashtra. The high level teams will report to and coordinate with the nodal officers for the three States. They will submit daily reports on five aspects including Testing; Contact Tracing including Surveillance & Containment; Hospital infrastructure including ICU, ventilator & oxygen beds; Enforcement of COVID Appropriate Behavior; and COVID Vaccination.

The Union Government has been leading the fight against the global pandemic with a 'Whole of Government' and 'Whole of Society' approach under the umbrella strategy of 'Cooperative Federalism'. As an ongoing effort to strengthen efforts of various State/UT Governments for COVID management, the Central Government has been deputing Central teams from time to time to visit various States/UTs. These teams interact with the State/UT authorities and get a first hand understanding of the challenges and issues being faced by them so as to strengthen their ongoing activities and remove bottlenecks, if any.

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