



DO No. A-60022/03/2020-E.II

March 27, 2020

Dear Colleague,

**Subject: Measures in the wake of Novel Corona Virus-
Covid 19.**

Sir/Madam,

All of us are aware that the Country is engaged in the challenging task of combating the spread of Novel Corona virus- Covid 19 hence it is imperative that everyone must follow what Hon'ble Prime Minister has emphasised in his address to the nation on 24th March, 2020 on a Nation-wide 21-day lockdown and social distancing to ensure that the chain of the virus infection is broken.

2. Importance of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) representatives and functionaries in effective implementation of 21-day lockdown, including social distancing, in rural areas assumes significance as they are not only elected representatives of the local population but also have a direct connect with the people in their villages / Gram Panchayats. States are requested to proactively advise all the PRI representatives / functionaries of the 3 tier Panchayati Raj System, requesting them to disseminate following information:

3. Sensitizing all the inhabitants of Gram Panchayats, Block Panchayats and District Panchayats about the threat posed by the Novel Corona virus- Covid 19

- i. Implementing preventive public health measures during the lockdown period where the rural population stays indoors
- ii. To implement social distancing measures at pharmacies, grocery, vegetable, milk shops/ vending points, bank branches, ATMs, petrol pumps, cooking gas outlets etc.
- iii. Frequent washing of hands with soap and water
- iv. Intimating local police and administrative authorities in-case migrants who have returned to their villages from within or outside the country, develop symptoms like sneezing, dry cough, fever, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties, helping in putting these people under quarantine, wherever required and as far as possible.

3. PRI representatives and functionaries should not only make local communities aware but should also keep a constant vigil on the health of people within their jurisdiction and any suspected case of Covid-19 may be reported immediately to the Health Authorities without any delay. Further PRI representatives must also facilitate continuous availability of necessary provisions within their jurisdiction. State Governments and UT Administrations may make necessary arrangements and issue detailed guidelines in this regard.

4. Ministry of Rural Development is also taking expeditious steps to liquidate outstanding wage and material dues under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). Necessary releases under all flagship schemes to States and UTs has started and would continue till 15th April, 2020. Special interventions have been announced for enhancing MGNREGS wages, giving ex-gratia payments to old age, widow and disability pension beneficiaries, giving ex-gratia payments to women Jan Dhan account holders etc. This should go a long way to address the liquidity issues in rural areas.

5. As many of the rural Self Help Groups (SHGs) are now engaged in production of masks, sanitizers and soaps, therefore, the State Governments may like to encourage them to produce the required quantities of prescribed quality in consultation with their respective Health Departments. However, the States / UTs will have to ensure that the items produced meet the necessary standards.

6. The above actions are only suggestive and the States and UTs may like to take other appropriate actions fully utilizing the Panchayati Raj Institutions to ensure that hardships to the villagers are mitigated.

(Rajesh Bhushan)
Secretary

Department of Rural Development

(Sunil Kumar)
Secretary

Ministry of Panchayati Raj

To

Addl. Chief Secretaries/Principal Secretaries/Secretaries incharge of
Panchayati Raj and Rural Development Departments in all States / UTs.

Copy to :

1. Principal Secretary to Prime Minister
2. Cabinet Secretary
3. Private Secretary / OSD to Hon'ble Minister, Rural Development
4. Private Secretary to Hon'ble Minister of State, Rural Development
5. All JS-level and above officers of Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Department of Rural Development.