

AJAY BHALLA, IAS



गृह सचिव  
Home Secretary  
भारत सरकार  
Government of India  
North Block,  
New Delhi

D.O. No. 40-3/2020-DM-I(A)

27<sup>th</sup> October, 2020

Dear Administrator,

Kindly refer to Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)'s Order of even number issued today whereby Guidelines for Re-opening dated 30.09.2020 have been extended upto 30.11.2020.

2. As you are aware, since the issuance of the first Order on lockdown measures by MHA on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020, almost all activities have been gradually opened up in areas outside the Containment Zones. While most of the activities have been permitted, some activities involving large number of people, have been allowed with some restrictions and subject to SOPs being followed regarding health and safety precautions. These activities include - *metro rail; shopping malls; hotel, restaurants and hospitality services; religious places; yoga and training institutes; gymnasiums; cinemas; entertainment park etc.*

3. In respect of certain activities, having relatively higher degree of risk of COVID infection, State/ UT Governments have been permitted to take decisions for their re-opening, based on the assessment of the situation and subject to SOPs. These activities include - *schools and coaching institutes; State and private universities for research scholars; allowing gatherings above the limit of 100 etc.*

4. As emphasized during various interactions/ communications, the essence behind graded re-opening and progressive resumption of activities is to move ahead. However, it does not mean the end of the pandemic. There is a need to exercise abundant caution by adopting COVID-19 appropriate behaviour by every citizen in their daily routine. A '**Jan Andolan**' was launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2020 on COVID-19 appropriate behavior to follow three mantras, namely, wearing face mask, washing hand frequently, and maintaining safe distance of 6 feet.

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5. However, it has been reported that during the ongoing festival season, people are ignoring the cardinal safety requirements, such as wearing face masks and maintaining physical distancing in various gatherings. Such behavior poses a serious threat to public health, at a time when the number of active cases in the country is witnessing a falling trend.

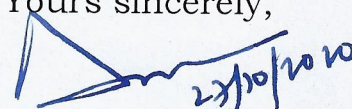
6. There is, therefore, an urgent need to instill a sense of discipline and ownership amongst citizens in order that the resumption of activities is successful and gains made in the management of the pandemic are not diluted. Accordingly, you should endeavour to promote COVID-19 appropriate behavior extensively at the grass root level and take measures to enforce the wearing of mask, hand hygiene and social distancing. Further State/ UT Governments should regulate various gatherings of people and strictly enforce the same as per their SOPs.

7. As emphasized in my earlier D.O. letters, States/Union Territories cannot dilute the guidelines issued by MHA under the Disaster Management Act 2005. It is reiterated that State/ UT Governments shall not impose any local lockdown, outside the containment zones, without prior consultation with the Central Government. Further 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.

8. I would urge you to ensure compliance of the aforesaid Order and direct all concerned authorities for its strict implementation. Further, guidelines issued by MHA and consequent Orders issued by the respective State Governments/ UT Administration should be widely disseminated to the public and to the field functionaries for implementation.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

  
(Ajay Bhalla)

To

The Administrators of UTs.