

NDMA Guidelines on Lockdown

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In terms of Section 6 (2) (i) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 (DM Act, 2005), National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), on being satisfied that the country is threatened by the spread of COVID – 19 pandemic, has been directing Union Home Secretary, being the Chairperson of the National Executive Committee (NEC), to take measures and to issue necessary guidelines so as to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the country. Accordingly, NEC has been issuing guidelines about the Lockdown and Unlock phases in the country from time to time.

By imposing country-wide Lockdown, India successfully blunted the aggressive spread of COVID-19. The period of Lockdown helped the nation create much required additional health infrastructure. During this time, dedicated isolation beds recorded an increase of 22 times and dedicated ICU beds above 14 times to what existed in March 2020. Similarly, laboratory capacity for testing COVID-19 was increased nearly 10 times during this time. Whereas there was no indigenous manufacturing of Personal Protective Equipments (PPE), with the requisite standards, at that point in time, the country is now self-sufficient and in a position to export the same. Similarly, the limited indigenous manufacturing capacity available for masks, ventilators, etc, at the time of Lockdown, was also enhanced to attain self-reliance in this regard. During this period, requirement of various cadres of personnel and volunteers across sectors and departments for COVID-19 related works and maintenance of other essential medical services was worked out, and trained through resources made available on the website of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and iGOT, an online platform (<https://igot.gov.in/igot/>). It has been estimated that the decision of Lockdown, by slowing down the spread of pandemic in India, has prevented 14–29 lakh cases and 37–78 thousand deaths.

Government of India has taken a series of comprehensive actions to prevent, control and mitigate the impact of COVID-19. Hon'ble Prime Minister, a High level Group of Ministers (GoM), Cabinet Secretary, Committee of Secretaries and senior officers in the Ministry of Home Affairs, NDMA, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and other Ministries/Departments concerned continue to monitor public health response to COVID-19 in the country.

States are free to take steps for restricting the disease in their respective States subject to compliance with the guidelines issued by the National Executive Committee as per recommendations of the NDMA.

This was stated by the Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri Nityanand Rai in a written reply to question in the Lok Sabha today.

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