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No. ASDMA. 20/2020/Pt. 2/ 17

Dated 28th March, 2020

From : Shri M.S. Manivannan, IAS
Commissioner & Secretary to Govt. of Assam
Cum Chief Executive Officer
Assam State Disaster Management Authority
Janata Bhawan, Dispur, Guwahati-06

To : The Deputy Commissioner cum Chairperson, DDMA
All District of Assam

Sub : Strategic Response plan for COVID-19

Sir/Madam,

With reference to the subject cited above, I render my appreciation for the all the initiatives and actions taken by the DDMA's in Assam towards containment of COVID-19 in the state. While the overall technical response is led by the Health and family welfare department, the need for coordinated non-pharmaceutical response is the need of the hour. While the NDMA has issued instructions from time to time, ASDMA as per section 18 (1) of the Disaster Management Act 2005 and with technical support of UNICEF has developed a State Response Plan for non-pharmaceutical actions related to COVID-19 response in Assam. This plan aims to bring role clarity, coordination and effective sharing of responsibilities related to non-pharmaceutical response to COVID-19 in the state among different departments and stakeholders. The plan has been designed to be a dynamic document which will be updated from time to time to incorporate evolving situations and scenarios. The plan addresses the following components:

- The plan provides a succinct analysis of the risks related to COVID-19 spread and the various possible scenarios (worst case scenarios). This gives clarity on what we are preparing for.
- The plan defines the strategic response actions which are within the ambit and mandate of ASDMA and DDMA's and can help the Deputy Commissioners exercise appropriate powers under the Disaster Management Act, 2005
- The plan provides the framework of various preparedness actions that will help in delivering the strategic response as per evolving needs and scenarios.

All DDMA's are therefore requested to adhere to the plan enclosed herewith and initiate necessary action for implementation of the same.

This has the approval of the Chief Secretary, Govt. of Assam.

Yours faithfully,

Enclosed: As stated


(Shri M.S. Manivannan, IAS)

Commissioner & Secretary to Govt. of Assam cum CEO
Assam State Disaster Management Authority, Dispur

Memo No. ASDMA. 20/2020/Pt. 2/ 17 (A)

Dated 28th March, 2020

Copy to:

1. The Staff Officer to the Chief Secretary to Govt. of Assam for kind appraisal of the Chief Secretary.
2. The Addl. Deputy Commissioner cum CEO, DDMA for information and necessary action.


(Shri Pankaj Chakravarty, ACS)

State Project Coordinator
Assam State Disaster Management Authority, Dispur

Strategic Response Plan for COVID-2019



Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA)
Janata Bhawan, Dispur, Guwahati-781006

INTRODUCTION:

In exercise of the Power conferred under Section 69 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, Union Home Secretary, the chairperson of the National Executive Committee has delegated its powers under Clause I and II of Section 10 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 to Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to enhance preparedness and containment of COVID-19 and other ancillary matters connected there to. Accordingly, actions were initiated by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare at national level and state health and family welfare departments at state level. Further, NDMA vide letter No.1-137/2018-Mit-II (FTS-10548) dated 5th March 2020 has send necessary directive to Chief Secretaries of all states and UTs highlighting and summerizing the various steps that are needed to be taken at state level by various departments which also includes a series of actions requiring coordination and non-medical/pharamaceutical response. The letter also refers to the important role SDMAs/DDMAs in coordination, risk communication and other aspects of non-medical response.

Govt. of Assam has issued a notification vide HLA 248/2020/6 dated 18th March 2020 called the 'Assam COVID-19 Regulations, 2020' citing the responsibilities of various stakeholders in management of COVID response under the Epedemic Diseases Act, 1897. This also reinforces the role of various departments and the including role of DDMAs as the responsible authorities in developing and carrying out structured and coordinated response actions to support heath and family welfare department led response to COVID-19 in the state. In view of the above, and to streamline and better structure the response actions of ASDMA and DDMAs to support various departments in ensuring response actions of non-medical and non-pharmaceutical nature toward prevention and containment of COVID-19 in the state of Assam, a response plan has been developed to multi-stakeholder coordinated response at state, district and local levels. The plan is based on a risk analysis and definition of certain possible worst case scenarios. It defines the various anticipated strategic response actions that will be needed (non-medical) and illucidates the preparedness actions to be taken up by various departments and coordinated by ASDMA/DDMAs to deliver the anticipated response at the situation unfolds.

RISK ANALYSIS AND SCENERIO DEFINITION:

COVID-19 is rapidly spreading across the globe including India. India has reported (as on 28-03-2020, 9.30 am) 775 active positive cases and 19 deaths while 78 were cured/discharged from hospitals¹. The situation is rapidly changing in the country with last few days witnessing the daily consistent increase in number of reported positive cases. Assam has approximately 3.65 Crore people (extrapolated considering decadal growth of 17% over census data of 2011). Though Assam has not seen any positive case till date (till 21st March, 2020), the rapidly changing scenario can grapple Assam and NE very soon.

Further, It has been observed that the elderly people are more vulnerable and susseptible to COVID-19². Besides, other groups such as children and people suffering from different other diseases are also vulnerable. If we consider the most vulnerable group of people in the state, Assam has approximately 21.88 lakh senior citizens/above 60 years (6%) and around 1.46 crore would children below 18 years of age (40% of the total). As per one of the estimates, the

¹ <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/>

² <https://www.cebm.net/global-covid-19-case-fatality-rates/>

mortality rate outside China due to COVID-19 could go upto 15.2 %³ of positive cases. Given the rapidly changing scenario of the cases in India, the following scenarios (worst case other than clinical) are assumed for Assam.

- **Mass spread-** Given the potential of COVID and its transmission, in spite of best prevention measures, many positive cases may emerge in the state from people who have travelled from various COVID-19 affected places (within and outside the country).
- **Need for additional infrastructure and supplies for quarantine-** In a scenario of mass spread, the need and demand for quarantine facilities will increase manifold. There may emerge a situation to convert any available facility at district and sub-district level into quarantine facilities. This may increase the need for identifying and provisioning manpower and supplies.
- **Hospital preparedness, emergency surge and transitional health services-** In such a mass spread situation, the demand for health services may increase manifold. This may create demand for transitional health facilities outside recognized health care facilities for which logistics, manpower and other resources will be required.
- **Law and Order situation-** In a situation of increased spread and quarantine, law and order situation may deteriorate with requirement of stricter and extra ordinary arrangements in quarantine facilities, crowd management in hospitals, arrangement and transportation of logistics and similar places.
- **Food security of marginalized families-** In a lock down situation, the marginalized communities including the wage earners, workforce in the larger informal sector, farmers, household workers etc may be left with a situation of food insecurity.
- **Shortage of essential commodities in a lock down scenario-** To contain the spread further, lock down may become the only available option which may result in shortage of essential commodities for the masses.
- **Exclusion and discrimination-** In such scenario, chances of exclusion and social discrimination with families of COVID-19 affected persons during/post quarantine may also create an alarming situation limiting access to commons and community support systems.
- **Dead Body Management-** In the worst case scenario, the fatality rate may also increase leading the increased demand for land and resources to manage dead bodies giving respect to religious sentiments.
- **Possible interaction of flood, erosion and COVID-19 response-** Since Assam is approaching flood season, social distancing may become a challenging affair in a mass displacement scenario or in relief camp setting which may further aggravate the spread of infection.

Anticipated Strategic Response Actions of ASDMA

- Lead non-medical response coordination at state and district
- Support in limiting human-to-human transmission through appropriate administrative procedures

³ Boud .D., Qi.x.,saines.k.n., Musso.D.,Pomar.L.,Favre. L(2020).Real estimate of mortality following COVID-19 infection, Published by THE LENCET,12th March 2020.

- Targeted and coordinated Risk Communication to avoid panic, rumor and to promote desirable behaviors
- Supporting reduction of secondary infections, preventing transmission and further spread by using all possible means.
- Hospital preparedness assessment, crowd management and logistics support to ensure optimum functioning and service continuity
- Quarantine facility management at all levels (State, District, Sub-Divisional and Revenue Circle level)
- Management of financial proposals as per modified SDRF norms issued by MHA, Gol with regard to COVID-19 response
- Effective management of volunteers and community surveillance.
- Logistic management for coordinated response including management of surge requirements and non-medical supply chain
- Dead body management as per national guidelines issued by MoHFW, Gol

Preparedness Actions to deliver the strategic anticipated response

No	Action	Level of Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Relevant guidelines/documents
Lead non-medical response coordination at state and district					
1	Identify potential stakeholders who can support in non-medical response including NGOs/CSOs/Unions/Associations/other bodies/volunteers	State and District	ASDMA/DDMAs	Immediate (March 25)	
2	Conduct coordination meetings with relevant stakeholders in small groups (Following social distancing guidelines) and share relevant materials for conducting activities on the ground	State and District	ASDMA/DDMAs	April 5, 2020	Social Distancing Guidelines by MoHFW https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/SocialDistancingAdvisorybyMOHFW.pdf Preventive measures to be taken to contain the spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) — regarding. https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/PreventivemeasuresDOPT.pdf
3	Map prevention/preparedness activities of these organizations for coordinated action	State and District	ASDMA/DDMAs	April 10, 2020	
4	Inter-Departmental coordination meetings to ensure coordinated actions, reducing overlaps and duplications	District	DDMAs	Once in a week or As per requirement	
5	Coordination with Micro-finance institutes, NBFC through RBI to ensure relaxation, interest subsidy and temporary suspension of weekly collections for next few months particularly for the marginalised workers/women SHGs.	State & District	ASDMA and Finance Deptt. CEO, DDMA with LDM	April 10, 2020	
6	Coordinate with Social Sector departments (Education, Social Welfare etc.) to plan for transitional services toward	State & District	ASDMA and relevant departments	April 20	

	compensation/continuity particularly those related to children		CEO, DDMA with relevent departments		
7	Coordination with relevent departments regarding transportation and supply of essential response/other items in COVID affected districts	State and District	ASDMA and DDMA with NFR, Transport Department, IWT and others	Regular	
Support in limiting human-to-human transmission through appropriate adminsitrative procedures					
8	Issuance of related notiofications and prohibitory orders by DDMA Chairperson	District	Chairperson, DDMA	As per requirement	
9	Mobilize additional manpower and create a surge roster for necessary support	District	Chairperson, DDMA	April 10	
10	Monitoring and real time corrective actions to ensure implementation of advisories and guidelines on maintianing social distancing, quarantine and isolation	District	Chairperson, DDMA	On regular basis	
11	Ensure availability of Personal Protective Equipments for non-medical support teams in critical locations (where chances of contact with the COVID-19 positive case exists)	District	Chairperson, DDMA	April 5	
Targeted and coordinated Risk Communication to avoid panic, rumor and to promote desirable behaviors					
12	Adapt/customize risk communication messages in local languages for different emerging situations (<i>Following MoHFW, WHO, UNICEF guidelines/materials</i>)	State	ASDMA	March 31	
13	Collaborate with relevent agencies/channels such as DIPR community radio, print and electronic media and various inter-faith groups for wider dissemination of key messages on desired behaviours for infection prevention, social distancing, reducing spread of rumours and promoting community surveillance including a communication feedback mechanism	State and District	ASDMA/DDMA	March 31	
14	Monitoring social media, print and electronic media and other sources of mass information to prevent and unauthenticated information from reaching masses	District	Chairperson, DDMA with DIPRO	On regular basis	Assam COVID-19 Regulation, 2020 notified vide notification No. HLA 248/2020/6 dated 18 th March, 2020
Supporting reduction of secondary infections, preventing transmission and further spread by using all possible means					
15	Assess and continuously monitor suspected cases placed in home quarantine/district run quarantine facilities in collaboration with Health department	District	Chairperson, DDMA with Jt.DHS and PO-DDMA	Routine	Guidelines for home quarantine by MoHFW, GoI https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/Guidelinesforhomequarantine.pdf
16	Issue necessary orders/directives targeting different stakeholders for secondary infections, preventing transmission and	District	Chairperson, DDMA with Jt.DHS and PO-	Routine	

	further spread		DDMA		
17	Adopt strict actions against any violation of guidelines in line with provisions under the Assam COVID-19 Regulation, 2020	District	Chairperson, DDMA with Jt.DHS and PO-DDMA	Routine	
18	Develop a community surveillance mechanism through the existing network of Gaon Burhas, Mondals, VDPs and other frontline workers to ensure monitoring of preventive actions	District	Chairperson, DDMA with Circle Officers	Routine	
Hospital preparedness assessment, crowd management and logistics support to ensure optimum functioning and service continuity					
19	Develop checklists for assessing preparedness of hospitals, quarantine facilities and others in collaboration with Health department	State	ASDMA with health and family Welfare department	April 10, 2020	National Guidelines for Infection Prevention and Control in Healthcare Facilities https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/National%20Guidelines%20for%20IPC%20in%20HCF%20-%20final%281%29.pdf
20	Ensure each identified facility has provisions as per relevant government guidelines based on assessment of preparedness	District	Chairperson, DDMA with Jt.DHS and PO-DDMA	Ongoing	
21	Assess logistic requirement for medical and non-medical care including those for establishing temporary health facilities, mobilizing surge and others	District	Chairperson, DDMA with Jt.DHS and PO-DDMA	April 10, 2020	
22	Map existing infrastructure which can be converted into makeshift hospitals/quarantine facilities if required (beyond already identified places). The assumption should be 10% of the district's population requiring quarantine	District	Chairperson, DDMA with CEO, DDMA, Jt.DHS and PO-DDMA	April 10, 2020	
23	Make preparatory arrangement for procuring materials to meet surge requirement invoking section 50 of the DM Act, 2005	District	Chairperson, DDMA with Nazarat branch	April 20, 2020	
24	Map requirement of major hospitals to manage crowds including an assumptive increase of case load and revised OPD procedures (for infection control) and ensure deployment of police/homeguard for supporting crowd management in hospitals	District	Chairperson, DDMA , with SP Jt.DHS and Revenue Circle Officers	April 5, 2020	
Quarantine facility management at all levels					
25	Identification of the facilities for Quarantine centre in District, Sub-division and Revenue Circles (targeting 10% of the population of their respective city/towns)	District and Sub-divisions	Chairperson, DDMA with SDO (Civil), Revenue Circle Officer, Field Officer (DM)	April 5, 2020	
26	Ensure that each identified Quarantine centre are resilient to flood, storm, landslide, earthquake and fire.	District and Sub-divisions	Chairperson, DDMA with SDO (Civil),	April 5, 2020	

			Revenue Circle Officer, Field Officer (DM)		
27	Ensure that each identified quarantine center has requisite provisions as mandated by GoI	District	Chairperson, DDMA with CEO, DDMA	As and when required	
28	Ensure that identified quarantine facilities are separate from identified flood relief camps. The same infrastructure shall not be designated for both purposes	District	Chairperson, DDMA with CEO, DDMA	As and when done	
Management of financial proposals as per modified SDRF norms					
28	Identification and overall management needs of Quarantine centre in District, Sub-division and Revenue Circles	District	Chairperson, DDMA with CEO, DDMA	Together with the above	Revised norms of Assistance for SDRF by MHA, GoI dated 14.03.2020 https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/RevisedItem&NormsforutilisationofSDRFdt14032020.pdf
29	Procurement of essential equipments/labs for response to COVID-19 and requirements as mentioned in points above	District	Chairperson, DDMA with Jt. DHS, Nazarat branch etc.	As per requirement	
30	Ensure simplified and rapid office procedures for fastracking any procurement for COVID-19 response in line with Modified SDRF guidelines	District	Chairperson, DDMA with Jt. DHS, Nazarat branch etc.	April 5, 2020	
Effective management of volunteers and community surveillance					
31	Identify volunteers for non-medical response actions including awareness generation, community surveillance, crowd management in hospitals, logistic arrangement in quarantine facilities. This may Apada Mitra Volunteers, Civil Defence Volunteers, NGO/CSO volunteers and NYKS volunteers	District	CEO, DDMA with Jt. DHS	April 10, 2020	
32	Develop a plan for volunteer deployment with duty roster	District	CEO, DDMA with Jt. DHS	April 15, 2020	
33	Conduct short training/orientation of volunteers in collaboration with health and family welfare department	District	CEO, DDMA with Jt. DHS	April 20, 2020	
34	Identify School Safety Focal point Teachers and orient them for conducting targeted awareness drives	District	CEO, DDMA with IS/DEEO	April 20, 2020	
35	Conduct volunteer coordination and review meetings at regular intervals and address requirements/grievances	District	CEO, DDMA with Jt. DHS	At regular intervals	
Logistic management for coordinated response including management of surge requirements and non-medical supply chain					
36	Identification of local vendors and suppliers for food, transport and other logistics supplies	District	All concerned deptt (Food and CS, NFR, Transport, IWT, Police, F&ES,	April 5, 2020	

			etc)		
37	Monitoring of local markets and ensuring non-interrupted supply of essential commodities	District	Chairperson DDMA with Food and CS and relevant deptt.	On regular basis	
38	Public announcements/messaging on situations related to availability and use of essential commodities	District	Chairperson DDMA with DIPR	On regular basis	
Dead body management as per national guidelines issued by MoHFW, GoI					
39	Identify spaces for performing last rites as per GoI guidelines on dead body management respecting religious and ethnic sentiments	District	SP with Revenue Circle Officer, BDO and other forces (NDRF/BSF/CR PF)	April 15	Covid-19:Guidelines on Dead Body Management issued by MoHFW, GoI https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/1584423700568_COVID19GuidelinesonDeadbodymanagement.pdf
40	Map and arrangement all logistics including burial ground, crematory, transportation of dead bodies etc	District	Municipal bodies, T&CP and Panchayat Secretaries in consultation with Revenue Circle Officer/BDO & Transport Deptt.	April 15	