

Government of Rajasthan
Home (Group-7) Department

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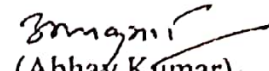
Jaipur, dated : 3/2/2021

Order

Sub : To Contain Spread of COVID-19 during Religious Festivals/
Melas.

In view of present COVID-19 scenario in the state, SOP on preventive measures to contain spread of COVID-19 during religious Festivals / Events / Melas has been prepared. A Copy of SOP is enclosed for necessary information and strict compliance.

Enclosed : As above


(Abhay Kumar)

Principal Secretary, Home

Copy for information and necessary action to the following:

1. Secretary to Governor, Rajasthan.
2. Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, Rajasthan.
3. Secretary, Rajasthan Legislative Assembly.
4. SA/PS to all Ministers/State Ministers.
5. Dy. Secretary to Chief Secretary, Rajasthan.
6. All Addl. Chief Secretaries/Pr. Secretaries/Secretaries.
7. Director General of Police, Rajasthan.
8. Director General, Jails/Home Guards, Rajasthan.
9. All Heads of Departments.
10. All Divisional Commissioners.
11. Commissioner Police Jaipur, Jodhpur.
12. All Range IG/DIG.
13. All District Collectors.
14. All SPs/Police Deputy Commissioners, Jaipur/Jodhpur.
15. All Chief Executive Officers, Zila Parishad.
16. All RTO/DTO, Rajasthan.
17. DIPR, Rajasthan - with a request to publicize it widely.


(N.L. Meena)

Secretary, Home

2nd February 2021

**GOVERNMENT OF RAJASTHAN
HOME DEPARTMENT**

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES ON PREVENTIVE
MEASURES TO CONTAIN SPREAD OF COVID-19 DURING
RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS/EVENTS/MELAS**

1. Background

The culture of Rajasthan reflects its splendid and vibrant colourful history with ethnic and religious diversity, different cuisines, beautiful dances, and mesmerizing music. It is also rich in its flora and fauna with some of the popular wildlife sanctuaries & national parks. Religion and spirituality, both beautifully intertwined, are indeed a way of life in Rajasthan and religious beliefs have influenced people all around the country. Its varied culture and multi religious background attracts tourists and pilgrims from all over the world.

Keeping in view the above facts it is important to issue guidelines and norms for such religious festivals/ events/ melas in such critical pandemic situations to curtail the spread of COVID.

2. Scope

The Government of Rajasthan is responsible for instituting measure that prevents the spread of COVID-19 during religious festivals/ events/ melas and ensure prompt public health response to an out break.

Mass gathering events, such as this, have the potential to facilitate the transmission of the virus and potentially disrupt the gains made by the country in COVID-19 management. This document outlines various generic precautionary measures to be adopted in addition to specific measures to be taken to prevent spread of COVID-19.

3. Protecting vulnerable population

The high-risk group population needs to be protected. The following procedures shall be followed:

- i. The Medical & Health Department shall ensure that the Healthcare workers and the other frontline workers engaged during such religious festivals/ events/ melas are vaccinated on priority in the ongoing vaccination of this group. Only vaccinated

Healthcare and other frontline workers be deputed for religious festivals/ events/ melas duties.

- ii. There should be registration of devotees and a medical certification regimen on similar lines as being practiced for the Shri Amarnath Yatra. All devotees desirous of attending the religious festivals/ events/ melas shall:
 - a. Register with the District Administration.
 - b. Obtain a medical certificate from the nearest Community Health Centre/ District hospital/ Medical college in their State **(Annexure - I)**.
- iii. Government of Rajasthan shall widely circulate this requirement to all the States well in advance, clearly specifying that the vulnerable population [age more than 65 years; pregnant women; children below the age of 10 years; those with underlying comorbid conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiac disease, chronic lung disease, cerebro-vascular disease, chronic kidney disease, immune-suppression and cancer] shall be discouraged to attend all such religious festivals/ events/ melas.
- iv. Devotees coming to all such religious festivals/ events/ melas without the medical certificate issued by a competent authority as detailed in para 3(ii) above will not be allowed.
- v. State government employees who are at higher risk i.e., older employees, pregnant employees and employees who have underlying medical conditions (as explained above) must take extra precautions. They shall not be exposed to any front-line work requiring direct contact with the public.

4. Promoting COVID appropriate behavior

Simple public health measures are to be followed to reduce the risk of COVID-19. These measures need to be always observed, by all. These are as follows:

- i. Individuals must maintain a minimum distance of 6 feet in public places as far as feasible.
- ii. Use of face covers/masks to be made mandatory. Mask dispensing kiosks at Government approved rates may be set up at entry points and parking lots. Provision shall be kept for distribution of free masks to those who cannot afford.
- iii. Levying fines/penalties on defaulters for not wearing mask/face cover, or for not following physical distancing norms should be done by the enforcement agencies.
- iv. Practice frequent hand washing with soap (for at least 40-60 seconds) even when hands are not visibly dirty. Use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers (for at least 20

- seconds) can be made wherever feasible.
- v. Establishing hand washing stations in public utility areas and ensuring availability of soap and water. Use of foot operated taps and contactless soap dispensers is mandatory.
 - vi. Respiratory etiquettes to be strictly followed. This involves strict practice of covering one's mouth and nose while coughing/sneezing with a tissue/handkerchief/flexed elbow and disposing off used tissues properly.
 - vii. Self-monitoring of health by all and reporting any illness at the earliest to State and District Helpline.
 - viii. Spitting should be strictly prohibited.
 - ix. Installation & use of Aarogya Setu App on compatible mobile phones shall be advised to all.

5. Mandatory COVID-19 RT-PCR negative test report

The Government of Rajasthan would widely publicize, as also convey to all other State Governments that devotees with negative RT-PCR test report(test done 72 hours prior to the date of visit) shall only be allowed to enter all such religious festivals/ events/ melas. The devotees may carry such test reports either on their mobile phones or in hard copies.

6. Specific administrative measures for preventing spread of COVID-19 during all such religious festivals/ events/ melas

The authorities may consider curtailing the total duration of all such religious festivals/ events/ melas. They shall comply with the administrative requirements as below:

a) Establishing Incident command / coordination system(ICS)

- i. A designated COVID-19 Nodal Officer of appropriate seniority to be responsible for addressing COVID-19 concerns within the designated area. He/she will be regularly co-ordinating with other stakeholders to ensure implementation of this Standard Operating Procedure at all level.
- ii. The Incident Command System for such religious festivals/ events/ melas will have a COVID-19 task force that will respond to all matters related to COVID-19 management.
- iii. The emergency operation center/control room within ICS will have dedicated monitoring desks for COVID-19.

b) Planning Considerations

The religious festivals/ events/ melas administration shall ensure the following:

- i. Identify spatial boundaries of the designated area keeping in view the physical distancing requirements and prepare a detailed site plan which would facilitate compliance with thermal screening, physical distancing, sanitization etc.
- ii. Multiple and separate entry and exits for devotees shall be ensured. Help desks should be set up and widely publicized with adequate number of staff to ensure that

- people do not wander around for want of direction.
- iii. Entrances to have mandatory contactless hand hygiene and multiple thermal screening provisions. Anyone found symptomatic during thermal screening should be politely refused entry and advised to seek immediate medical care.
 - iv. The crowd density does not remain the same throughout the day and usually peaks around certain hours of the day and on auspicious days (as mentioned above). Planning for the event should specifically factor this so that crowds are regulated and managed to ensure physical distance and frequent sanitization.
 - v. Volunteers should be appropriately stationed to ensure thermal scanning, physical distancing and wearing of masks.
 - vi. Keeping in view the physical distancing norms, the designated site should have proper markings at all locations which are likely to be visited by devotees.
 - vii. Staggering of devotees to be done maintaining physical distancing of a minimum of 6 feet, when queuing up for the holy darshan.
 - viii. Events such as exhibitions, fairs, prayer meetings etc. within the religious festivals/ events/ melas site shall be restricted/ regulated as far as feasible. For those allowed by the event administration, the number of people should not exceed the limit prescribed by the Ministry of Home Affairs/MHA.
 - ix. Seating arrangement in the food courts, prayer meetings, etc. must ensure adequate physical distancing. The number of shops, stalls, cafeteria, etc. must be curtailed and such establishments too shall always follow physical distancing norms.
 - x. Community kitchens/langars, etc. at event venue should also follow physical distancing norms while preparing and distributing food.
 - xi. In view of potential risk of spread of infection by groups singing prayers/chants etc., recorded devotional music/songs may be played and singing groups/chants should not be allowed as far as feasible.
 - xii. Proper crowd management outside the main venue - in parking lots, waiting areas, stalls and eateries etc. - duly following physical distancing norms shall be ensured.
 - xiii. Provision of Close circuit cameras must be done to monitor compliance of physical distance norms, wearing of masks at each venue.
 - xiv. Adequate number of ambulances, with provision for sanitizing them after each round should be kept ready. The control room should monitor their usage. A dedicated corridor should be created for the ambulances for obstruction free movement.

7. Specific Technical requirements for preventing spread of COVID-19 during religious festivals/ events/ melas

i. Health Risk Assessment

- a. The Medical & health department shall conduct health risk assessment in the context of prevailing COVID-19 situation in the local area in and around the religious festivals/ events/ melas and prepare a surveillance and response plan.

- b. The Medical & health department shall deploy adequate public health teams in co-ordination with other agencies to monitor prevention and control measures.
- c. A risk assessment team shall be stationed at the religious festivals/ events/ melas site and will recommend further necessary measures such as modification of the event, if the risk of spreading COVID-19 remains significant.

ii. Surveillance

- a. The Medical & health department shall set up a surveillance system in accordance with the surveillance and response plan (as an extension of Integrated Disease Surveillance Program (IDSP) for epidemic prone diseases with focus on COVID-19.
- b. The emergency operation center/command and control center shall have a dedicated sub-unit of the State IDSP for real-time monitoring and information management for epidemic prone diseases, with focus on COVID-19.

iii. Laboratory Infrastructure, Diagnostics and Testing

The designated area of the religious event may witness a floating population of many thousands on regular days surging to even higher numbers on auspicious days. Large number of samples may have to be tested during the event. Therefore, the number of testing centers needs to be augmented considerably.

- a. The identified hospitals by the administration should be the focal point for testing samples of suspect cases.
- b. The State Government would explore putting up mobile testing facilities, including container-based RT-PCR mobile labs within the designated area and/or temporary hospitals shall be established.
- c. The ICMR testing protocol shall be followed (available at: https://www.icmr.gov.in/pdf/covid/strategy/Testing_Strategy_v6_04092020.pdf)

iv. Hospital Infrastructure:

The existing bed capacity of government, referral and private hospitals– all combined needs to be substantially augmented. The expected surge of the floating population and potential outbreak of COVID or other epidemic prone diseases will overwhelm the existing facilities.

- a. The Medical & health department shall also assess the requirement of PPE kits, consumables, human resources, oxygen and ventilators, and if required, shall procure and store well in advance.

v. Clinical Management

- a. The existing clinical management protocol available at the MoHFW website shall be followed for managing cases COVID-19. These are available at: <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/UpdatedClinicalManagementProtocolforCOVID19dated03072020.pdf>

- b. A dedicated team of specialist's doctors designated by the Medical & Health Department will remain at call and will liaise with the center of excellence at SMS Jaipur on a regular basis through VC in case of any clarifications in clinical management.

vi. Infection Prevention and Control

- a. Public utility areas and open spaces shall be sanitized at least twice a day with 1% Sodium Hypochlorite within the religious festivals/ events/ melas premises.
- b. Cleaning and regular disinfection (using 1% sodium hypochlorite) of frequently touched surfaces (handrails, queue barricades, seats, benches, washroom fixtures, etc.) to be made mandatory in all public utility common areas.
- c. Deep cleansing of the toilets, hand washing and drinking water stations shall be done at least 3-4 times daily.
- d. Visitors and staff should be advised to dispose of used face covers/masks in covered bins available at the premises. The waste thus generated may be disposed of in accordance with the hazardous waste disposal guidelines.
- e. Guidelines issued by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare available at [https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/Guidelines on disinfection of common public places including offices. pdf](https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/Guidelines%20on%20disinfection%20of%20common%20public%20places%20including%20offices.pdf) shall be followed.

vii. Logistics and Supply Chain

- a. Appropriate arrangements for personal protection gears like face covers/masks, and other logistics like hand sanitizers, soap, sodium hypochlorite solution for sanitizing frequently touched surfaces etc. shall be made available by religious festivals/ events/ melas authorities/ State Government for their staff, as per requirements.
- b. Adequate availability of calibrated thermal guns shall be ensured.
- c. Availability of covered dustbins and trash cans in sufficient numbers to manage waste as per CPCB guidelines (available at: [https://cpcb.nic.in/uploads/Projects/Bio-Medical-Waste/BMWGUIDELINES- COVID_1.pdf](https://cpcb.nic.in/uploads/Projects/Bio-Medical-Waste/BMWGUIDELINES-COVID_1.pdf)) must be ensured.

viii. Capacity building

- a. National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), New Delhi and the district CMHO along with the State level experts shall train adequately in advance appropriate number of health personnel in close collaboration with State Government.
- b. A hands-on-training on critical care management for COVID cases shall be arranged by State authority.

ix. Information Management

The special State/ District Surveillance unit of IDSP at all such religious festivals/ events/ melas shall generate daily report in the format prescribed in the Surveillance and Response plan.

x. Risk Communication

- a. COVID related generic and specific requirements shall be widely publicized through print and visual media by the State Government.
- b. Posters/standees/AV media on preventive measures from COVID-19 must be displayed at prominent locations.
- c. Do's and Don'ts also to be displayed at vantage points.
- d. Recorded messages on precautionary measures and COVID appropriate behaviour may be played on public address systems installed in religious festivals/ events/ mela premises.
- e. Website of the all such religious festivals/ events/ melas, mobile application and that of the Rajasthan tourism department, must display preventive measures for COVID-19 at their landing page. The website/mobile application shall inform the devotees on self-monitoring of health and not to visit the religious festivals/ events/ melas if suffering from symptoms of Covid-19. The website/mobile application shall also provide information regarding the provisions mentioned in para 3 (ii-iv) of this SOP.
- f. Display helpline numbers and also numbers of local health authorities at prominent places.

xi. Advisory to international travelers

- a. In addition to the above SOP, International travelers visiting all such religious festivals/ events/ melas shall follow the travel advisory available on the website of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (<https://www.mohfw.gov.in/>) for international arrivals.
- b. This apart, travelers shall fulfill country specific mandatory requirements, if any, prescribed from time to time.

HEALTH CERTIFICATE TO BE ISSUED BY THE AUTHORIZED MEDICAL OFFICER

Affix cross-
signed (by
Yatri) recent
photograph

PART A : (TO BE FILLED BY APPLICANT)

1. Name.....S/o, D/o, W/o.....
Address.....
2. Date of Birth.....identification mark.....Blood Group.....
3. History of COVID-19 infection ☐yes ☐no, if Yes date of COVID-19 Positive Report.....
4. Are you undergoing under any medication; if yes, please specify.....
5. Are you allergic to drugs, foods and chemicals; if yes, please specify.....
6. Date of Latest COVID-19 Testing result Date.....Positive ☐ Negative ☐
7. I hereby declare that the particular given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and nothing has been concealed.

Date..... (Signature/thumb impression of the Applicant)

PART B : (TO BE FILLED BY AUTHORISED MEDICAL AUTHORITY)

On the basis of information furnished by the applicant, detailed examination and the necessary investigations, it is certified that

Mr/Ms/Mrs.....is fit to undertake the journey to the Religious Festival/ Event/Mela.....

Details of any specific test conducted before issuing the certificate :

Name of the Doctor.....

Date of issue:.....

Signature and seal of Authorized Medical
Authority MCI/State Medical Council
Registration No:.....