

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh reviews Ministry of Defence action plan to deal with COVID-19;

Urges Armed Forces, Defence PSUs and other organisations to gear up preparedness and provide all required assistance to civilian authorities

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Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh held a review meeting with senior officials of Ministry of Defence (MoD) on the action plan of the Ministry to deal with the COVID-19 situation, here today. During the meeting, Raksha Mantri expressed appreciation on the proactive role played by the Armed Forces and various departments of MoD in evacuating Indian nationals as well as foreigners from COVID-19 affected countries and ensuring them proper care at various quarantine facilities. He urged the Armed Forces and other departments to gear up their preparedness and provide all required assistance to the civilian administration at various levels.

At the meeting, officials briefed Shri Rajnath Singh on various measures and assistance provided so far. The Indian Air Force has made several sorties and evacuated Indian nationals from affected areas in China, Japan and Iran.

Various quarantine facilities of the Armed Forces have, so far, handled 1,462 evacuees and discharged 389. Presently, 1,073 persons are being provided care at the facilities in Manesar, Hindan, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur and Mumbai. Additional quarantine facilities are on standby with 950 beds capacity.

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) laboratories have manufactured 20,000 litres of sanitizer and supplied to various organisations, including 10,000 litres to Delhi police. DRDO has also supplied 10,000 masks to Delhi police personnel. It is tying up with some private companies to make personal protection equipment such as body suits and also ventilators.

Ordnance Factory Board has also ramped up production of sanitizers, masks and body suits. Bharat Electronics Limited is also engaged in manufacturing of ventilators.

Army medical teams deployed in the Maldives have since returned after completion of their mission. Army medical teams and two ships of Navy are on standby to provide required assistance to friendly countries in the neighbourhood.

Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat, Defence Secretary Dr Ajay Kumar, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Karambir Singh, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal R K S Bhadauria, Chief of Army Staff General M M Naravane, Secretary (Defence Production) Shri Raj Kumar, Secretary (Ex-Servicemen Welfare) Smt Sanjeevane Kuty and Secretary Department of Defence R&D and Chairman DRDO Dr G Satheesh Reddy attended the meeting.

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