

**Press Information Bureau
Government of India**

Union Home Minister directs to discuss with States, the Relaxations in Lockdown Restrictions to be applicable from 20th April and control COVID-19 epidemic

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The Union Minister for Home Affairs, Shri Amit Shah, yesterday reviewed the situation of the COVID-19 epidemic in the country, with senior officers of the Ministry. The Home Minister directed to discuss with States, the relaxations in lockdown restrictions to be applicable from 20th April and control COVID-19 epidemic.

The Home Minister said that India is still fighting a battle with Corona under the leadership of the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, so the applicable lockdown restrictions as well as national directives should be followed scrupulously.

While reviewing the situation, HM said that while certain activities are being permitted in those areas which do not fall within hot-spots/clusters/containment zones, due caution has to be exercised to ensure that only genuine exemptions/relaxations are given.

In order to give a boost to the rural economy, certain economic activities have been permitted in rural areas. Accordingly, DMs/DCs, in collaboration with industries, should make arrangements to transfer labourers to their place of work within the State. Modi government believes that on one hand, this will give a fillip to economic activity and on the other, provide employment to the labourers.

Similarly, States should give attention to operationalize big industrial units, industrial estates and industrial complexes, especially where the labourers can be accommodated within the complex. Such activities can help triggering economic revival, while ensuring that the labourers are provided gainful employment. Modi government is committed to protect the rights of every section of the society in these difficult times. DMs/DCs should also explore the possibility of providing labourers employment through agriculture as well as MGNREGA activities, HM said.

In respect of the labourers who continue to stay in relief camps, greater attention should be paid to their welfare, including quality of meals being provided to them. While it is understandable that the situation is challenging, the issue can be addressed.

The Home Minister said that now that community-based testing is being taken up through medical teams, States should take special care to ensure that each medical team is provided security. Before the team goes for testing in the community, the ground work in the community can be done by activating the peace committee and involving responsible community leaders, who can assuage the fear and confusion amongst the people with respect to testing, treatment and other aspects of COVID-19.

Patrolling in rural areas should be increased to monitor compliance with national directives to fight COVID-19. DMs/DCs can draw upon police, panchayat officials, revenue officials etc. to help monitor the compliance.

VG/SNC/VM

