



Ministry of Defence

 **Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh reviews efforts of MoD, Armed Forces, DRDO & other Defence organisations in fighting second COVID-19 wave**



Reviews logistic support to bolster medical oxygen supply and health infrastructure in states

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Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh reviewed the efforts of Ministry of Defence (MoD), the three services, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and other Defence organisations in assisting the civil administration to tackle the current Covid-19 situation in the country, through a video conference on May 17, 2021. The meeting was attended by 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 Department of Defence R&D and Chairman DRDO Dr G Satheesh Reddy, Additional Secretary (Defence Production) Shri Sanjay Jaju, ADG Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS) and other senior officials of MoD.


The meeting focused on special covid hospitals being set up by DRDO in different states, creation of additional hospital beds in military hospitals, supply of Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) oxygen plants under PM CARES Fund and augmentation of doctors and other health professionals to meet the current demand. DRDO Chairman Dr G Satheesh Reddy briefed that the hospitals set up at Delhi, Lucknow, Varanasi, Ahmedabad and Patna were functional and providing services in treating the covid patients. Similar facilities are being established in Rishikesh and Haldwani in Uttarakhand and Jammu and Srinagar at the request of the concerned local/State/UT authorities.


The DRDO has completed establishment of five PSA oxygen plants (four in Delhi and one in Haryana) and work is in progress to set up 150-175 more such plants by the end of this month.


Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat acclaimed the excellent coordination among the three Services in providing assistance to the civilian administration whether in terms of logistic support or creation of additional health infrastructure. He added that the Army has set up health facilities in far-flung and remote areas to aid the local civil administration.


Chief of the Army Staff General Manoj Mukund Naravane assured that there is no let up in the Army's efforts in the war against COVID-19. He briefed the Raksha Mantri that military hospitals at identified locations have set aside beds for treatment of civilian COVID patients. Capabilities at the Base Hospital in New Delhi are also being ramped up. Additional oxygen plants, cylinders and concentrators are being procured to bolster the medical infrastructure and oxygen supply at these hospitals.

 Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Karambir Singh briefed Shri Rajnath Singh regarding the logistic support being provided by the Indian Naval Ships in transporting medical oxygen containers and other health equipment from abroad. He also mentioned the special health facilities created in various places by the Indian Navy to cater to the treatment for civilian COVID patients.

 Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria said Indian Air Force (IAF) has completed 990 sorties both within the country and abroad in various missions to transport oxygen containers and other health equipment.

 Defence Secretary Dr Ajay Kumar commended the assistance provided by the three Services and added that nearly 800 doctors have been mobilised through various measures to meet the shortage of health professionals.

 Defence Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) also pitched in with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) setting up a 250-bed hospital each in Lucknow and Bengaluru. Similarly, PSUs are also engaged in setting up oxygen plants by using Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds.

 Raksha Mantri praised the contribution of DRDO in developing the 2-DG medicine for the treatment of COVID patients. He added that currently the Covid-19 cases are reducing but all were required to remain alert. He directed the three Services and other organisations of MoD to continue with their regular work despite Covid-19 challenges.

This is the fourth review meeting held by Raksha Mantri since April 20, 2021 on the assistance extended by MoD and other Defence organisations in the fight against second COVID-19 wave. The first three meetings were held on 20th April, 24th April and 1st May.

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