

Government of India
Ministry of Home Affairs

North Block, New Delhi-110001
Dated 24th May, 2020

ORDER

In continuation of Ministry of Home Affairs' Orders No.40-3/2020-DM-I(A) dated 17th May, 2020, 19th May, 2020 and 20th May, 2020 and in exercise of the powers, conferred under Section 10(2)(I) of the Disaster Management Act, the undersigned, in his capacity as Chairperson, National Executive Committee, hereby issue Standard Operating Protocol (SOP), for ***movement of Indian Nationals stranded outside the country and of specified persons to travel abroad, as Annexed***, in supersession of MHA order of even number dated 5th May, 2020 to Ministries/ Departments of Government of India, State /Union Territory Governments and State /Union Territory Authorities with the directions for its strict implementation.


24/05/2020
Home Secretary

To: (As per list attached)

1. The Secretaries of Ministries /Departments of Government of India.
2. The Chief Secretaries/Administrators of States/Union Territories.

Copy to:

- i) All Members of the National Executive Committee.
- ii) Member Secretary, National Disaster Management Authority.

A. Standard Operating Protocol (SOP) for movement of Indian Nationals stranded outside the country

In order to contain the spread of COVID-19 pandemic, international travel of passengers has been prohibited under MHA's Orders related to lockdown measures. As per information available, many Indian Nationals who had travelled to different countries before the lockdown, on various purposes such as employment, studies/ internships, tourism, business, etc., are stranded abroad. Due to their prolonged stay abroad, they are facing distress and are desirous of returning to India urgently. Apart from the above cases, there are other Indian Nationals who need to visit India in medical emergencies or death of a family member.

2. In order to facilitate the movement of such Indian Nationals, the following SoP is hereby laid down:

- i. Such persons will register themselves with the Indian Missions in the country where they are stranded, along with necessary details as prescribed by MEA.
- ii. They will travel to India by non scheduled commercial flights as allowed by Ministry of Civil Aviation (MOCA); and ships as allowed by Department of Military Affairs (DMA)/ Ministry of Shipping (MOS). Only those crew and staff, who are tested COVID-19 negative, will be allowed to operate these flights/ ships.
- iii. Priority will be given to compelling cases in distress, including migrant workers/ labourers who have been laid off, short term visa holders faced with expiry of visas, persons with medical emergency/ pregnant women/ elderly, those required to return to India due to death of family member, and students.
- iv. The cost of travel, as specified by the carrier, will be borne by such travellers.
- v. Based on the registrations received, MEA will prepare flight/ ship wise database of all such travellers, including details such as name, age, gender, mobile phone number, place of residence, place of final destination; and information on RT-PCR test taken and its result. This data base will be shared by MEA with the respective State/ UT in advance.
- vi. MEA will designate State/ UT wise nodal officers, who will co-ordinate with the nodal officers designated for this purpose by the respective States/ UTs.
- vii. MEA will display with at least two days notice, the schedule (day, place and time of arrival) of the incoming flight/ ship, on their online digital platform.
- viii. All travellers will also be required to give an undertaking that they are making the journey at their own risk.
- ix. Passengers arriving through the land borders will also have to undergo the same protocol as above, and only those who are asymptomatic will be enabled to cross the border into India.

- x. The Guidelines for international arrivals, including for quarantine arrangements, dated May 24, 2020, issued by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) will be followed. A copy of the Guidelines is enclosed.

B. Standard Operating Protocol (SOP) for movement of persons stranded in India who are desirous to travel abroad

In order to contain the spread of COVID-19 pandemic, international travel of passengers has been prohibited under MHA's Orders related to lockdown measures. As per information available, many persons are stranded in India who desirous to travel abroad urgently for various purposes.

2. In order to facilitate the movement of such persons, the following SoP is hereby laid down:
- i. Such persons will apply to Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) or to any agency designated by MoCA for this purpose, along with necessary details, including the places of departure and arrival, as prescribed by MoCA.
 - ii. Only those persons shall be allowed to travel to the destination countries, who are citizens of that country; who hold visa of at least one year duration of that country; and green card or OCI card holder. In cases of medical emergency or death in the family, Indian Nationals holding six month visa can also be allowed.
 - iii. The travel from India shall be by on the non-scheduled commercial flights that are allowed by MoCA for bringing back stranded Indian Nationals from abroad.
 - iv. Indian seafarers/ crew seeking to accept contracts to serve on vessels abroad, can travel on the non-scheduled commercial flights departing from India under the Vande Bharat Mission or other flights arranged by their employers subject to clearance given by the Ministry of Shipping.
 - v. Before the tickets of such persons are confirmed, MoCA will ensure that the destination country allows entry of such persons in that country. The conditions, if any, imposed by the destination country, will have to be fulfilled by the person intending to travel.
 - vi. The cost of travel, as specified by the carrier, will be borne by such travellers.
 - vii. At the time of boarding the flight, MoCA will ensure that all travellers undergo thermal screening as per health protocol. Only asymptomatic travellers would be allowed to board the flight.
 - viii. While on board the flight, required precautions such as wearing of masks, environmental hygiene, respiratory hygiene, hand hygiene etc. are to be observed by airline staff, crew and all passengers.

