Gangtok, March 19: (IPR) Chief Secretary Shri S.C Gupta took stock of the level of preparedness for prevention of Covid 19 in the State in the first meeting of the State Task Force, today.

The meeting was attended by officers of the State Task Force, and was joined by the District Collectors and officials of all four districts over video conferencing.

The meeting laid emphasis on the preventive measures in place by the Government, and areas which needed urgent intervention. It was decided that all non-essential work in Government offices needed to be suspended for the time being to avoid movement and gathering of people at work place. All heads of departments and District Collectors were directed to issue necessary orders to this effect.

It was informed that a substantial amount of fund has been transferred to the Health Department from the Chief Minister’s Relief Fund, for the purchase of new equipment and necessary essentials for quarantine wards and health facilities. The Chief Secretary directed the District Collectors to requisition for additional fund, if necessary, from the Health Department, especially for the up-gradation of quarantine facilities in the district and sub-divisions.

The need for restricting the movement of labour force, especially along Rangpo-Mamring was discussed and necessary directions issued. In order to make tourists and visitors aware of the restrictions on travel, the Transport Department would be sticking posters with travel advisory on taxis plying from Siliguri. Likewise, the Chief Secretary suggested for a medical team to be stationed at SNT complex, Siliguri, and all passengers travelling by SNT buses to be thoroughly screened, to avoid overcrowding at Rangpo and Melli check posts.

Regarding movement of students studying in other States and cities following the outbreak of Corona Virus, it was decided that those who have already started or have reached the State will invariably have to report to the authorities and need to be home quarantined. However, those students who are still in the cities should be advised to stay put wherever they are, and avoid travelling to Sikkim. The Chief Secretary directed for an advisory to be issued especially to the parents to adhere to the travel restrictions.

The Chief Secretary advised all the Heads of Departments and the District Collectors to exercise their authority and issue relevant Orders whenever necessary. He urged all the officers to put their best foot forward to follow the common protocol being advocated country-wide for prevention of Covid-19. He said that the State Task Force will meet regularly to take stock of the situation.
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