

India reviews preparedness in wake of emerging global Ebola crisis

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Chairing a high level meeting at New Delhi on October 16, the cabinet secretary Mr Ajit Seth reviewed the state of preparedness in the context of emerging global crisis on Ebola. In a video conference with chief secretaries and health secretaries of 19 states and UTs which have an international airport or a seaport, he took stock of the measures being undertaken for strengthening the preparedness, surveillance, and response system in the respective states.

Those present included health secretary, home secretary, shipping secretary and secretaries or representatives of D/o health research, civil aviation, and external affairs were also present.

The preparedness measures including infection control practices to be followed by the States and UTs have already been communicated to the states. The state Governments informed during the meeting that these protocols have been put in place and all inbound passengers are being screened.

Till October 15, 2014, a total of 22,150 passengers have been screened, of which 7 were identified to be at medium risk and 56 at high risk while the others were categorized at low risk. Low risk passengers are given general advice on the virus while medium and high risk passengers are kept under observation for a further period of 30 days and their blood samples tested. A tracking system has been put in place under the Integrated Disease Surveillance Program (IDSP).

State Governments informed that in accordance with the protocol, they have identified hospitals and isolation ward for Ebola treatment. Central teams have been asked to inspect the adequacy of preparations in these hospitals.