

BP Sharma takes over as new health secretary

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In a recent bureaucratic reshuffle by the Modi government on February 01, 2015, the senior IAS officer, Mr Bhanu Pratap Sharma has been appointed as health secretary in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Mr Sharma, a 1981 batch IAS officer of Bihar cadre, is at present establishment officer and special secretary in the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT).

His predecessor, Mr Lov Verma, a 1978 batch IAS officer of Uttar Pradesh cadre has been given the responsibility of Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities as a secretary. It is important to note that he has only one year left to his retirement. He had recently expressed his desire to achieve 'Immunization Mission 2020' health goals during an event 'PEDICON' event by the Indian Academy of Pediatrics. His transfer is apparently being taken as a step towards replacement of bureaucrats appointed by the previous regime.

New health secretary reviews swine flu situation

Recently on February 03, Mr B P Sharma reviewed preparedness of the states affected with H1N1 to manage the situation, here today. Mr Sharma held a video conference meeting with senior health officials of states of Telangana, Kerala, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh, and with officials of government of Delhi.

As per the minister, "Situation was reviewed in terms of the adequacy of medicines and personal protective equipment such as masks with the state health departments, along with number of adequately equipped and functioning isolation wards. The review also included the training provided to the doctors, rapid response teams and para-medical staff at various district and other government hospitals, in addition to the IEC campaigns mounted to create awareness among the masses regarding the preventive steps to be taken."

The health ministry had advised the states to ensure that all necessary steps be taken to prevent increase in number of casualty by informing the people to approach the public health facilities in time for effective treatment, and to educate them on ways to prevent it.

The union government is closely monitoring the situation in the states and has assured them all assistance in terms of medicine, testing kits, personal protective equipment etc. Central teams have been sent to Telangana, Rajasthan and Gujarat to assess the situation and help them to manage the cases.