Webinar
on
Health and Safety Measures for Police Personnel on COVID-19

19-Feb-2022

Organized by

GUJARAT
INSTITUTE OF
DISASTER
MANAGEMENT
BUILDING RESILIENCE

Gujarat Institute of Disaster Management

1. Background

The novel Corona virus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is a global health crisis which has affected a huge population the world over. The rapid spread of the disease worldwide and uncertainties as to its evolution demand a global response in which law enforcement services including police personnel play a crucial role in contributing to the effort to control the disease and promoting safer communities.

Police personnel are among the frontline workers performing duties for containing the spread of the diseases. Since they have to interact with the public on a daily basis, they are more vulnerable to the corona virus disease. Hence, it is imperative to make police personnel aware of the precautions to be taken while performing their assigned tasks in order to ensure that the strategy adopted for containing COVID-19 spread remains sustainable. In view of such cases, it is considered expedient safety measures to reiterate the precautions and measures to be taken.

This training emphasizes on the hazards associated with policing duty, the risks involved and the risk management that should be followed to protect themselves against COVID- 19.

To avoid exacerbating integrational inequalities and to implement effective policing in building a culture of resilience, it requires to anticipate the impact of mitigation and recovery measures across different age groups, by applying effective Disaster Risk Governance, which addresses *Priority 2*: Strengthening Disaster Risk Governance to Managing Disaster Risks. Keeping in view of greater engagements of these forums, GIDM has planned to organize a Webinar on "**Health and Safety Measures for Police Personnel on COVID-19**" scheduled on **19-Feb-2022**, online.

2. Rationale

With the advent of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (**SFDRR 2015 – 2030**), there has been a paradigm shift from '**Managing Disasters**' to '**Disaster Risk Management**'. Along with this, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (**Sustainable Development Goals**) is steering our world towards sustainable development as an overarching agreement amongst all the nations. GIDM, through its capacity development programs, is fostering the concerted ideology of Risk Informed Planning and Disaster Resilient Sustainable Development.

Since long and according to the conventional and contemporary understanding, police force has been seen as a crucial player in Disaster Response and Pre-Emptive Response measures, but,

undoubtedly the role of police in the overall gamut of DRM is something that needs to be looked into.

The Indian Police Force has been on the forefront to maintain law and order, support the health system, guide the public and are on the battlefront as intrepid <u>COVID warriors</u>. There had never been any such crisis before, yet, the police personnel have been able to deal with the situation with energy, efficiency and, in most cases, with empathy. Hence, it is heartening to see how the police rose to the occasion and not only met the expectations of the people but, perhaps, went beyond the call of duty.

GIDM has initiated various capacity development activities on the subject across the State. Policy makers in local and National Governments, International Organizations and concerned Organizations, must be encouraged to ensure that DRM is pursued in such a way that it reduces the Risk(s). Prevention, Mitigation and Preparedness for any probable disaster are essential and proactive steps to deal with any emergency. Each stakeholder needs to develop and enhance its systems, skills and resources to enable the department to perform their respective roles and responsibilities on the onset of the disaster.

2.1 Aim and Objectives
Under this, the following specific objectives will be pursued -
- To give an overview of COVID-19, its mode of transmission, symptoms and preventive measures;
- To outline the hazards and risks involved for Police force during COVID-19 pandemic;
- Understand what Disaster Risk is and how it is a function of existing / new hazards, different dimensions of Vulnerability and the Exposure of the people / assets at large;
- To understand the role of police in the whole gamut of DRM, stimulating them to actively participate in capacity building and preparedness phases, which includes being a part of assessment of risks and vulnerabilities at the local level, make action / contingency plans for an emergency / extreme event;
- Protective measures and health safety protocols for the Police force engaged in various duties during COVID pandemic and more specifically in the new paradigm;
- Representative examples / Best practices / Case studies from across the State.

Key Words: First Responders, Communities, Risk Management, Policing

2.2 Legal Mandates

On the occasion of an event of disaster, sometimes the State & District level authorities cannot afford to wait for response of specialized forces, like NDRF/Armed Forces/SDRF. Moreover, on many occasions, it might not be advisable or feasible to obtain/deploy specialized armed forces and NDRF/SDRF. At the same time, due to police's proximity to the incident sites, familiarity with the local terrain, wider reach and better knowledge of background of the locality and culture, established communication system, they are one of the first and best responders to help manage any crisis situation. Hence, Gujarat Police machinery must gain expertise in effectively handling disasters through carefully designed training programmes.

The *Gujarat State Disaster Management Act, 2003* has broadly defined the Role of Police in Disaster Management: (a) giving of warning; (b) carrying out search and rescue operations, and (c) carrying relief and rehabilitation operations. In addition to these, *other general functions as specified in the State Disaster Management Plan* as directed by the Collector at the time of an event of disaster in particular are: (a) Ensure that the communication system is in order, which shall be made available, free of charge, for being used for transmission and receipt of messages in connection with a disaster; (b) Identify the personnel and provide adequate training for the purposes of disaster management so that the services of such personnel are readily available; (c) Conduct disaster management drills periodically and; (d) Provide such assistance to the Authority, the Commissioner and the Collector and take such other steps as may be necessary for disaster management.

With above mentioned mandate stating vital role of Police in various phases of management of a disaster, it is important that appropriate time is given for capacity building at various levels of the department. This gradual upgradation of skills and technical knowhow of the Gujarat Police will gradually make the State better prepared for disasters by reducing gaps between controlled and uncontrolled crisis.

Moreover, Target E of Sendai Framework talks about developing local DRR strategies which are in line with the State or National level strategies. The police force can play an integral role in development of such strategies, however, they are mostly relegated to be used only during the response phase. Thus, this training program would stimulate the involvement of police in the process of disaster risk management and not merely be at the forefront of response.

3. Targeted Participants

The target group for this program will be the L2 level of stakeholders from *Uniform Services*, viz. Police Force (DySP/PI/PSI), SDRF/SRPF (DySP/PI/PSI), Western Railway Police (A'bad/Vadodara) (DySP/PI/PSI), Home Guards (Cmdt/DyCmdt), Civil Defence (Divisional Warden/Dy.Divisional Warden/Post Warden) etc. and Faculties/Researchers/Trainees working with Universities/Police Training Academy/Schools from across the State.

References

1. National DM Plan, 2005, DM Policy, 2009 and GSDM Plan, 2003
2. The Gujarat Police Act, 1951 and Police Manual
3. PM's 10 Point Agenda
4. Training Module on Understanding Disaster Risk Management, GIDM 2019
5. PDRC on Role of Police for Disaster Risk Management, GIDM 2018
6. All presentations

   https://gidm.gujarat.gov.in/

Program Schedule

Saturday, 19 Feb' 2022

14:30 – 14:45   *---Reporting at respective locations---*

14:45 – 15:00   **Welcome, About GIDM, GIDM portal, Audio-Visual Film, 5 hrs e-CCDRM course, Details about Study Material Provided**
Dr. Chintan Pathak, APPM, GIDM

15:00 – 15:15   **Opening Remarks**
Shri Nisarg Dave, Director (DM), GIDM

15:15 – 16:00   **Basics of COVID-19 and DRM perspective**
Dr. Abhiyant Tiwari, APPM, GIDM
At the end of this session participants will be able to:
- *Basic of COVID-19: Terminology, Origin, Transmission and Impacts*
- *Potential exposure to COVID-19 while on duty*
- *Do's and Don'ts: COVID appropriate behaviour*
- *Response by India and Gujarat*
- *COVID-19 Vaccination: Myths and Clarity*
- *The mitigation strategy for Infection Prevention and Control*
- *COVID-19: Health and Safety for Police Personnel & their families*

16:00 – 17:00   **Health and Safety for Police Personnel and their families**
Dr. Mahendra Chawda, RMO I/c, PDU Hospital, Rajkot
At the end of this session participants will be able to:
- *Types of Public Health Orders*
- *How to Prepare for Public Health related Enforcement Activities*
- *Protection and Security: Analyzing the uncertainty created by the Pandemic*
- *Proposing principles for new paradigm*
- *Intermediate and long term interventions*

17:00 – 17:30   **Introduction to Stress Management**
Dr. Pooja Pushkarna, Chief Psychologist, Apollo Hospitals
At the end of the session, Participants will be able to
- *Depiction of Success Stories in Gujarat*
- *Define Psychosocial Care and Counselling Techniques used in Disasters*
- *Home Quarantine, Community Surveillance and Field Supervision*
- *Scientific Management of Dead Bodies and Psycho-social Care*
- *Explain effective confidence building mechanism to work towards building resilience*

17:30 – 17:45   **Question-Answer, Feedback, Conclusion**
Dr. Pooja Pushkarna, Chief Psychologist, Apollo Hospitals
Dr. Chintan Pathak, APPM, GIDM