R.P. Meena
Joint Secretary to the Government of India
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
(Department of Health Research)



आर. पी. मीना संयुक्त सचिव, भारत सरकार स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण मंत्रालय (स्वास्थ्य अनुसंधान विभाग)

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Department of Health Research

influenza, swine flu etc. and to put in place an early warning system for various viral epidemics, the Union Cabinet has approved a Centrally Sponsored Plan scheme on 27th June 2013 for establishing a network of regional, state and local Viral Research and Diagnostic Laboratories (VRDLs) across the country.

- 2. The Government of India will set up over 160 viral research and diagnostic laboratories across the country in this Scheme. Under the Scheme 19VRDLs (two State level and seventeen Medical College level) are to be established in your State. Once these laboratories will be functional, it is expected that any viral epidemic occurring in your State will be diagnosed quickly to improve the public health response to these viral diseases/epidemics.
- 3. The performance of this scheme with respect of Maharashtra was reviewed and it was revealed that only two locations for Medical College level so far have been finalised. The preparatory work at the other seventeen VRDLs (two State Level and fifteen medical college level) locations are yet to be finalised. Also, various administrative issues were found needing attention pertaining particularly to the procurement of the equipment, renovation/construction of buildings and other miscellaneous preparatory works. I am also attaching a list of such administrative issues pertaining Maharashtra needing urgent attention.
- 4. Although most of the Viral Research & Diagnostic Laboratories are being established in the Medical Colleges and the involvement of Medical College administration has been encouraging, however, it is felt that involvement of the State Medical Education Department would help in accelerating the pace of the implementation of this scheme.
- 5. We are also planning a review of this schemes pertaining to Maharashtra in near future and I would request for the time, date and venue of the review meeting shortly. Meanwhile, the issues identified may please be got addressed and a nodal officer from the state government to please be nominated for this scheme, with his full communication details. As such proactive involvement of the Medical Education Department of the State Government is solicited.

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6. For the sake of convenience, the approved guidelines for the further scheme can be accessed at the website of Department of Health Research at www.dhr.gov.in. For any clarification, the undersigned or Dr. Nivedita Gupta, Scientist E/Deputy Director, Indian Council of Medical Research, Ansari Nagar, New Delhi – 110029 (Mobile No.9313978049/ Office No.26589397) may also be contacted.

with regards.

Yours sincerely

(R. P. Meena)

Smt. Sujata Sounik

Principal Secretary (Public Health & Family Welfare) Government of Maharashtra 10th Floor, B Wing GT Hospital Complex Building Mumbai-400 001 Maharashtra

ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA

I. AHARASHTRA	LOCATIONS ALREADY IDENTIFIED:	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN:
	State Level	1. The locations for both the State Level VRDLs are yet to be identified in the absence of any suggestions/ proposals from the State Government. State Government is requested to come up with proposals at the earliest, preferably within 3 months so that the funds could be tied up.
	Medical College Level Indira Gandhi Medical college, Nagpur	2. A total budget of Rs. 1, 29, 00,000/was released by DHR, in November 2014, for establishment of a Medical College level VRDL at Indira Gandhi Medical College, Nagpur (0.7 cr for equipment; Rs. 0.37 cr for renovation / civil work and Rs. 0.22 cr for staff and consumables). IGMC, Nagpur should expedite the work. Process of Procurement of Equipment and renovation/ construction of premises for laboratories, etc., may please be expedited, if necessary administrative approvals/ enhancement of financial powers of HOD/ Director of the medical college may be considered.
		3. In all, 17 Medical College Level VRDLs are to be established. IGMC, Nagpur and GMC, Sangli have already been identified for the purpose. The State Govt. further needs to submit proposals and MoAs to DHR in respect of the remaining 15 locations.
		4. Utilisation Certificate in respect of funds already utilised may please be furnished at the earliest, filling which it will not be possible to release any further funds to Maharashtra. With competing demands from other States, the funds may be diverted to the States from whom the Utilisation Certificates are received well in time.