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## भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान अनुसंधान परिषद

### INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH

स्वास्थ्य अनुसंधान विभाग ( स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण मंत्रालय )

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RESEARCH ( MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE )

वी. रामलिंगस्वामी भवन, अन्सारी नगर, पोस्ट बॉक्स 4911, नई दिल्ली-110 029

V.RAMALINGASWAMI BHAWAN, ANSARI NAGAR, POST BOX-4911, NEW DELHI-110029

No.189/2015-Admn-II

Dated: 3/9/2015.

To,

The Directors/Directors-in-Charge of all  
Permanent Institutes/Centres of the Council

Sir/Madam,

I am directed to send herewith a copy of OM No. Z.28015/74/2015-IH dated 26<sup>th</sup> August, 2015 received from Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, New Delhi regarding Guidelines on foreign engagement on Bio-safety and Bio-security matter for your information and necessary action.

Yours faithfully,

(Bharat Bhushan)  
Administrative Officer  
for Director General

Encl: as above

Z.28015/74/2015-IH  
Government of India  
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare  
(International Health Section)

Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi

Dated: 26<sup>th</sup> August, 2015

DG: IHS OFFICE  
Diary No. 2567  
Date: 11/9/15

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

**Subject: Guidelines on foreign engagement on Bio-safety and Bio-security matters**

The undersigned is directed to forward a copy of communication No. 191/3/1/2015-TS, dated 27.07.2015, received from Cabinet Secretariat, on the above subject, and to inform that the following recommendations have been made by the Committee of Secretaries:

- Political clearance would not be necessary for non-Government officials, with regard to foreign engagement on Bio-safety and Bio-security matters.
- MEA shall arrange online political clearance for international engagements on bio-safety and bio-security matters.
- All stakeholders, including government funded laboratories, to organize regular sensitization workshops for orientation of personnel on the provisions contained in the said Guidelines and the rules/ regulations related to bio-safety / bio-security.

Encl: As stated.

Ad(Admin)

Head, ECO

To circulate

to all  
11/9/15

Director also  
& heads of divisions

N. K. SWAMY

(N Kumara Swamy)

Under Secretary to the Govt. of India

Tel. No. 011-23061521

- DGHS, Directorate General of Health Services (Dte.GHS), Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi-110011
- Secretary (DHR), V. Ramalingaswamy Bhawan, Ansari Nagar, New Delhi - 110029, Tel: 011-23736086
- Director, National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), Directorate General of Health Services (Dte.GHS), 22, Sham Nath Marg, New Delhi-110 054, Tel: 011-23913148, Fax: 011-23922677.
- Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), V Ramalingaswamy Bhawan, P.O. Box No. 4911, Ansari Nagar, New Delhi -110029, Tel: 011-26588895, Fax: 011-26588662

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DT: NO 11/5 A-11

02/09/2015

f.s

**SECRET/ MOST IMMEDIATE**

Copy No. 3

No. 180495/15  
Date: 29/7

No. 191/3/1/2015-TS)  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (BHARAT SARKAR)  
CABINET SECRETARIAT (MANTRIMANDAL SACHIVALAYA)  
RASHTRAPATI BHAWAN

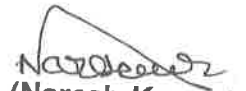
New Delhi, dated the 27<sup>th</sup> July, 2015

**Subject: Guidelines on foreign engagement on Bio-safety and Bio-security matters.**

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Kindly find enclosed a copy of minutes of the meeting of the Committee of Secretaries (CoS) held at 12.00 Noon on 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 2015 in the Committee Room, Cabinet Secretariat, Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi, on the subject mentioned above.

2. It is requested that in pursuance of the decisions of the Meeting of Committee of Secretaries, an action taken report may be sent to this Secretariat.

  
(Naresh Kumar)

Under Secretary to the Government of India

Tel: 2301 6184

Section Tel. No.: 2301 3092

Encl: Doc. No. CD(TS) - 100/2015

(3 pages)

- Dr. S. Jaishankar, Foreign Secretary, M/o External Affairs.
- Shri G. Mohan Kumar, Defence Secretary, M/o Defence.
- Shri B.P. Sharma, Secretary, D/o Health & Family Welfare.
- Shri B.P. Sharma, Secretary, D/o Health Research.
- Shri Ashok Lavasa, Secretary, M/o Environment, Forests and Climate Change.
- Shri Siraj Hussain, Secretary, D/o Agriculture and Cooperation.
- Dr. K. Vijay Raghavan, Secretary, D/o Bio-technology.
- Dr. K. Vijay Raghavan, Secretary, D/o Scientific and Industrial Research.
- Dr. Ashutosh Sharma, Secretary, D/o Science and Technology.
- Shri S. Ayyappan, Secretary, D/o Agricultural Research & Education.
- Shri R.K. Jain, Secretary, National Disaster Management Authority.
- Dr. S. Christopher, Secretary, D/o Defence Research & Development.

**Copy for information to:-**

- Shri Nripendra Mishra, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister.
- Shri Ajit Doval, National Security Adviser {with reference to his D.O. letter No.4122381 (PMO)/2015 dated 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2015}.

  
31/7/15  
Shri Shabeem

  
(Naresh Kumar)

Under Secretary to the Government of India

**INTERNAL CIRCULATION (only one copy):**

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17-copies

  
JS (AP)  
PS  
28/7/15

  
SoC(H)  
USHH  
N. G. Swamy  
30/7/15

**CABINET SECRETARIAT  
RASHTRAPATI BHAWAN**

Doc. No. CD (TS) - 100/2015

Copy No. 3

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COMMITTEE OF SECRETARIES**

Venue : Committee Room, Cabinet Secretariat,  
Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi.

Date : 22.07.2015 Time of Meeting: 12:00 Noon

**P R E S E N T**

Shri P.K. Sinha, Cabinet Secretary.  
Ms. Gauri Kumar, Secretary (C), Cabinet Secretariat.  
Ms. Sujata Mehta, Secretary (M&ER), M/o External Affairs.  
Shri B.P. Sharma, Secretary, D/o Health & Family Welfare.  
Shri Ashok Lavasa, Secretary, M/o Environment, Forests & Climate Change.  
Dr. K. Vijay Raghavan, Secretary, D/o Bio-technology and D/o Scientific and Technical Research (Addl. Charge).  
Dr. Ashutosh Sharma, Secretary, D/o Science & Technology.  
Dr. S. Christopher, Secretary, D/o Defence Research & Development.  
Shri R.K. Jain, Secretary, National Disaster Management Authority.  
Sh. Ashok Dalwai, Additional Secretary, D/o Agriculture & Cooperation.  
Shri S.P.S. Parihar, Joint Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat.  
Shri Suresh Kumar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Defence.  
Dr. P.K. Chakrabarty, Assistant DG, D/o Agricultural Research & Education.  
Ms. Manju Rajpal, Director, Cabinet Secretariat.  
Shri Chinmay Naik, Deputy Secretary, M/o External Affairs.

**Subject: Guidelines on foreign engagement on Bio-safety and Bio-security matters. [F.No.191/3/1/2015-TS]**

A meeting of Committee of Secretaries, chaired by Cabinet Secretary was held on 22/07/2015 at 12.00 Noon in the Committee Room of Cabinet Secretariat, Rashtrapati Bhawan to finalise 'Draft Guidelines on foreign engagement on Bio-safety and Bio-security matters' prepared by Ministry of External Affairs.

2. Secretary (M&ER), MEA informed that India is a signatory to Biological Weapons Convention and Chemical Weapons Convention. As such, there are international commitments and obligations to be met for which it is necessary to observe certain protocols while interacting with foreign inter-locutors during international engagements. In the absence of sensitive handling of these matters, concerns are likely to be expressed about adequacy of knowledge and appropriate level of safety/security measures in India. Therefore, it is only appropriate that broad guidelines for international engagement on bio-safety and bio-security are made available to the concerned at

Ministries/Departments and institutional level. MEA has prepared draft guidelines which were discussed with the Ministries of Health and Family Welfare, Agriculture, Environment and Forests and Climate Change, and Departments of Bio Technology, Science & Technology, Scientific and Industrial Research, DRDO and NDMA.

3. Secretary, (M&ER) further informed that views of the concerned Ministries/Departments have been incorporated in the draft guidelines and suggested that the guidelines be approved. It was pointed out to MEA that the following three issues raised by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, DRDO and Indian Council of Agriculture Research may also be addressed in the draft guidelines:-

- i. Whether Departments are required to seek political clearance for organising Workshops on each occasion, on case by case basis, or a series of workshops can also be proposed as a part of an overall project, for one time approval by MEA.
- ii. Department of Agricultural Research and Education has moved a Bill for setting up Agriculture Bio-Security Authority which is pending in Parliament. Once the Authority comes into existence, it may be appropriate to place all issues related to Bio-security for examination by this authority, before seeking political clearance from MEA.
- iii. It may be appropriate to set up a Working Group/Management Board to implement and enforce Bio-risk Management practices for better coordination on international engagements.

4. The matter was deliberated upon and it was felt that Departments may have the option of seeking either case by case approvals or an umbrella approval for a series of events which may have to be organised under one proposal. MEA agreed with this view. As regards, the proposal of Agriculture Bio-Security Authority or Working Group to enforce Bio-Risk Management practices, it was felt that such measures would only enhance the effectiveness of bio-security/bio-safety and Departments are welcome to undertake such measures.

5. A view was expressed that technology is evolving very rapidly and it is difficult to monitor its spread. Besides Government funded institutions, there are many private players who are also engaged in scientific endeavour. It is likely that some of these private institutions are not following the required protocol for international engagement, whereas the Government institutions are generally following the required protocols. The appropriateness of bringing in more regulations may have to be examined in this context. MEA representatives reiterated that the idea behind these guidelines is not to restrict scientific enterprise and that guidelines are meant to sensitize the scientific community and stake holders to follow certain protocols which are necessary for international engagement.

6. Secretary, Department of Science and Technology observed that the draft guidelines would largely address the issue of formal engagement with international community. However, intangible communication, outside formal conferences, is not easy to capture. Therefore, some thought may also be given to this aspect. Moreover, the proforma for seeking political clearance which is enclosed with the guidelines, requires information on expected outcome, level of participation and consultation with Indian Missions etc. which may not always be feasible for participants to provide. Therefore, the proforma may be modified suitably. It was also pointed out that political

clearance should not be necessary for non-Government officials. MEA agreed with this view.

7. A suggestion was made that political clearance by MEA may be made available, online for the purpose of international engagement on bio-safety and bio-security. MEA agreed to examine the suggestion. Other participants informed that they have gone through the draft guidelines and have no further comments to offer.

8. After detailed deliberations, the following recommendations were made:-

- i. Proforma related to political clearance which is enclosed with the guidelines, may be appropriately simplified by MEA. Besides, political clearance would not be necessary for non-Government officials.
- ii. MEA to arrange for online political clearance for international engagements on bio-safety and bio-security matters.
- iii. All stakeholders, including government funded laboratories, to organise regular sensitization workshops for orientation of personnel on the provisions contained in these guidelines and the rules/regulations related to bio-safety/bio-security.

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