

**No.40-3/2020-DM-I(A)**  
**Government of India**  
**Ministry of Home Affairs**

North Block, New Delhi-110001

Dated 22 August, 2020

**ORDER**

In continuation of Ministry of Home Affairs' Order No.40-3/2020-DM-I(A) dated 29<sup>th</sup> July, 2020 and in exercise of the powers, conferred under Section 10(2)(l) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, the undersigned, in his capacity as Chairperson, National Executive Committee, hereby issue Standard Operating Protocol (SOP), for ***international travel on non-scheduled commercial flights under Vande Bharat Scheme and Air Transport Bubble arrangement***, in supersession of MHA order of even number dated 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2020 to Ministries/Departments of Government of India, State/Union Territory Governments and State/Union Territory Authorities with the directions for its strict implementation.

  
Home Secretary

To: (As per list attached)

1. The Secretaries of Ministries/Departments of Government of India
2. The Chief Secretaries/Administrators of States/Union Territories.

Copy to:

- i) All Members of the National Executive Committee.
- ii) Member Secretary, National Disaster Management Authority.

**Annexure to Ministry of Home Affairs' (MHA) Order No.40-3/2020-DM-I (A)  
dated 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 2020**

**Standard Operating Protocol (SOP) for travel on Vande Bharat and Air Transport  
Bubble flights**

In order to contain the spread of COVID-19 pandemic, Central Government had taken a series of steps to curtail the inward/ outward movement of international passengers (both foreigners and Indians) in a calibrated manner. Further international air travel of passengers (except as permitted by MHA) has been prohibited under MHA's Orders related to lockdown/ Unlock guidelines. For bringing back Indian Nationals stranded abroad, Government of India has launched '**Vande Bharat**' mission. In addition, Ministry of Civil Aviation (MOCA) has entered into the '**Air Transport Bubbles**' arrangements with few countries to allow limited commercial passenger services on reciprocal basis, when regular international flights are suspended as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. In order to facilitate the movement of persons on these limited international non-scheduled commercial flights, the following SoP is hereby laid down:

**A. In-bound flights:**

- i. The category of persons, who will be eligible to travel on these flights, will be as permitted by MHA from time to time.
- ii. Persons desirous to travel to India *on Vande Bharat* flights, will register themselves with the Indian Missions in the country where they are stranded/ residing, along with necessary details as prescribed by MEA. Such a registration may not be required on flights operating under Air Transport Bubbles arrangements.
- iii. They will travel to India by non-scheduled commercial flights as allowed by Ministry of Civil Aviation (MOCA); and ships as allowed by Department of Military Affairs (DMA)/ Ministry of Shipping (MOS). Only those crew and staff, who are tested COVID-19 negative, will be allowed to operate these flights/ ships.
- iv. SOP for the operations of these flights/ ships will be as issued by MOCA/ DMA or MOS from time to time.
- v. Priority will be given to compelling cases of in distress, including migrant workers/ labourers who have been laid off, short term visa holders faced with expiry of visas, persons with medical emergency/ pregnant women/ elderly persons or those required to return to India due to death of family member, and students.
- vi. The cost of travel, as specified by the carrier, will be borne by such travellers.
- vii. Based on the registrations received for Vande Bharat flights, MEA will prepare flight/ ship wise database of all such travellers, including details such as name, age, gender, mobile phone number, place of residence, place of final destination; and information on RT-PCR test taken and its result. This data base will be shared by MEA with the respective State/ UT in advance.
- viii. In case of flights operating under air transport bubbles, passenger manifest containing the same details as given above for Vande Bharat flights or in a revised format as may be finalised by MEA with the country concerned, will be submitted by the airlines to the Indian Mission in the country concerned

before operation of each flight with a copy to the State/ UT Government of the destination airport in India.

- ix. MEA/ MOCA will designate State/ UT wise nodal officers, who will coordinate with the nodal officers designated for this purpose by the respective State/ UT, both for the Vande Bharat flights as well as for the flights operated under air transport bubbles.
- x. MEA and MOCA will display with at least two days' notice, the schedule (day, place and time of arrival) of the incoming flight/ ship, on their online digital platform.
- xi. All travellers will also be required to give an undertaking that they are making the journey at their own risk.
- xii. While on board the flight, required precautions such as wearing of masks, environmental hygiene, respiratory hygiene, hand hygiene etc. are to be observed by airline staff, crew and all passengers.
- xiii. Passengers arriving through the land borders will also have to undergo the same protocol as above.
- xiv. The Guidelines on health protocols and quarantine for international arrivals, as issued by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), from time to time, will be observed.

**B. Out-bound flights:**

- i. The category of persons, who will be eligible to travel on these flights, will be as permitted by MHA from time to time.
- ii. MOCA will display on its website the category of persons eligible to travel out of India.
- iii. Such persons will apply to MoCA or to an agency/ agencies designated by MoCA for this purpose, along with necessary details, including the places of departure and arrival.
- iv. The travel from India shall be on the non-scheduled commercial flights, as are allowed by MoCA.
- v. Indian seafarers/ crew seeking to accept contracts to serve on vessels abroad, can travel on the non-scheduled commercial flights as allowed by MOCA or the flights arranged by their employers subject to clearance given by the Ministry of Shipping.
- vi. Before the tickets of such persons are confirmed, the airline concerned will ensure that the destination country allows entry of such persons with valid visa in that country. The conditions, if any, imposed by the destination country, will have to be fulfilled by the person intending to travel.
- vii. The cost of travel, as specified by the carrier, will be borne by such travellers as prescribed.
- viii. At the time of boarding the flight, MoCA will ensure that all travellers undergo thermal screening as per health protocol. Only asymptomatic travellers would be allowed to board the flight.
- ix. While on board the flight, required precautions such as wearing of masks, environmental hygiene, respiratory hygiene, hand hygiene etc. are to be observed by airline staff, crew and all passengers.