

**ORDER**

Whereas, the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), Goalpara has vide order No. DDMA/Goalpara/37/2020/Pt.I/301-331 - (A) Dated: 26/10/2021 issued consolidated and revised guidelines for the district of Goalpara for containment of COVID - 19 in both rural and urban areas until further order.

Whereas, the situation of COVID 19 in the District has been reviewed and observed that, though the number of COVID 19 patients and positivity rate is declining, the situation is still precarious, for which adequate containment measures for both urban and rural areas are still necessary for containment COVID-19 across the District.

Whereas, the situation of COVID-19 in the State has been further reviewed and the overall case load and positivity rate are declining steadily.

Whereas, certain major festivals in the State such as Chat Puja and Raas festival will be celebrated in the coming months, leading to large congregation of people in the enclosed spaces.

Whereas, the Health and Family Welfare Department, Assam has vide Order NO. HLA 264/2020/55 Dated 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2021 issued general guidelines for Puja and upcoming festivals in Assam. **(Annexure - A)**

Whereas, gatherings in enclosed spaces without prior social distancing and maintenance of the COVID-19 protocols runs the risk of spread of Corona virus and may also give rise to serious difficulties in contact tracing, thereby adversely affecting containment of the spread of COVID-19.

Whereas, it is necessary to formulate norms of public gathering during the forthcoming major festivals in the state in order to ensure that people are able to celebrate these festivals with joy gusto, while at the same time adhering to extant COVID-19 protocols.

Therefore in exercise of the powers, conferred under section 30 (2) (IV), (2) & (2) (XXIX) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 and order from CEO, ASDMA vide order no. ASDMA.28/2021/321 Dated: 09<sup>th</sup> November, 2021, I, the Deputy Commissioner cum Chairman, District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), Goalpara, considering the present COVID-19 situation of the district, which are to be strictly adhered by all the event organizers/visitors/participants of the proposed festivals hereby issue the following directives which will be applicable in both urban and rural areas which will remain in force during the upcoming Chat Puja and Raas Festival until further orders.

**A. Meeting / Gatherings :**

At any open and closed spaces are permitted with the following conditions:

1. In case of open or closed spaces DDMA, Goalpara shall fix the limit of gatherings depending on COVID situation in the district.
2. In closed venues gathering is allowed upto 50% of the seating capacity of hall, auditorium etc.

**B. Guidelines for observing Chat Puja:**

1. All the places and routes leading to the celebration of sites/ghats and river banks etc. should be identified, sanitized and checked. The puja committees should be directed to engage Volunteers at the site of celebrations and necessary guidelines to the Volunteers may given with Do's and Don'ts.
2. Only five persons per family ate allowed at a time in the puja ghats maintain a social distancing and other protocols of COVID-19. The puja committees will ensure that only the religious rituals will be observed.
3. There shall be no Mela/cultural events in connection with the celebration of puja.
4. The Puja committees will not allow any vendor, temporary tea stall/chat house etc. in the vicinity of the Puja pandals.
5. All visitors to puja location shall be subjected to thermal scanning by Puja organizers and no person with any symptom related to COVID-19 shall be allowed to enter the Puja pandals.
6. Strict compliance of social distancing, wearing mask, etc. are to be maintained.
7. All organizers and Volunteers must be at least vaccinated with one dose of vaccine and preferably with two doses of vaccination.
8. In case any person/visitor to Puja panadal is suspected to be symptomatic with COVID-19, it will be the responsibility of the Puja organizers to inform the nearest Government medical facility and arrange for shifting of such persons to the nearest COVID treatment centre.

**C. Guidelines for organizing Raas Festival :**

1. All organizers of the Raas Committee must take permission from the District Administration for organizing Raas Festival, 2021 as per existing rules.
2. The District Administration will convene a meeting of all Raas Committees/Organizers for a detailed briefing on the protocol/guidelines issued by the Government before giving permission in order to ensure compliance with COVID protocols. This is to extend all possible support to the Raas Committees for successful and safe celebration of Raas festival maintaining COVID-19 appropriate protocol.

**(I) Participation in Raas Festival :**

- a. Children below the age of 10 (ten) years and senior citizens above the age of 65 (sixty five) years are not allowed to perform in the Raas festival.
- b. Prior to the start of the first day of Raas, the actors and other participants including volunteers, organizing committee members etc. will have to be tested for COVID-19. This should be done at least 48 hours before the start of the first day of Raas Festival.
- c. In case any participant shows symptoms of COVID-19 subsequently, the organizers will debar such participant from participating and =send the concerned person immediately for COVID-19 testing and subsequent treatment.
- d. Organizers will ensure thermal screening of all participants prior to start of performance every day.