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Police Headquarters, Kerala
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Dated: 17/04/2021

Circular No. 11/2021

Sub: Police Dept. - Handling cases of reported or suspected presence of Radioactive material in the public domain - Guidelines issued for Police Personnel - reg.

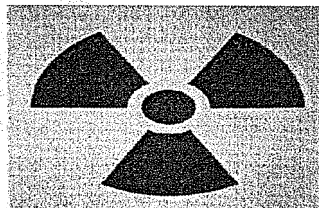
Read: 1) MHA OM No. 31-2/2014-OM.I(A) dated 22/03/2019.
2) Lr. No. 5/12(1)/2006-CSS/ Vol. VII/ 1425 dated 29/01/2021 of DoAE.

It is reported, on the night of 10/01/2021, Kerala Police had arrested two youths near Ranni, Pathanamthitta District, under the suspicion that they are in possession of Uranium. On 11/01/2021 in the afternoon, Kerala Police have approached IREL to arrange for analysis of the material which was under the custody of Police to confirm whether it is Uranium and if so, what is the radioactivity level of the material. Delay in sending the seized item for detailed inspection cannot be accepted at any circumstances.

TRANSPORT OF RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS

Radioactive materials (Radio Isotopes) are used in the country for a variety of applications in the fields of agriculture, medical diagnosis and therapy, non-destructive testing in industry, and various research applications including uses at Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) facilities. Handling of Radioactive materials in the country and its movement in public domain are carried out in a safe and controlled manner adhering to provisions in the Atomic Energy Act (1962) and the rules framed therein. Requirement of Radioactive materials for the above mentioned applications are mainly supplied by the Board of Radiation and Isotope Technology (BRIT), Mumbai, a constituent unit of DAE, and any shortfall in meeting the requirement is met through imports. These materials are transported by road/rail/air/sea to and from the users across the country in addition to movement of Radio Isotopes as mentioned above, there are other nuclear materials, such as nuclear reactor fuel, transported occasionally by road/rail between different units of DAE for which dedicated approved documents (SOPs) are there.

Any consignment having Radioactive material should mandatorily exhibit an internationally accepted symbol for Radioactivity as shown below.



Every consignment of Radioactive material during transport will be carrying a Transport Emergency Card (TREM Card) which enlists the primary steps to be taken in case of an emergency during transport. A typical TREM Card is given as Annexure-A for ready reference.

With the increase in use of Radioactive materials for its industrial, medical and research applications, cases of unauthorized or mis-declared consignments or consignments entering through unapproved route or inadvertent actions due to ignorance have started showing instances of Radioactive material landing up in public domain without regulatory control.

Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) are the identified nodal ministries for taking actions in case of any radiation incident/emergency in public domain. While, DAE is designated as nodal ministry for providing technical advice and support for handling radiological incident/emergency in public domain, Local Police/Security Agencies, SDRF, NDRF etc. are identified as the First Responders for handling such scenarios. Hence, a need is felt to widely disseminate the guidelines for handling situations arising out of such presence of Radioactive materials in the public domain to the public officials concerned. DOAE Guidelines are intended to convey procedures to be followed by officials in the civil administration, such as the District Collector or District Magistrate, Police Officials, Officers in charge of Airports/Seaports/Railways/Public Health Care providers/Officials at Primary Health Care Centres, Border Crossing Posts, Heads of the non-DAE facilities etc. under whose jurisdictions Radioactive materials are being handled or suspected to be present in the public domain.

TYPICAL SCENARIOS ENVISAGED

There are some typical scenarios wherein unauthorized/undesirable presence of radioactivity could be expected/suspected in public domain.

- a) An accident during the transport of Radioactive material.
- b) A fire incident involving Radioactive material in storage/transport.
- c) Unclaimed/damaged Radioactive consignments at Airports/Seaports/Railway/Roadway/Warehouses.
- d) Theft/loss of Radioactive material from an authorized premise like hospital, industrial radiography facility, work site, temporary storage etc.
- e) Presence of container having 'Radiation Symbol', abandoned in a public area such as scrap-yard or garbage dump.
- f) Suspected smuggling/transporting of contraband items in sealed containers displaying radiation symbol.
- g) Reported unauthorized possession/sale/auction/recycling of Radioactive material/Radioactively contaminated material.
- h) Detection and recovery of suspected Radioactive material by Police.
- i) Reported or suspected placing/presence of Radioactive material with malicious intent in public areas or public utilities, etc.
- j) Any incident with malicious intent including threats during transport of Radioactive material.
- k) Reports of suspected radiation induced injuries or symptoms of radiation exposure to individuals.
- l) Any other even posing radiation hazard to member(s) of the public.

GUIDELINES FOR ACTION

The general course of action would be similar, by and large, for all such scenarios. The public officials concerned, such as the District Magistrate or equivalent/ Superintendent of Police or equivalent (Jurisdictional Police)/Officer in charge of the facility such as Airport or Seaport, hospital, etc. The Responsible Officer (RO) should:

1. Call Local Police and Fire Service, the first responders. Inform the matter to DPCs concerned immediately.
2. Inform/send message to the Department of Atomic Energy Control Room (DAE-ECR) about the incident. The full contact details are given in Annexure-B. DAE-ECR Contact basic details are as follows:

Email: daeecr@dae.gov.in


Contacts : +91-9969201364, 022-22023978, 022-22021714

Fax: 022 - 22830441

3. The seized Radioactive item/ material should be kept safely.
4. In case of an emergency arising out of an accident during transportation of Radioactive material, carryout further actions described in the TREM Card (Transport Emergency Card).
 - a. Inspect the package visually. If it is intact, ensure onward journey in the same or another vehicle wearing protective clothing (boots, gloves, overalls, caps etc).
 - b. In case of fire, fight from a distance.
 - c. If the package to be damaged, cordon a distance of 3 meter around the package.
 - d. Rescue injured person, if any, and cordon off the affected site to establish access control.
 - e. Provide medical assistance to the injured/suspected victims (as per need, technical advice to the concerned Districts/Health Officials on the treatment of persons having radiation injury will be extended by DAE's medical expert team).
5. Arrange security of the affected/suspected Radioactive material.
6. Handle any Law & Order situation/contingency that may arise at the affected site.
7. Arrange to provide local assistance that may be required by the Department of Atomic Energy's expert team to carry out their assessments/evaluation at the site.
8. Carry out further actions under the technical advice from DAE's experts.
9. Obtain Technical inputs from DAE experts prior to media briefing/ issue of press release.

All the Officers/personnel in Kerala Police shall be aware of the DOAE Guidelines and shall strictly follow, in case of any information of suspected presence of Radioactive material in the public domain reported/receive by the Local Police.

DPCs shall give wide publicity of MHA and DOAE instructions to all concerned.


Loknath Behera IPS
Director General of Police &
State Police Chief, Kerala

Distribution:-

All DPCs, for n/a.

Copy for info & n/a :-

- All Officers in List A, B, C & D.
- All Unit Heads (including Spl. Units)
- All Officers in PHQ
- Dy. Dir, State Police Media Centre, PHQ.
- ED File / Police Website / D-Space / CA to SPC.