

# FIRST INSTALMENT OF SDRF RELEASED

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Disaster and disaster management

The States can use the funds for COVID-related needs. The picture shows patients undergoing treatment in Jaipur. PTI

The Centre has released the first instalment of the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) to States, in the wake of the second wave of COVID-19 that has claimed thousands of lives since April.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), in a statement, said Rs. 8,873.6 crore had been released, an annual exercise usually done in June.

“As a special dispensation, the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, at the recommendation of the Ministry of Home Affairs, has released in advance of the normal schedule the first instalment of the Central share of the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) for 2021-22 to all the States,” the MHA said. “Normally, the first instalment is released in June as per the recommendations of the Finance Commission. However, in relaxation of the normal procedure, not only has the release of SDRF been advanced, the amount has also been released without waiting for the utilisation certificate of the amount provided to the States in the last financial year. Up to 50% of the amount released, i.e., Rs. 4,436.8 crore can be used by the States for COVID-19 containment measures,” it said.

The MHA said the funds may be used for meeting the cost of oxygen generation and storage plants in hospitals, ventilators, air purifiers, strengthening ambulance services, COVID-19 hospitals, COVID Care Centres, consumables, thermal scanners, personal protective equipment, testing laboratories, testing kits and containment zones, among others.

Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh, one of the first COVID-19 hit States, were allocated Rs. 1,288 crore, Rs. 316.4 crore, Rs. 125.60 crore and Rs. 773.20 crore respectively.

Since Delhi is a Union Territory, the fund is released by the MHA and is included in the Union Budget. The allocation to each State depends on its population and utilisation of such funds in the previous financial year.

## Immediate relief

The SDRF is the primary fund available with State governments as part of their response to notified disasters to meet expenditure on providing immediate relief to victims.

The Centre contributes 75% of the allocation for general category States and Union Territories and 90% for special category States (northeastern, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and J&K).

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