

Government of India

Ministry of Culture

Press Brief

5 November, 2020

SOPs for “Re-opening of Museums, Art Galleries and exhibitions ” on preventive measures to contain spread of COVID-19

1. COVID -19 pandemic has hit the museum and art sector across the world. However, as museums and art galleries are slowly resuming their operations and re-opening their premises, it is imperative that comprehensive guidelines are laid down to prevent transmission of COVID-19 and ensure safety of visitors and staff.

2. All museums and art galleries under administrative control of M/o Culture were closed vide order dated 17 March, 2020 and have been closed since. Since the festive season is here, it has been decided to reopen all museums, art galleries and exhibitions with effect from 10 November, 2020 so that the public can once again enjoy exploring rich cultural heritage of India.

3. Unlock guidelines have been issued by MHA from time to time and apply to all Central Government and other institutions, subject to notification of Containment Zones in the respective cities/States. Unlock 4.0 guidelines dated 30 August 2020 had allowed social/academic/sports/entertainment /cultural/sports and religious functions and other congregations with a ceiling of 100 persons outside containment zones with effect from 21st September, 2020, subject to following of all Covid-19 protocols such as social distancing, sanitization etc.

4. Unlock guidelines 5.0 have been issued by MHA on 30 September, 2020 and are currently in force (extended up to 30 November, 2020). Relevant portion of these guidelines with respect to **cultural institutions** are reproduced below-

(iv) Cinemas/ theatres/ multiplexes will be permitted to open with up to 50% of their seating capacity, in areas outside the Containment Zones only, with effect from 15th October 2020, for which, SOP will be issued by Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.

(v) Entertainment parks and similar places will be permitted to open with effect from 15th October, 2020, for which the SOP will be issued by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW).

(vi) Business to Business (B2B) Exhibitions will be permitted to open, in areas outside the Containment Zones only, with effect from 15th October 2020, for which, SOP will be issued by the Department of Commerce.

(vii) Social/ academic/ sports/ entertainment/ cultural/ religious/ political functions and other congregations have already been permitted with a ceiling of 100 persons, outside Containment Zones only. Such gatherings beyond the limit of 100 persons may be permitted, outside Containment Zones, by State/UT governments after 15th October,2020 only and subject to the following conditions:

a. In closed spaces, a maximum of 50% of the hall capacity will be allowed, with a ceiling of 200 persons. Wearing of face masks, maintaining social distancing, provision for thermal scanning and use of hand wash or sanitizer will be mandatory.

b. In open spaces, keeping the size of the space/ground in view, and with strict observance of social distancing, mandatory wearing of face masks, provision for thermal scanning and hand wash or sanitizer.

State/UT Governments will issue detailed SOPs, to regulate such gatherings and strictly enforce the same.”

5. Based on the Unlock 5.0 Guidelines of MHA, and after taking into consideration, suggestions received from various stakeholders in the culture and creative industry, Ministry of Culture now issues detailed SOPs for “Re-opening of Museums, Art Galleries and exhibitions ” on preventive measures to contain spread of COVID-19 (pdf attached).

6. These guidelines contain Standard Operating Procedures to be followed by the management of museums, art galleries and exhibitions (both temporary and permanent), as well as the visitors to these spaces. Comprehensive guidelines have been issued for adequate cleaning, purchase of tickets and for ensuring safety of visitors and staff at museums , exhibitions and art galleries.

7. It is clarified that no museums and/or art galleries shall re-open inside containment zones. Further, State/UT Governments may consider proposing additional measures as per their field assessment.

8. The National Directives for COVID-19 Management and the relevant guidelines issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, State/UT Governments, etc. shall be strictly complied with during all activities and operations.

9. These guidelines shall come into effect immediately, and shall continue to be in effect until further orders. While the museums, exhibitions and art galleries under Ministry of Culture would be reopened from 10 November, 2020 onwards, others can be reopened as per convenience and in tune with relevant State/city /local laws, rules and regulations/unlock guidelines in force.
