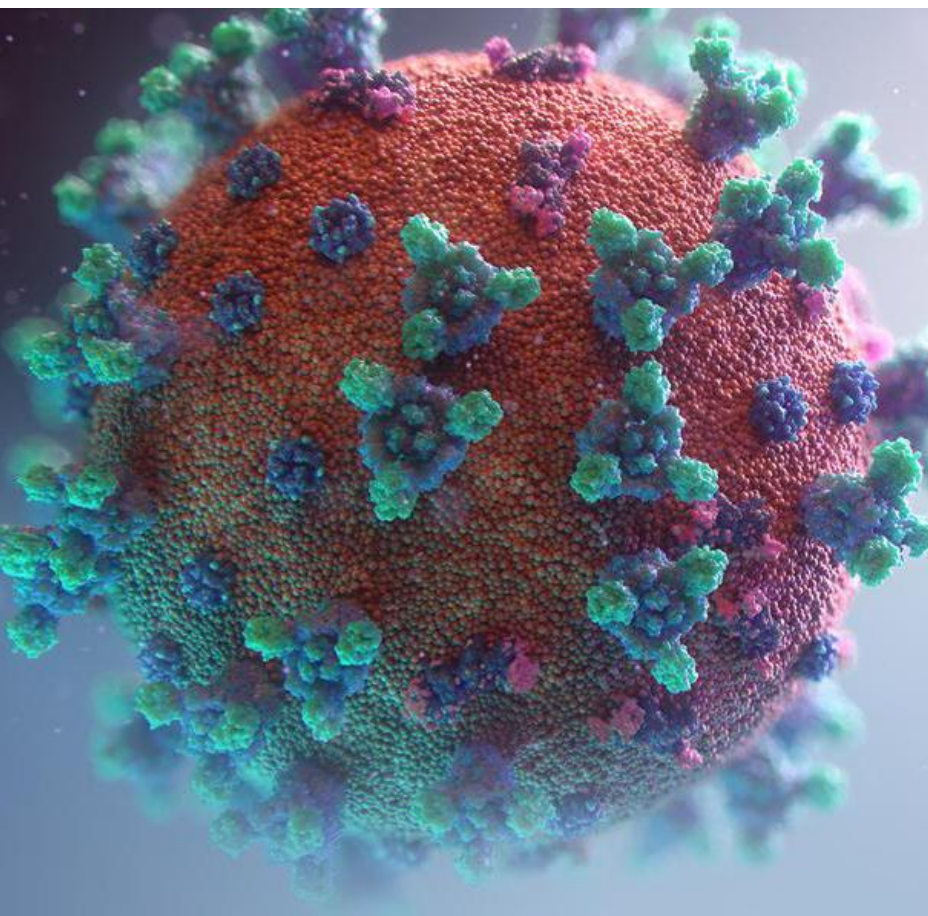


ICAR-CIFT

COVID-19 Mitigation Advisory for Fish Transportation



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The World is facing an unprecedented threat from the COVID-19 pandemic caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The current evidence indicates that COVID-19 virus is transmitted during close contact through respiratory droplets (formed on coughing or sneezing). The virus can spread directly from person-to-person when a COVID-19 case coughs or sneezes, producing droplets that reach the nose, mouth, or eyes of another person.

Fish transportation services are essential services that keep the fish supply chain moving from aquaculture farms/fishing harbours to fish markets and processing plants; both within the state and between the states in the country. Their role in the crisis of COVID-19 pandemic is very crucial for rapid and safe transport of highly perishable fish and fishery products across the length and breadth of the nation. During the course of fish delivery, the vehicle drivers may take the vehicles through COVID zones and inadvertently get exposed to the novel coronavirus.

ICAR-CIFT has brought out a COVID-19 mitigation advisory for fish transportation which emphasizes the do's and don'ts for personnel involved in the transportation of fish and government agencies/ district authorities and prevent the spread of corona virus and also to safeguard their own health

1. Ensure personal hygiene:

i. Proper hand hygiene:

- Drivers must wash their hand with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (follow WHO advice) or rub with alcohol-based hand sanitizers.
- Government officials or volunteers may be asked to demonstrate the WHO suggested method of proper hand washing to the drivers.
- Drivers should be provided with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, a disinfectant, and paper towels.
- Drivers should use a hand sanitizer before passing vehicle documents to transport officials or delivery documents to the fish market staff.



ii. Practice good respiratory hygiene

- Make sure that drivers practice good respiratory hygiene by covering their mouth and nose with bent elbow when they cough or sneeze.
- Drivers must always wear clean clothes and cover face with masks while driving, loading, and unloading.

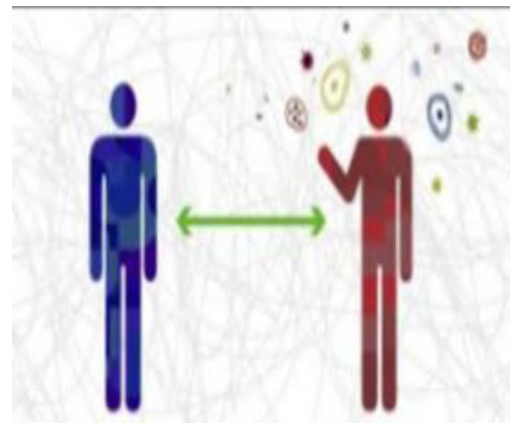
iii. **Teach drivers not to touch eyes, nose and mouth:**

- a. Ensure that drivers wear masks covering nose and mouth. After use, ensure that the masks are put in dust bins with lid.
- b. Ensure frequent cleaning and disinfection of touch points such as vehicle door handles, steering wheels, mobile devices, etc.
- c. Drivers must avoid close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing.
- d. Drivers must wash hands with soap and clean water after going to the toilet.
- e. Driver must not do the following in fish handling area: Smoking, Spitting, chewing or eating tobacco, Sneezing or coughing over the product



2. Maintain social distance:

Maintain at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between people during loading and unloading of fish.



3. Seek medical care:

- a. Encourage drivers to seek medical care in case they have fever, cough and difficulty in breathing.
- b. WHO recommends that people who are feeling unwell should stay at home.
- c. Drivers must be made aware of the symptoms of COVID-19.

Common symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- a fever (high temperature : 37.5 degrees Celsius or above)
 - a cough (this can be any kind of cough, not just dry cough)
 - shortness of breath
 - breathing difficulties
 - fatigue
- d. Food business operators need to produce written guidance for drivers/staff on reporting such symptoms and on exclusion from work place.
 - e. The most important issue is for drivers/staff to be able to recognise symptoms early so that they can seek appropriate medical care and testing, and minimise the risk of infecting fellow workers.
 - f. Drivers must contact health staff after travel to COVID positive area.



4. Sanitise the vehicles:

- a. Wash and disinfect vehicles before loading and after unloading fish.
- b. Drivers also need to be aware of the need to ensure that all transport containers are kept clean and frequently disinfected.
- c. Fish and fish products must be protected from contamination, and must be separated from other goods that may cause contamination.
- d. Cleaning and sanitation records must be available in the vehicle at all times.
- e. If a vehicle enters an area marked as a COVID-19 hotspot, then the vehicle must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before use.



- Drivers must strictly follow traffic rules.
- Drivers must not stop vehicle at crowded places.
- Drivers must park vehicles only in designated parking areas.
- Drivers and other staff transporting to fish should not leave their vehicles during delivery and must refrain from stopping in between for tea breaks, etc.
- Drivers and transport personnel should not come in contact with the fish or fishery products during transportation

Steps to be taken by State Government/District Authorities

- i. Health check for COVID-19:**
 - a. District Administration must ensure mandatory testing of transport staff before and after their trip.
 - b. Must provide health certificate.
- ii. Designated parking area:**
 - a. District Administration must allocate designated parking slots for fish transport vehicles during transit and at destination
 - b. District Administration must identify designated retiring facilities for transport staff during transit and at destination.
 - c. Drivers must park vehicles only in the designated parking areas.
 - d. Spray the parking area and surroundings with sodium hypochlorite solution (at least 1000 ppm) to kill the virus.
- iii. Facilities to be provided:**
 - a. Provide separate resting room and toilet facilities at the designated parking places.
 - b. Provide clean toilets with approved detergents/disinfectant/chemicals and ensure that the flush is working properly.
 - c. Provide sign board directing toilet users to wash hands with soap and clean water after going to the toilet.
 - d. Drivers, loaders and other support staff must avoid using public toilet as much as possible.
- iv. Training of drivers, loaders and other support staff:**

Must ensure drivers, loaders and other support staff are trained about the COVID-19 infection symptoms and its prevention by following high standards of hygiene, cleaning and sanitation and following social distancing.