

Government of West Bengal
Department of Forests
AranyaBhawan, Sector – III
Block LA-10A, Salt Lake City, Kolkata – 700 106

No. 1002-For/FR/O/N/6M-10/2020

Kolkata, the 18th September, 2020

ORDER

Whereas, all public places under the control of Forest Department in West Bengal were closed for visitors with effect from 17th March 2020, *vide* this Department Order No. 531-For/FR/O/N/6M-10/2020 and No. 531-For/FR/O/N/6M-10/2020 dated 16th March, 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

And whereas, while the effect of the pandemic is still being felt, in view of the graded unlocking and requirement to restart economic and related activities thereby mitigating avoidable hardships to various stakeholders, it has been decided to allow public to access various establishments of the Forest Department with appropriate restrictions in view of the Pandemic.

Now, therefore, the Governor is pleased to order that:

1. All Parks & Gardens (including Lloyd Botanic Garden), National Parks and Sanctuaries Eco-tourism Centres and lodges shall be opened for the public/visitors w.e.f. 23rd September, 2020.
2. All Zoological Gardens and similar establishments under the control of the Forest Department shall be opened for the public/visitors w.e.f. 2nd October, 2020
3. The guidelines annexed to this order shall be strictly adhered to and followed.

Sd/-
Principal Secretary
to the Government of West Bengal.

No. 1002/1(11)-For/FR/O/N/6M-10/2020

Kolkata, the 18th September, 2020

Copy forwarded for information and necessary action to:-

- 1) The Principal Chief Conservator of Forest and HoFF, W.B.
- 2) The Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (General), W.B.
- 3) The Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife) and CWLW, W.B.
- 4) The Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (RMD), W.B.
- 5) The Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (CAMPA), W.B.
- 6) MD, W.B. Forest Development Corporation Ltd.
- 7) Member Secretary, West Bengal Zoo Authority.
- 8) CCF (Conservation & Extension)/ (HQ)/ (North Circle).
- 9) D.F.O., Publicity.
- 10) P.S. to Hon'ble MIC, Forest Department, Government of West Bengal.
- 11) P.S. to Hon'ble MOS, Forest Department, Government of West Bengal.

[Signature]
Deputy Secretary to the
Government of West Bengal.

No. 1002/2(3)-For/FR/O/N/6M-10/2020

Kolkata the 18thSeptember, 2020.

Copy forwarded for information and necessary action to:-

- 1) Sr. P.S. to the Principal Secretary to the Hon'ble C.M., West Bengal – for kind information of the Hon'ble C.M.
- 2) Sr. P.S. to the Chief Secretary to the Government of West Bengal – for kind information of the C.S.
- 3) Sr. P.S. to the Addl. Chief Secretary, Home & Hill Affairs Department, Govt. of W. B. – for kind information of the A.C.S.

Deputy Secretary to the
Government of West Bengal. .

No. 1002 /3(4)-For/FR/O/N/6M-10/2020

Kolkata, the 18thSeptember, 2020

Copy forwarded for information and necessary action to:-

- 1) The Secretary, Health & Family Welfare Department, Govt. of West Bengal.
- 2) The D.G.P., West Bengal Police.
- 3) The Commissioner, Kolkata Police, Lalbazar, Kolkata – 1.
- 4) Under Secretary to the Govt. of West Bengal – with the request to inform all District Magistrates of the State of West Bengal for taking necessary action.

Deputy Secretary to the
Government of West Bengal.

Post COVID 19 pandemic Guidelines for access to Protected Areas, Ecotourism Centres, Parks & Gardens and Zoos of West Bengal

All public places under the control of Forest Department in West Bengal were closed for visitors with effect from 17th March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the effect of the pandemic is still being felt, in view of the graded unlocking and requirement to restart economic and related activities thereby mitigating avoidable hardships to various stakeholders, it has been decided to allow public to access various establishments of the Forest Department with appropriate restrictions in view of the Pandemic.

The following guidelines are to be accordingly followed at all such locations, in addition to any local restrictions imposed on account of containment zones and other general restrictions for COVID19 as notified by Government from time to time. It is appreciated that these guidelines may cause some inconvenience to stakeholders, but in view of the paramount priority to be given to their health and safety, forbearance with strict adherence is requested.

1. General Guidelines

- a. All entry tickets and bookings *etc.* shall be made online.
- b. Guests aged less than 10 years or more than 65 years are advised to travel as per Restriction regulations/ guidelines in vogue.
- c. Wearing of face cover and following all norms of social distancing are mandatory for all guests.
- d. Every vehicle / boat / launch that shall operate in the areas unlocked will have to carry sanitizer at all times, for use of passengers.
- e. There will be no elephant safari at any location till further orders.
- g. Besides these Guidelines, the Park Authorities may close any portion or facility at short notice, or impose any other restrictions temporarily, for preventing spread of COVID19.

2. At Entry Gates

- a. Temperature checks will be conducted for all the guests at the entry point. Any guest whose body temperature is higher than normal will not be allowed to enter. No refund will be given for such guests on the entry fee, if already paid. Each Online Booking Site / Ticket counter shall prominently display such Notice.
- b. All vehicles will be sanitized by spraying sanitizer of the approved alcohol based variety of. No bleach, peroxide or ammonia based sanitizer is to be used. The vehicle is to be parked in a designated spot for the purpose. For closed vehicles, all windows are to be rolled up prior to spraying. For open vehicles, all passengers, including the driver are to disembark and stand at least 2 metres away from the vehicle while it is being sanitized.
- c. Staff at entry gates must ensure that visitors have washed or sanitized their hands before entry and are wearing face covers/ shields.

3. National Parks and Sanctuaries

- a. No person shall exit the vehicle except at designated places.
- b. All tourist vehicles will have one seat vacant between passengers.
- c. At designated places where guests are allowed to disembark, such as watch towers *etc.*, the limit of persons allowed at any given time will be limited to 20 (twenty) persons only. This will be controlled by the number of vehicles allowed access to the site and will be enforced by the designated guide of the vehicle. All such locations shall be sanitized twice during the course of the day, once when the tower is opened and next at mid time.



- d. The Park Authority will ensure that access to such places do not pass through staff residence clusters. In cases where no alternate route is available, such watchtowers *etc* will not be made available for tourism.

4. Eco-tourism Centres

- a. All rooms will be sanitized through fumigation with alcohol based sanitizers prior to opening of the centre. Thereafter, each room is to be similarly sanitized after the guest has checked out. Facility should be provided for on-demand sanitization, if the guest so desires, prior to check in.
- b. All closed common areas will be fumigated at least twice a day.
- c. All Service Personnel will wear appropriate protective gear, especially face cover, at all times within the facility.
- d. Access to closed common areas will be restricted to 30% of the capacity at any given time. Local managers will stagger the meal timings in dining spaces accordingly.
- e. Cultural programmes at such locations will be conducted only in open spaces, duly maintaining physical distancing and segregating the local people from the guests. If such arrangements are not possible, no such programme should be organized.
- f. Guests will be advised to visit local areas outside the facility after observing the COVID19 restrictions and respecting local sentiments in the matter.

5. Zoological Gardens, Parks & Gardens (including Lloyd Botanic Garden)

- a. All buildings, including animal enclosures, museums, NICs inside the facility will be fully sanitized before opening.
- b. The number of visitors inside enclosed food centres is to be restricted to 30% of the capacity. Canteen and Cafeteria Staffs shall enforce social distancing norms and should be asked to serve food packed in disposable containers instead of utensils. All personnel must wear face mask while inside the premises and maintain social distancing and sanitization procedure while entertaining customers. Hand Sanitizer should be kept at all counters.
- c. Visitors should be advised to avoid touching barricades and other surfaces so as to minimize chances of spreading of contamination. All railings and touch points have to be disinfected regularly. The on-duty staffs will ensure that visitors avoid touching barricades and other surfaces so as to minimize chances of spread and contamination.
- d. Sanitation staff will ensure social distancing among users inside washroom. The door knobs of the cubicles and of the washroom entry should be frequently disinfected and cleaned.
- e. All locations must be disinfected after the closing of the visiting hours every day particularly the visiting path, barricades, railings, door handles, touch points, washrooms *etc*.
- f. For services like toy train, safari vehicles, *etc*, the capacity will be reduced to ensure that two passengers do not occupy adjoining seats.

6. For all staff and service personnel

- a. They shall maintain highest level of personal hygiene, both at facility and at their residences.
- b. They shall strictly follow the timely directions issued by the Government with respect to COVID 19.
- c. They shall come on duty only if typical symptoms of COVID 19 are absent. Any employee suffering from cold, cough and fever shall immediately inform the supervisor.