

**JAN SWASTHYA ABHIYAN KARNATAKA**  
(Karnataka Chapter of People's Health Movement)

---

March 31, 2020

To,  
Chief Minister of Karnataka  
Bangalore  
[cm.kar@nic.in](mailto:cm.kar@nic.in)

Subject : To stop public disclosure of names and addresses of COVID 19 suspects.

Sir,

We are writing to you with grave concern over the fact that in the course of government's ardent efforts to contain COVID-19 pandemic in the state of Karnataka, an essential component of patient's rights is being blatantly violated. It has come to our notice that Karnataka Government has decided to make names and addresses of COVID 19 suspects' public through newspapers, social media, health ministry website and other medium of public information, apparently with the objective of ensuring effective containment of infection transmission.

Sir, we are afraid to note that, these measures, although being deemed important by the government to contain the virus, are in direct violation of medical ethics and patients' right to privacy and confidentiality as outlined in different national and international charters, guidelines and principles. Global public health experiences over the decades have also shown us that such approaches, rather than doing any good, would only breed wider stigma in the public, thus deterring people from reporting their illnesses and revealing their travel/exposure history for the fear of social intimidation. This in turn would make it even harder for the government to trace cases and contain the virus.

It is therefore critical that such moves by the state are strongly desisted and stopped right away. We have also come to know that people are getting multiple calls and are also stigmatised and subjected to vigilantism. Such measures can cause potential harm and distress to patients and their families in both short and long term (i.e. even after they are certified infection free) given the kind of deep stigma such moves generate. In these sensitive times when there's an increasing panic all around, it is important that we do nothing which makes containment more difficult. We believe that at this point it's very crucial that the government strikes a fine balance between what patient information to reveal and what not. Orissa government has taken such a step in the right direction (attached for reference). So we request Karnataka government to also please follow the same process.

In the light of the above we request you to please revoke the order of revealing the names and addresses of COVID 19 suspects without any further delay. Also we request you to revoke the notification asking quarantined persons to report every one hour through selfies which is a serious violation of the privacy of the persons.

We hope for immediate action in this regard

Thank you and best regards,

We are :

(Dr Gopal Dabade)  
9448862270

(Sri Prasanna Saligram)  
(9916937280)

Copy to :

1. Sri Ramalu, Health Minister, Govt. of Karnataka, [health@karnataka.gov.in](mailto:health@karnataka.gov.in)
2. Chief Secretary, Govt. of Karnataka, [cs@karnataka.gov.in](mailto:cs@karnataka.gov.in)