

**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MINISTER, GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA
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- Government will facilitate and encourage whole-sellers and traders to procure food-grains. In case of deficiency, government will take steps to procure additional stock of food-grains for the open market.
- The lifting and distribution of rice under PDS system will continue as usual.
- The Cabinet has decided that with effect from 27th March, 2020 for urban areas like Shillong and Tura, the District Administration in collaboration with Headmen will regulate the buying of food-grains from retail shops in their localities to avoid overcrowding and maintain social distancing. People should not venture to markets outside their localities. Retail shops will be allowed to procure goods from the traders. In rural areas, a suitable mechanism will be put in place by the respective Deputy Commissioners.
- The lockdown is for 21 days and it is expected that everyone will follow home-quarantine
- 1917 iTeams of the Agriculture Department will procure vegetables for distribution to the retail outlets in Shillong and other urban areas.
- Local entrepreneurs willing to take up online delivery of essential commodities will be encouraged.

Meghalaya Cabinet today discussed the delivery mechanism of all essential commodities. It has been decided that grocery shops will be open from 27th of this month. The cabinet has worked out measures to provide delivery of essential commodities in rural as well as urban areas, while the DCs has been asked to chalk out the plan.

Addressing media after the cabinet meeting, Deputy Chief Minister Prestone Tynsong said that there is no shortage of rice and distribution to retailers has already taken place in the entire State.

Tynsong informed that distribution for March has been made available in the district, while for April the allotment will be released in the first week. “There is no shortage of rice in the State and the government decided today to move again to the FCI and ensure that the allotment of May and June happens. The food and civil supply department is on the job and I'm sure the allotment of May and June is also going to happen well in advance,” he added.

Deputy Chief Minister assured the citizens that stock for the next three months is available. Apart from supply through PDS, the Government also informed its citizens that through the open market also the supplies of essential commodities will be made available.

“We have taken the decision today that as far as open market is concerned government will make sure that the transportation of the open market items does not stop,” the Deputy Chief Minister informed.

He informed that instruction has been given to the Chief Secretary to take up the matter with his counterpart in Punjab and Haryana for ensuring supply and transportation of rice and other essential commodities for open market from those states without any hindrances. The Deputy Chief Minister reiterated that shortage of food items will not be there in the State while stating that government is working on a mechanism to ensure that commodities reach the respective villages in the State. The cabinet discussed measures for distribution in Rural and Urban areas of the State. He informed that grocery shops will be allowed to be opened in different localities from 27th of this month.

The DCs of respective districts have been asked to work out modalities in consultation with local administration and communities. “Whether the shops will be open in the morning or evening, the respective districts will take the call,” the Deputy CM added. On the 21 days lockdown, the Deputy Chief Minister said, “20-25 percent population are still taking the matter easily, which should not be the case.” He said that the cabinet has decided to urge the public to observe complete lockdown because it was in the interest of the public. “We should be convinced to stay home safely. Coronavirus has affected the whole world but we are thankful to God that there is no positive case detected so far in the State. But we should not be complacent anything may happen, so, therefore, stay away”, the Deputy CM urged.