

**GOVERNMENT OF KERALA**

No:M3/347/2019-HEALTH
Health & Family Welfare (M) Department
Thiruvananthapuram,
Dated:09-11-2025

CIRCULAR

Sub: Health & Family Welfare Department - Guidelines on implementation of Safety instruction in schools prevention and management of snakebite-Issued.

- Ref:
1. Circular No.QIP1/9520/2025/DGE dated 13.05.2025 issued by the Director of General Education.
 2. Circular No.DGE/11198/2024-Q1P1 dated 30.05.2025 issued by the Director of General Education.
 3. Guidelines on School Safety and Security issued by the Ministry of Education, Government of India (2021)
 4. Manual on Safety and Security of Children in Schools issued by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)
 5. Minutes of the Meeting held by the Chief Secretary on 01-09-2025 regarding formulation of Guidelines on School Safety and Security including prevention and management of snakebite.
 6. Directions of the Hon'ble High Court in the Judgment dated 26-09-2025 in W.P(C) No.32493/2019 filed by Sri Kulathur Jaisingh and W.P (C)No.34037/2019 (Suo motu).

Ahead of the opening of the school for the academic year 2025-26, a Circular was issued from the Director of General Education vide reference 1st paper above regarding the instructions to be followed by the schools keeping in mind the safety

and health of the children. In view of the prevailing adverse climatic condition, directives were issued, vide circular read as 2nd paper above.

2. In compliance with the interim orders dated 05.06.2025, 28.07.2025 and 26.08.2025 of the Hon'ble High Court in W.P(C) No.32493/2019 filed by Sri Kulathur Jaisingh and W.P (C) No.34037/2019 (Suo motu) and the decisions taken in the meeting held by the Chief Secretary on 01-09-2025 regarding formulation of Guidelines on School Safety and Security including prevention and management of snakebite, the General Education Department, Forest & Wildlife Department, Local Self Government Department, Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Bio-technology and National Institute of Virology, Kerala Unit, Alappuzha have been consulted and inputs obtained from them. The suggestions of the petitioner in WP(C) No. 32493/2019 and the learned Amicus Curiae have also been taken into account.

3. As per the judgement read as 6th paper above, the Hon'ble High Court has directed, inter alia, that the State of Kerala will issue a circular notifying the guidelines on the implementation of safety instructions regarding snakebites in schools across the State, as formulated in the meeting held on 1st September, 2025 under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary, within two weeks from the date of the Judgement.

4. Government have examined the matter in detail and accordingly guidelines on school safety and security including prevention and management of snakebite in schools across the State are hereby issued with immediate effect, as follows:-

1. General Guidelines

All schools must treat the Ministry and NCPCR guidelines, issued vide reference 3rd and 4th cited above as the foundational reference documents for the planning and execution of safety-related initiatives.

- Safety Audit-Each school is required to undertake a thorough safety audit of its

entire infrastructure. This includes verification of the stability of buildings, the condition of classrooms, sanitation facilities, electrical systems, and perimeter fencing. All physical hazards such as open pits, broken floors, exposed wiring, and unsecured doors or windows must be promptly repaired. The school environment, including playgrounds and adjacent areas, should be cleared of overgrown vegetation, stagnant water, and any other potential health or wildlife risks including snake bites.

- First-aid kit- Schools must maintain a well-equipped first aid room or designated area for the purpose with fully stocked first-aid kits accessible to staff and students. Every school head must ensure that at least two staff members must be trained in basic first aid, including CPR and emergency wound care in consultation with nearest hospital. The contact details of nearby hospitals both (government and private) and public health officers must be displayed prominently within the school premises and ensure that ambulance service contact details are also available and prominently displayed.
- Child Emergency Medical Response Plan - Each school must prepare and display a Child Emergency Medical Response Plan outlining the steps to be taken in case of sudden medical emergencies. Schools must proactively coordinate with the nearest Primary Health Centre or Taluk Hospital to ensure availability of anti-venom and paediatric medical care in critical situations. Schools should maintain updated lists of hospitals with anti-venom facilities. Also schools should coordinate with the Forest Department to Identify and engage authorized snake catchers/handlers for emergency snake removal operations. Schools should conduct thorough inspections of their premises to identify and seal potential entry points of snakes, insects and other reptiles. This includes checking boundary walls, storage areas, gardens and all structures of gaps, holes or overgrown vegetation that may harbour these threats.
- Clean and well-maintained toilet facilities must be ensured for all students,

with adequate water supply, ventilation, and lighting.

- If any kind of serious accidents or traumatic injury occurs, it is crucial the victim receives emergency medical treatment in the first hour after an injury when emergency treatment is most likely to be successful (the Golden Hour). No delay whatsoever shall be allowed in initiating emergency response.
- Schools must conduct mock drills to ensure preparedness for snake bite, fire, flood, earthquake, or other emergencies in consultation with District Disaster Management Authority and Local Self Government. Awareness should be made on handling emergencies for the welfare of the students.
- School heads and managements should strictly adhere to the all directives in this circular. District officials shall conduct periodic inspections to verify implementation.

2. Guidelines on Prevention and Management of snakebite

Introduction

The primary management of snake bites involves immediate first aid followed by prompt medical care to assess and treat potential envenomation. This guideline covers clinical issues and various aspects of management of snakebites, including clinical features, intervention measures, first aid, transport and referral criteria, treatment with and treatment with anti-snake venom, and also primordial prevention.

The guidelines shall be shared to all institutions under the General Education Department, and also to the Directorates of CBSE, ICSE systems, as well as inter-departmentally, so as to benefit all the related departments including Women and Child Development Department with respect to safety of children attending Anganwadis, as a proactive step.

Action Plan to tackle snake envenomation in schools

Preparedness measures for preventing snake bite events in schools in Kerala should

be comprehensive, combining environmental management, awareness, infrastructure improvements, and emergency readiness. The following are key, evidence-based steps recommended for Kerala schools:

1. Environmental and Structural Measures

- **Maintain Cleanliness:** Do not let garbage, food waste, or debris accumulate on school premises, as these attract rodents and other prey, which in turn attract snakes
- **Cleaning of School premises:** This activity shall be conducted at the beginning of every school year and before rainy season and at least once in a quarter. LSGI shall ensure the process
- **Inspection of School buildings:** School officials and Local self-government officials should thoroughly inspect the safety of the building and shall ensure that the routine removal of vegetation etc as prescribed above is complied with.
- **Rodent Control:** Prioritize effective rodent control to reduce the food chain that draws snakes
- **Secure Building Structures:** Ensure compound walls and school buildings are free of gaps, burrows, or holes where snakes can hide. Regularly plaster and maintain these structures
- **Remove Hiding Spots:** Avoid storing logs, firewood, bricks, or construction materials near classrooms, as these provide shelter for snakes
- **Clear Vegetation:** Regularly trim bushes, shrubs, and tall grass around playgrounds and buildings. Ensure children do not venture into dense vegetation or abandoned properties
- **Designated Paths:** Encourage children to use only clear, designated paths and avoid walking barefoot in grassy or wooded areas
- **Doors and windows** are to be properly closed in the evening promptly after school hours, thus preventing the unnoticed entry and hiding of harmful insects and reptiles.

- Bags and shoes of the students should not be kept outside class rooms unattended at any time because of chance of snakes entering and hiding in them.

2. Student , Staff and other capacity building

- Education: Conduct regular sessions to educate students and staff about snakebite risks, snake identification, and safe behaviors (e.g., using sticks to retrieve balls from bushes)
- Sensitization Programs: Implement awareness drives and distribute educational materials (pamphlets, posters) in local languages
- Mock Drills: Organize periodic mock drills for snakebite emergencies, involving teachers, students, and local authorities
- Periodic health awareness class on various aspects such as snake envenomation, rescuing etc.
- Long-term steps Introduce Snakebite awareness and prevention education for students using digital technologies, Interactive games and creative IEC materials, like videos to enhance learning and engagement.
- Snakebite Prevention will be incorporated in the School Curriculum including in NCC Cadets' Handbook: Introduce snakebite awareness and prevention education for students using digital technologies, interactive games, and creative IEC materials to enhance learning and engagement.
- Development of Standardized IEC Materials and school curriculum integration will be done by the General Education Department in consultation with the Health Department & Forest Department
- SARPA volunteers have been doing the programme named 'Sarpa Suraksha', which is done in educational institutions for safety check against the presence of venomous snakes, especially during the school reopening after the summer vacation.
- SARPA volunteers have been doing the programme named 'Sarpa Paadam',

which is an awareness programme on snakes and snakebites done in educational institutions. It has been targeted to cover all educational institutions during an academic year, which will be repeated in following years. A team of volunteers and staff have been given proper orientation as SARPA Educators, and a standardized Power Point Presentation has been developed and distributed among the selected SARPA Educators for 'Sarpa Paadam'. Support of Education Department in this regard is solicited, by Forest & Wildlife Department and the same is under consideration of the General Education .

3. Emergency Preparedness

- First Aid Training: Train staff in basic first aid for snakebites and ensure they know how to keep the victim calm, immobilize the bitten limb, and arrange prompt medical transport
- Anti-Snake Venom (ASV) Availability: Know the nearest hospital(both Public and private) with ASV stock. Confirm availability in advance and maintain updated contact numbers for local doctors and hospitals
- Ambulance availability, location and updated contact mobile numbers of the operating agency/hospital to be known and displayed prominently in room of HM/Principal and school office section.
- Availability of services other standby vehicles, updated contact numbers etc to be displayed similarly in case ambulance is unavailable.
- Conducting Mock drill inter sectorally with the co-operation of Local Self Government bodies, Health, Forest and Schools bi annually

4. Collaboration with Authorities

- Engage Certified Snake Handlers: Utilize Kerala's SARPA initiative and certified snake handlers for safe removal of snakes and to conduct awareness programs
- Contact details of snake handlers / rescuers to be maintained at institution level

- Use of SARPA App'(by Kerala Forest Department, GoK,) and Snake-Pedia App (run by a team of scientists, nature lovers, and doctors in Kerala) to be familiarised to all teachers and non-teaching staff. SARPA, the mobile application and the team of trained and authorized snake rescuers started offering voluntary service for safe removal of snakes from conflict situations, aiming at snake conservation and snakebite mitigation on 24 x 7 since August 2020, subsequent to the implementation of "Guidelines for the Rescue and Release of Snakes from Human Dominated Areas in Kerala by Certified Snake Handlers" with the approval of State Government. SARPA is a standout example of community participation in addressing snakebite fatalities. With the involvement of 3,200 trained volunteers and over 60,000 snake rescues done during the last five years, the program showcases the value of citizen engagement and community participation in snakebite mitigation and snake conservation.
- The "Snakebite Death Free Kerala Initiative" aiming at reducing and eliminating the snakebite deaths in the State was discussed and approved in the State Biodiversity Board Meeting, Chaired by Hon'ble Chief Minister, on 24.10.2024. The program aims to halve the snakebite deaths in Kerala within next two years, and bring the deaths to zero within next five years. The details of the SARPA initiative of the Forest Department is attached herewith as Annexure I
- Financial Assistance: Utilize available government funds for fencing, clearing wild growth, and other preventive infrastructure. The support of concerned Local Self bodies may be utilised to ensure the same.

5. Policy and Surveillance

- Community Engagement Involve the wider community and local bodies in surveillance, reporting, and preventive activities.
- These measures, when implemented together, create a safer school

environment and ensure rapid, effective response in the event of a snakebite, significantly reducing the risk and severity of incidents in Kerala's schools.

6. Post event Immediate steps

- Verify the history of snakebite and look for obvious evidence of a bite (fang puncture marks, bleeding, swelling of the bitten part etc.). However, in a Krait bite no local marks may be seen. It can be noted by a magnifying lens as a pinpoint bleeding spot with a surrounding rash.
- Reassure the victim, as around 70% of all snakebites are from non venomous species.
- Immobilize the limb in the same way as a fractured limb. Use bandages or cloth to hold the splints (wooden stick), but do NOT block the blood supply or apply pressure. Ideally, the patient should lie in the recovery position (prone, on the left side) with his/her airway protected to minimise the risk of aspiration of vomitus.
- Do not give the victim anything to eat/drink including food, drinks and medications, till he/she reaches a medical health facility.
- Shift the victim to the nearest health facility immediately.
- Arrange transport of the patient to medical care as quickly, safely and passively as possible by vehicle ambulance (toll-free no.108), boat, bicycle, motorbike, stretcher etc.
- Victim must not be made to walk/run or drive himself to reach a Health facility. Motorbike Ambulance may be a feasible alternative for rural areas.
- Inform the doctor of any symptoms such as progress of local swelling, ptosis (drooping of eyelids) or new symptoms like difficulty in breathing, double vision, difficulty/change in speaking.
- Remove shoes, rings, watches, jewellery and tight clothing from the bitten area as they can act as a tourniquet when swelling occurs.
- Leave any local blisters undisturbed.

7. TRADITIONAL / INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICES TO BE AVOIDED:

Important don'ts:

- Do not attempt to kill or catch the snake as this may be dangerous. Take a picture of the snake, if possible, for identification by an expert.
- Discard unscientific methods (like black stones, scarification)
- Do not wash the wound and interfere with the bite wound (like making incisions, suction, rubbing, tattooing, vigorous cleaning, massage, application of herbs or chemicals, cryotherapy, cautery) as this may introduce infection, increase absorption of the venom and increase local bleeding.

8. Health Department Roles

- In the State, action has been taken to ensure availability of Anti-Snake Venom (ASV) in all hospitals at and above the level of Taluk Hospitals.
- Nodal Officers will be assigned at the district level for coordinating snake bite envenomation related activities and ensuring ASV at designated hospitals.
- Administration of ASV is a life-saving measure, yet it can sometimes cause serious adverse events unpredictably, and hence, the professional protection of medical personnel involved shall be ensured to instil confidence among them.
- Schools shall work in liaison with concerned FHC Medical Officers to receive guidance to address the health care needs of the schools, which includes snake bite management. The health department shall coordinate with the Education department to organise training in first aid measures, and share an updated list of hospitals having ASV stocks, with contact details.
- Facility for onward transport of patients referred from Taluk/other hospitals to higher centres shall be kept ready 24x7.
- The Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India has issued D.O Letter No.ISCP/57155/06/DZDP/NCDC dated 27.11.2024 to

all States and UTs with direction to declare snakebite cases and deaths a "Notifiable Disease". Declaring as Snakebite Cases and Deaths as Notifiable Disease is very important, since it enables online data entry of all such cases, which will provide the data required for trend analysis, and heat maps thus prepared enables better preparedness and effective planning for addressing the issue. In the State of Kerala, Snake bite will be made a notifiable disease and efforts for the same as per the Public Health Act is underway.

- As per NAPSE (National Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Snakebite Envenomation in India by 2030) anti-venom stock availability shall be ensured in all District and Taluk level hospitals, and also in all CHC level. Ensuring availability of good quality ASV along with facility for its administration is very important in reducing risks of snakebite casualties in the State. The policy level decision to keep ASV at CHC level will be explored after considering various aspects.
- In addition to the Polyvalent ASV available in India, which is effective only against the bites of Big 4 venomous species, we still don't have ASV for species like Hump Nosed Pit Viper and venomous snakes, which is endemic to South-Western Ghats.
- Collaborative Research works in this regard will also be undertaken.
- The Health & Family Welfare Department is striving to develop all the major hospitals as per the standardisation guidelines. Shortcomings, if any, at present are being addressed through KIIFB/NABARD/Plan/NHM Funds. Such shortcomings can be notified to the authorities concerned through the toll free number of 1056 by DISHA helpline. The Health and Family Welfare Department is also in the process of developing a dedicated portal for grievance redressal by the general public.

9. Ambulance

- Schools may contact 108 Ambulance/nearest health facility for ambulance to

transport the child to designated treatment facility without delay. In case ambulance is not available any suitable vehicle may be used for the purpose.

- Child shall be fully immobilized (ie., should not even be made to walk) and transported in a lying down position, preferably with affected part/ limb placed at the level of the heart.

3. Guidelines for providing fitness from the Local Self-Government Department regarding implementation of safety standards in schools

- For issuing Safety Certificate at the beginning of the academic year, Engineers of the Local Self-Government Department should ensure the structural stability of the school and also take into account the safety of the premises and land where the school is located. They should also check for trees that are growing in a way that poses a danger to the school building or children using the playground in the school compound, dangerous walls, earthen mounds, buildings, electric posts, hoardings, arches, towers, wells with no or weak walls, pits, and the possibility of vehicle accidents in front of the school gate and fitness certificate shall be issued only after ascertaining safety and security through inspection.
- Steps shall be taken to make timely changes in the proforma used for applying the fitness certificate. A checklist regarding the information related to the safety norms should also be included along with proforma. The check list will be finalized after consultation with all the Departments concerned.
- To ensure the safety of school children, a Safety Monitoring Committee should be formed at the school level, comprising the school manager, school headmaster / headmistress, P. T. A representatives , teacher / non-teacher representatives , ward member , Forest and Wildlife Department representative , Electrical Inspectorate Department representative , Electricity Board representative , and Health Department representative. The application

for school fitness should be submitted with the approval of the said Monitoring Committee, and all the Committee members should certify the check list and the application.

- After issuing Fitness Certificate by the Engineers of the Local Self Government at the beginning of the academic year, the security systems in the school should be inspected at regular intervals at the school level to ensure that they are in good condition. For this, a Sub-Committee comprising the School Manager, School Headmaster / Headmistress, P. T. A. , teacher/non-teaching representatives , Ward Members etc. may be formed and the task as described above may be assigned to the Sub Committee.
- The School Safety Sub-Committee may also be entrusted with the responsibility of immediately informing the relevant Departments if it becomes aware of a situation where the students or others are facing a threat to life or property .
- School authorities must follow the instructions of the Union Ministry of Education and the State General Education Department regarding school safety .
- Fire extinguisher systems should be installed in all schools and training in their operation should be provided to all teachers and students .
- The Motor Vehicles Department can be tasked with checking the fitness of school vehicles every year. A school-level sub-committee can be tasked with monitoring activities related to the fitness of vehicles.
- Barrier-free school entrances should be provided .
- It should also be ensured that all schools have sick room facilities and first aid facilities at the time of issuing fitness certificates .
- The guidelines issued through circular number 17565/DB2/10/LSGD dated 19.03.2010, stipulating facilities such as water tanks in all schools , replacement of old and damaged wiring with new wiring , insurance of buildings against fire and natural calamities , replacement of all kitchens

near classrooms , ensuring that only the Pre-primary and Lower Primary,Nursery wings are functioning on the first floor , and use of fire-resistant materials in building construction, shall be followed.

- New constructions in schools shall be carried out complying with the existing Building Rules. Further , the construction should be carried out under the supervision of engineers only after the plan , estimate , structural drawing , soil investigation report etc. of the new construction are examined by the concerned engineer as prescribed in Circulars No. 42448/ EW3/11/ LSGD dated 12.09.2011 & No.DB5/9495/2009/ CE/LSGD dated 28.05.2014 .
- It should also be ensured that all Government , Aided and Unaided Schools including Pre-primary schools have obtained fitness certificates through Local Self Government Engineers . The Head of the Local Self Government Institution concerned should ensure that schools are not functioning without fitness certificates as directed in the Circular No.792455/EW3/2016/LSGD dated. 30.12.2016.
- Before issuing fitness certificate, Guidelines issued vide GO(Rt) No.1840/2020/LSGD dated 07.10.2020, shall be strictly complied with. Accordingly, the Officer entrusted with the responsibility of issuing fitness certificates to school buildings etc. shall strictly conduct site inspection and submit report. Action shall be taken to cut away dangerously poised trees in school campus, to do fencing of transformers, to ensure electric wires are not dangerous to children, to construct parapet for wells, to cover open wells, to remove/destroy wasp/bee-hives, to clean class rooms toilets and washrooms through cleaning workers including Kudumbasree workers.
- As per circular No. 358/EWA3/2021-LSGD dated 16.03.2022, it is stipulated that trees that are dangerous to school buildings and playgrounds , compound walls, earthen mounds, electric posts, buildings , hoardings , towers, wells without parapets , broken parapets , arches , holes in

the ground , and hazards in front of the school gate should be inspected during the fitness inspection. The said conditions shall be scrupulously followed.

- Regarding the replacement of asbestos , tin and aluminum sheet roofs and making fire safety arrangements directions stipulated in Government Order No. G.O.(Ms.)No.162/2019/G.Edn dated 09.10.2019 , Government Order No. G.O.(Rt)No.2182/2021/LSGD dated 02.11.2021 , G.O.(P)No.114/2022/LSGD dated 28.05.2022 should be followed.

As the technical personnel of LSGD alone are not responsible for implementation of safety standards in schools, it is necessary to ensure the collective responsibility of all stake holding Departments in such a collective and co-ordinated task. Hence the Department wise responsibility and Checklist as shown in Annexure A and B respectively are stipulated for the issuance of School Fitness Certificate.

(Annexure A: Department-wise Responsibility who are associated in different stages for the Issuance of School Fitness Certificate

Annexure B : Checklist for Issuance of School Fitness Certificate)

Dr. Rajan Namdev Khobragade I A

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ADDITIONAL

CHIEF SECRETARY

The Advocate General ,Kerala (with covering letter)

The Secretary, General Education Department.

The Principal Secretary, Forest & Wild Life Department.

The Principal Secretary, Women & Child Development Department.

The Principal Secretary, Local Self Government Department

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & HoFF ,Thiruvananthapuram

The Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (WL&CWW)
,Thiruvananthapuram

The Director of General Education Department, Thiruvananthapuram

The Director, Women & Child Development Department, Thiruvananthapuram

The Director, Health Services, Thiruvananthapuram.

The Director, Medical Education, Thiruvananthapuram.

The Director, Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Bio - Technology, Thiruvananthapuram

The Director, National Institute of Virology, Kerala, Alappuzha

The Regional Officer, CBSE/ICSE, Thiruvananthapuram

All Deputy Directors of Education Department.

Stock File / Office Copy

Forwarded / By order,

Section Officer.

Copy to:

The Private Secretary to the Minister for General Education & Labour.

The Private Secretary to the Minister for Health & Family Welfare.

The Private Secretary to the Minister for Local Self Government Department

The Officer on Special Duty, o/o Chief Secretary

ANNEXURE 1

SARPA APP and the Snakebite Death Free Kerala initiate

1. SARPA, the mobile application and the team of trained and authorized snake rescuers started offering voluntary service for safe removal of snakes from conflict situations, aiming at snake conservation and snakebite mitigation on 24 x 7 since August 2020, subsequent to the implementation of "Guidelines for the Rescue and Release of Snakes from Human Dominated Areas in Kerala by Certified Snake Handlers" with the approval of State Government. SARPA is a standout example of community participation in addressing snakebite fatalities.

2. With the involvement of 3,200 trained volunteers and over 60,000 snake rescues done during the last five years, the program showcases the value of citizen engagement and community participation in snakebite mitigation and snake conservation.

3. The "Snakebite Death Free Kerala Initiative" aiming at reducing and eliminating the snakebite deaths in the State was discussed and approved in the State Biodiversity Board Meeting, Chaired by Hon'ble Chief Minister, on 24.10.2024. The program aims to halve the snakebite deaths in Kerala within next two years, and bring the deaths to zero within next five years.

4. The push for indigenous antivenom production is an important area to be prioritized, and scope and feasibility for regional antivenom production has been proposed under this program, with the support of Industries Department. A regional collection centre can be established at a suitable location in Kerala.

5. As per NAPSE (National Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Snakebite Envenomation in India by 2030) anti-venom stock availability shall be ensured in all District and Taluk level hospitals, and also in all CHC level. Ensuring availability of good quality ASV along with facility for its

administration is very important in reducing risks of snakebite casualties in the State. The policy level decision to keep ASV at CHC level will be explored after considering various aspects.

6. The Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India has issued D.O Letter No.ISCP/57155/06/DZDP/NCDC dated 27.11.2024 to all States and UTs with direction to declare snakebite cases and deaths a "Notifiable Disease". Declaring as Snakebite Cases and Deaths as Notifiable Disease is very important, since it enables online data entry of all such cases, which will provide the data required for trend analysis, and heat maps thus prepared enables better preparedness and effective planning for addressing the issue. In the State of Kerala, Snake bite will be made a notifiable disease and efforts for the same as per the Public Health Act is underway.

7. The online data entry of Snakebite Cases and Deaths by Health Department and Hospitals is requested to be interpolated with SARPA Mobile App also, so that the planning against snakebite proneness can be made more effective. There is already facility provided in the SARPA App for reporting snakebites.

8. In addition to the Polyvalent ASV available in India, which is effective only against the bites of Big 4 venomous species, we still don't have ASV for species like Hump Nosed Pit Viper, which is endemic to South-Western Ghats. Interestingly, most number of venomous snakebites reported in Kerala are those of HNPV, and there are several deaths reported due to HNPV bites. Hence developing either Monovalent ASV for HNPV, or a Polyvalent ASV for Pit Vipers is important, to eliminate possibilities of snakebite deaths completely. Research works in this regard done by Evolutionary Venomics Lab, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore has been supported by Kerala Forest Department.

9. SARPA volunteers have been doing the programme named 'Sarpa Suraksha', which is done in educational institutions for safety check against the presence of venomous snakes, especially during the school reopening after the summer vacation.

10. SARPA volunteers have been doing the programme named 'Sarpa Paadam', which is an awareness programme on snakes and snakebites done in educational institutions. It has been targeted to cover all educational institutions during an academic year, which will be repeated in following years. A team of volunteers and staff have been given proper orientation as SARPA Educators, and a standardized Power Point Presentation has been developed and distributed among the selected SARPA Educators for 'Sarpa Paadam'. Support of Education Department in this regard is solicited, by Forest & Wildlife Department.

11. "Snake and Snakebite Awareness" has been recommended by the Forest and Wild Life Department to be included in the syllabus of 9th and 11th Standard students, as proper awareness about the subject will reduce possibilities of dangers due to snakebites. It is worth noting that there are still many wrong and unscientific information regarding snakes and snakebites, including in NCC Cadets' Handbook, which need to be corrected at the earliest.

12. Besides students, SARPA volunteers are providing awareness programmes for various other target groups such as Kudumbasree units, MNREGS members and Residentail Associations. Support of LSG institutions in this regard is solicited by the Forest and Wildlife Department.

13. Among the achievements of SARPA initiative, most important is that the snakebite deaths were reduced fom 123 during 2019 to 30 in 2024. There were many critical interventions by the volunteers in many snakebite cases which lead to this remarkable achievement.

Annexure B

Checklist for Issuance of School Fitness Certificate

School Name: _____

School Code: _____

School Type (Govt./Aided/Unaided): _____

Section A – Structural & Premises Safety

Sl. No.	Item to be Verified	Yes	No	Remarks
1	Building structurally stable (no cracks, tilting, unsafe walls)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	Compound wall intact and safe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3	Premises free of pits, mounds, unsafe slopes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4	New constructions comply with Building Rules &	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	approvals		
5	Dangerous/ overgrown trees pruned or removed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Inspection Date: _____

Signature & Seal of the Concerned Department Officer:

Section B – Electrical & Fire Safety

Sl. No.	Item to be Verified	Yes	No	Remarks
1	Electrical wiring safe (old/damaged wiring replaced)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	Transformers (if nearby) fenced properly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3	No exposed or hazardous electric posts/wires	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	near school		
4	Fire extinguish ers installed and functional	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Teachers & students trained in extinguish er use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Building insured against fire/natural calamities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Inspection Date: _____

Signature & Seal of the Concerned Department Officer:

Section C – Health, Sanitation & First Aid

Sl. No.	Item to be Verified	Yes	No	Remarks
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- | | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | Adequate
, clean,
ventilated
toilets
with safe
water | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | Classrooms,
toilets,
washrooms
cleaned
regularly | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 | Sick
room/health room
facility
available | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 | First aid
kit fully
stocked | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 | At least
two staff
trained in
First Aid
& CPR | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 | Emergency
hospital/ambulance | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

contacts
displayed

Inspection Date: _____

Signature & Seal of the Concerned Department Officer:

Section D – Snakebite & Wildlife Safety

Sl. No.	Item to be Verified	Yes	No	Remarks
1	Premises inspected for snake entry points/hole s	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	Rodent control measures in place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3	Vegetation /garbage cleared to avoid snake habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4	Bags/shoes not left	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	unattended outside classrooms		
5	Awareness /mock drills on snakebite conducted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Contact details of snake handlers displayed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Staff familiar with SARPA & Snakepedi a apps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Inspection Date: _____

Signature & Seal of the Concerned Department Officer:

Section E – Access, Transport & Vehicle Safety

Sl. No.	Item to be Verified	Yes	No	Remarks
1	Barrier-free entrance/exit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	provided		
2	Risk of accidents near school gate minimized	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	School vehicles inspected & certified by MVD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Vehicle safety monitored by Sub-Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Inspection Date: _____

Signature & Seal of the Concerned Department Officer:

Section F – Building Safety Standards (as per GOs)

Sl. No.	Item to be Verified	Yes	No	Remarks
1	Kitchens not located near classrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	Only Nursery/L	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	P classes in first floor		
3	Fire- resistant building materials used	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Asbestos/ tin/ aluminium sheet roofs replaced	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Parapet walls for wells; open wells covered	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Inspection Date: _____

Signature & Seal of the Concerned Department Officer:

Section G – Monitoring & Documentation

Sl. No.	Item to be Verified	Yes	No	Remarks
1	School Safety Monitoring Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

- | | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | constituted | | |
| 2 | Application
signed by
Committee with
checklist | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 | Sub-Committee
formed for
regular
monitoring | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Signature & Seal of the Concerned:

Final Certification

Based on the above inspection and checklist, I hereby certify that:

- ☐ The school building and premises are fit and safe for functioning.
- ☐ The school building and premises are not fit, deficiencies noted.

Assistant Engineer (LSGD), Concerned Local Body

Name: _____

Signature & Seal: _____

Date: _____

Countersignature by Headmaster / Convener, School Safety Monitoring Committee

I hereby confirm that the information provided in this checklist is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Headmaster / Convener

Name: _____

Signature & Seal: _____

Date: _____

Department-wise Responsibility for Issuance of School Fitness Certificate

The following **department-wise responsibilities** are prescribed for verification of school safety standards prior to the issuance of a Fitness Certificate. Each department official shall personally inspect, verify, and record compliance under their jurisdiction. The Assistant Engineer, LSGD shall issue the final Fitness Certificate only after ensuring that all departmental verifications have been duly completed and authenticated.

1. Local Self Government Department (Engineering Wing)

- Verification of **structural stability** of school buildings, including foundations, walls, roofs, beams, columns, and floors.
- Inspection of **compound walls, parapets, wells, septic tanks, pits, earthen mounds, and slopes** for safety.
- Certification that **new constructions/alterations** comply with Kerala Building Rules, approved plans, soil investigation reports, and structural drawings.
- Identification and removal of **trees, hoardings, arches, towers or other structures** that pose danger to children or school property.
- Verification of compliance with **earlier Government Orders** on fire-resistant construction materials, replacement of asbestos/tin/aluminium sheet roofing, and kitchen location.
- Ensuring **barrier-free access** to school buildings and premises.

2. Electrical Inspectorate / Kerala State Electricity Board

- Inspection and certification of **electrical wiring and fittings**; replacement of damaged/obsolete wiring.
- Verification of **proper earthing** and safe electrical installations.
- Inspection of **transformers, electric posts, overhead lines** and certification that these do not pose danger to students.

- Ensuring fencing and protective measures for all high-voltage equipment within or adjacent to school premises.

3. Fire & Rescue Services Department

- Verification of installation and functionality of **fire extinguishers and fire safety equipment**.
- Certification of **fire evacuation routes** and safety signage within the school.
- Conducting and certifying **mock fire drills** and evacuation preparedness.
- Ensuring training of staff and students in **basic fire safety measures**.

4. Health Department

- Verification of **toilets, washrooms, and drinking water facilities** for cleanliness, hygiene, ventilation, and adequacy.
- Inspection of **sick room/health room** availability with minimum facilities.
- Certification that a **first-aid kit** is maintained in good condition and accessible.
- Verification that **at least two staff members** are trained in first aid.
- Ensuring display of **contact details of nearby hospitals, ambulance services, and health officials** in prominent places.
- Certifying arrangements for **emergency medical response**, including ambulance access and referral linkages with PHC/Taluk hospitals.

5. Forest & Wildlife Department

- Inspection of school premises to identify and seal **entry points for snakes, reptiles, and other wildlife**.
- Verification of **vegetation clearance, rodent control, and garbage management** to prevent wildlife risks.

- Certification of school participation in **snakebite awareness and safety programmes** (e.g., SARPA).
- Ensuring availability and display of **contact details of certified snake handlers/rescuers**.
- Promoting familiarity of school staff with **SARPA App**

6. Motor Vehicles Department

- Annual inspection and certification of **school buses and other vehicles** for roadworthiness and compliance with statutory safety requirements.
- Verification of **driver licensing, fitness certificates, permits, insurance, and safety equipment** in school vehicles.
- Checking compliance with **speed governors, CCTV, GPS tracking, and seating capacity norms**.

7. School Safety Monitoring Committee (Headmaster, PTA, Local Body Representative, etc.)

- Ensuring constitution of the **School Safety Monitoring Committee** and a **School-level Sub-Committee** for continuous monitoring.
- Supervising **general cleanliness** of classrooms, kitchens, and playgrounds.
- Confirming **implementation of mock drills and awareness programmes** on health, disaster preparedness, and safety.
- Countersigning the consolidated checklist before submission to LSGD.
- Acting as the **first point of contact** for identifying and reporting imminent threats to life or property.

8. Consolidation and Certification – Assistant Engineer, LSGD

- After ensuring that all the above departmental verifications are completed and signed, the **Assistant Engineer, LSGD** shall issue the **School Fitness Certificate**.

- The AE, LSGD shall not issue the certificate unless all required departmental verifications are present and found satisfactory.
- A copy of the consolidated checklist, duly signed by all concerned, shall be retained in the records of the school and the local body.