

12.05.2021

Shri Sarbananda Sonowal ji,
Hon'ble Chief Minister,
Government of Assam

Subject: Need for protecting Last Mile Workers and ensuring citizen safety: Retailers Association of India appeal for prioritisation of Vaccination of Last Mile Workers

**Honourable Minister,
Greetings from the Retailers Association of India (RAI)!**

Retailers Association of India (RAI) is the unified voice of Indian retailers working with all the stakeholders to create the right environment for the growth of modern retail industry in India. RAI is the premier body of Retailers in India, having around 13,667 member establishments, including large and small retailers of the country, having approximately 500,000 stores providing Direct and Indirect employment to 50 million Indians.

We know that the pandemic has ensured that many citizens are to be at home to feel safe. However, in order to support the citizens, we have recognized the work of Health Care Workers (HCWs) and Front-Line Workers (FLE). We also need to recognise that millions of Last Mile Workers too have supported during this period. These are people who work in retail stores selling essential goods and medicines, workers delivering goods to customers, restaurant workers etc. ***These Last Mile Workers (LMWs) meet about 50 to 100 customers (citizens) a day. Thus, 100 of these people end up meeting about 7000 citizens a day.***

It makes sense to get these workers vaccinated in priority to save many more citizens on a daily basis. If these workers are vaccinated on priority, it will not only benefit them but will also benefit the public at large who continue to rely on the Last Mile Workers for their daily needs. It will give immense peace of mind to citizens when they know that the person serving them at stores or delivering items to their homes have been vaccinated and do not pose a health risk to them or their families.

Being the apex association of Indian retailers, we request that Assam's State Government work with RAI to mobilise each of our strengths to get retail Last Mile Workers vaccinated:

- 1. RAI members can provide space inside malls and retail stores for vaccination, not just for Last Mile Workers but also for general public.***
- 2. Retailers can meet the cost of their employees' vaccination.***
- 3. The Government can help with mobilising the availability of vaccines for Last Mile Workers on priority.***

We request your good office to support Last Mile Workers to fight COVID-19 and continue providing safe and uninterrupted services to citizens in your area/ward and help make your ward COVID-19 free. We assure you of our constant support in the fight against COVID-19.

Warm regards,



Gautam Jain, Director – Finance and Advocacy