

# Prime Minister chairs high level meeting to review status and preparedness of public health response to Covid-19

PM cautions against complacency, advises for maintaining strict Vigil

PM emphasises the need for strengthened surveillance with focus on genome sequencing and increased testing

States advised to ensure operational readiness of hospital infrastructure

Advises adherence to Covid appropriate behavior including wearing of mask

Stresses on Precaution dose vaccination for elderly and vulnerable population groups

PM appreciates the selfless service of frontline workers and Corona warriors

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today chaired a high-level meeting to assess the Covid-19 situation in the country, preparedness of health infrastructure and logistics, status of the vaccination campaign in the country and the emergence of new Covid-19 variants and their public health implications for the country. This high-level review meeting comes in the backdrop of spike in COVID19 cases in some countries.

A comprehensive presentation was made regarding the global Covid-19 situation including the rising cases in countries by Secretary, Health and Member, NITI Aayog. Prime Minister was briefed that India has been witnessing a steady decline in cases with average daily cases falling to 153 and weekly positivity down to 0.14% in the week ending 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec, 2022. However, 5.9 lakh daily average cases have been reported globally since the last 6 weeks.

Prime Minister cautioned against complacency and advised strict vigil. He reiterated that Covid is not over yet and directed officials to strengthen the ongoing surveillance measures, especially at the international airports.

Prime Minister stressed the need to ensure that the entire Covid infrastructure at all levels is maintained at a high level of preparedness in terms of equipment, processes and human resources. He advised States to audit Covid specific facilities to ensure operational readiness of Hospital Infrastructure, including Oxygen Cylinders, PSA plants, ventilators and human resources.

Prime Minister directed officials to ramp up testing and also genomic sequencing efforts. States have been asked to share a larger number of samples with the designated INSACOG Genome Sequencing Laboratories (IGSLs) for Genome Sequencing on a daily basis. This will support timely detection of newer variants, if any, circulating in the country and facilitate undertaking requisite public health measures.

Prime Minister urged everyone to follow Covid appropriate behaviour at all times, especially in view of the upcoming festive season, including wearing masks in crowded public places. Prime Minister also urged that that precaution dose may be encouraged especially for vulnerable and elderly groups.

Prime Minister was informed that there is adequate availability with regard to medicines, vaccines and hospital beds. He advised to regularly monitor availability and prices of essential medicines.

Highlighting the globally appreciated work of the frontline healthcare workers, Prime Minister exhorted them to continue working in the same selfless and dedicated manner.

The meeting was attended by Shri. Amit Shah, Union Home Minister; Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Minister of Health and Family Welfare; Shri Jyotiraditya Scindia, Minister of Civil Aviation, Dr S. Jaishankar; Minister of External Affairs, Shri Anurag Thakur, Minister of Information and Broadcasting; Smt. Bharati Pravin Pawar, Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare; Shri PK Mishra, Principal Secretary to PM, Shri Parameswaran Iyer, CEO, NITI Aayog; Dr. V K Paul, Member (Health) NITI Aayog; Shri. Rajiv Gauba, Cabinet Secretary; Shri Amit Khare, Advisor, PMO; Shri. A.K. Bhalla, Home Secretary; Shri. Rajesh Bhushan, Secretary (HFW); Dr Rajiv Bahl, Secretary (DHR); Shri Arun Baroka, Secretary, Pharmaceuticals (I/C); along with other senior officials.

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