

15th meeting of GoM on COVID-19 held; reviews current status, preparedness and actions for management of COVID-19

Dr. Harsh Vardhan emphasizes to focus on high load area management and case fatality management

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The 15th meeting of the high level Group of Ministers (GoM) on COVID-19 was held at Nirman Bhawan, here today, under the chairmanship of Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare. Sh. Hardeep S. Puri, Minister of Civil Aviation, Dr. S. Jaishankar, Minister of External Affairs, Sh. Nityananda Rai, Minister of State for Home Affairs, Sh. Mansukh Lal Mandaviya, Minister of State for Shipping, & Chemical and Fertilizers, and Sh. Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare were present, along with Sh. Bipin Rawat, Chief of Defence Staff.

A detailed presentation on the present status of COVID-19 cases globally and within the country was made. Worldwide the total number of COVID-19 positive cases stand at 42,48,389 with 2,94,046 deaths and the fatality rate pegged at 6.92%, whereas in India, the total number of COVID-19 positive cases stand at 81,970 with 2,649 deaths and the fatality rate pegged at 3.23%. So far, a total of 27,920 people have been cured. And if seen in the last 24 hours, 1,685 patients were found cured. This takes the total recovery rate at 34.06%. It was also highlighted that the impact of lockdown was seen on the Doubling Rate which improved from 3.4 days in the pre-lockdown week to 12.9 days in the last week. The Case Fatality Rate (CFR) has come down from 3.2% in the pre-lockdown period to 2.1% during the last week.

The Group of Ministers (GoM) had in depth deliberation on containment strategy and management aspects of COVID-19, as well as the measures being taken by the Centre and various States. The GoM was informed that there are 30 municipal areas which are constituting 79% of India's case load. GoM discussed that focus of COVID-19 management strategy needs to be on the States with highest number of confirmed cases and highest number of fatalities, and on treatment and case fatality management, for which timely detection of infection and contact tracing were the best way forward. GOM also discussed the challenges before various States/UTs arising from the returning migrant labourers and the returnees from abroad.

GoM was also apprised that various recommendations of Government of India for the containment zone management pertaining to indicators, root causes and action required are already shared with the States/UTs for better and effective management of COVID-19 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

GoM was also apprised about the growing medical infrastructure in the country and was informed that as on today, a total of 8,694 facilities comprising of 919 dedicated COVID hospitals, 2,036 COVID Health Centres and 5,739 COVID Care Centres with a total of 2,77,429 beds for severe

and critical cases, 29,701 ICU beds and 5,15,250 isolation beds in care centres, are available. Also, as on date, 18,855 ventilators are now available to combat COVID-19 in the country. The Centre has also provided 84.22 lakh N95 masks and 47.98 lakh Personal Protective Equipments (PPEs) to the States/ UTs / Central Institutions. GoM was also informed that domestic manufacturers have reached the production capacity of nearly 3 lakh PPEs per day and about 3 lakh N-95 masks per day which is sufficient to meet the requirement of the country in the near future. In addition, manufacturing of ventilators by domestic manufacturers has also started and orders have been placed.

Dr. Balram Bhargava, DG, ICMR informed the GoM that the testing capacity has increased in the country to 1,00,000 tests per day through 509 government and private laboratories. Nearly 20 lakh cumulative tests have been conducted in the country, as on date. Advance machines for ramping up the testing facility has also been procured and ordered. Also, the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) had been equipped with the COBAS 6800, a fully automated, high end machine for performing real time PCR testing COVID-19 in the service of nation. COBAS 6800 will provide quality, high-volume testing with a high throughput of test around 1200 samples in 24 hours. The current availability of testing kits is sufficient enough and is being distributed through 15 depots of ICMR to the States/UTs.

The GoM was also informed about the efforts taken by the Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Civil Aviation in cooperation with the State Governments to prepare a staggered timeline of flights to bring back Indian citizens from various countries. In Phase-1 of the exercise, around 12,000 Indians have already been brought back and quarantined in the respective States. All due procedures like screening at the point of embarkation, and paid institutional quarantine facilities in the States have been undertaken as per the laid down guidelines.

Ms. Preeti Sudan, Secretary (HFW), Sh. Rajesh Bhushan, OSD/Secretary (HFW), Sh Pradeep Singh Kharola, Secretary (Civil Aviation), Sh. Anup Wadhawan, Secretary (Commerce), Prof. Balram Bhargava, DG-ICMR, Sh. Anand Swaroop, DG, ITBP, Sh. Dammu Ravi, Addl. Secretary (MEA), Sh. Anil Malik, Addl. Secretary (MHA), Dr. C.S. Mohapatra, Addl. Secretary (Economic Affairs), Sh. Lav Agarwal, JS (MoHFW), representative from M/O I&Band other officials were also present.

For all authentic & updated information on COVID-19 related technical issues, guidelines & advisories please regularly visit: <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/>.

Technical queries related to COVID-19 may be emailed at technicalquery.covid19@gov.in and other queries on ncov2019@gov.in and via tweets to @CovidIndiaSeva.

In case of any queries on COVID-19, please call at Ministry of Health & Family Welfare helpline number +91-11-23978046 or 1075 (Toll-free). List of helpline numbers of States/UTs on COVID-19 is also available at <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/coronavirushelplinenumber.pdf> .

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