

India's has 17.7% of global COVID-19 cases, while it also has highest share - 19.5% - of global recoveries:  
Health Secretary

Member (Health), NITI Aayog calls for being a responsible citizen by following COVID Appropriate Behaviours and wearing masks in the upcoming festive season

Most of the districts in Maharashtra have adequate facilities to deal with COVID-19: Health Secretary

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India has recorded the highest number of recoveries, that is, 44.9 lakh patients of COVID-19 have recovered from the infection in India, by which the country's recovery rate crosses the milestone of 80%. This apart, highest ever single day recovery of 1 lakh cases has been recorded in the last 24 hours. At the same time, more than 6.5 crore tests have been conducted around the country, 12 lakh tests conducted on a single day. This has been stated by Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Shri Rajesh Bhushan in course of a media briefing on the actions taken, preparedness and updates on COVID-19.

Shri Bhushan further stated, India's share of global COVID-19 cases is around 17.7%, while it also shares the highest - 19.5% of the recoveries from the infection that happened around the world. "This is a matter of satisfaction and shows that the country's standard treatment protocol formulated on the basis of inputs by scientists and treating doctors and discussions held with different stakeholders and the its implementation by various State and UT Governments is yielding results. It is also the outcome of the responsibility, hard-work and sacrifice of the health-care workers in the country", said the Health Secretary. Early detection of cases, followed by isolation, seamless hospitalization has also contributed towards achieving highest recoveries and "all this has been possible because of an exponential increase in testing infrastructure in the country", added Shri Bhushan. While 1 crore tests were done by 1100 labs in the country on 7th July, it increased to 3 crore tests by 1600 labs on 3rd August and 6 crore tests were done on 17th September by 1776 government and private labs taken together. "A substantial amount of credit for this achievement goes to the leadership shown by ICMR and the prompt participation in testing by the private sector labs", also stated the Health Secretary.

It has also been noticed that new recoveries have exceeded new cases in the country over the last four days. In this connection, the Health Secretary ruled out certain apprehensions that have been raised about having less testing in some states and informed that more than 8 lakh tests were done every day in the above stated period (September 19-22, 2020). The Health Secretary also said that

India still figures amongst the countries having lowest cases and also deaths per million population. This apart, less than one-fifth of total cases are active in the country.

In the [presentation given by the Health Secretary](#), it is also seen that Maharashtra has the maximum number of daily cases which has been around 21,000 in the week between September 16-22. The top 7 states in terms of daily cases are Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Delhi and West Bengal.

Dr. V.K.Paul, Member, NITI Aayog said, the overall situation in the country remains under control. Dr. Paul said, mostly kits manufactured in India are being used for testing. While certain tests have been adapted, new testing methods have also been developed in India, which reflects the country's technological prowess. Dr. Paul said, we have to be more careful and maintain social distancing at this stage of the pandemic. He called for being a responsible citizen by following COVID Appropriate Behaviours in the upcoming festive season. He urged mediapersons and media platforms to take the message of compulsorily wearing a mask, across to every person and every corner of the country as this is going to act as a social vaccine till a vaccine becomes available. Further, science and estimates has shown that pandemic can be controlled up to 36-50% in this manner. Almost 80-85% persons in the country are susceptible to the virus, stated Dr. Paul. He also urged to follow social distancing and avoid large gatherings in public places particularly in view of the festive season that is approaching.

Dr. Paul also stated that non-COVID health programmes like various national missions and immunization programmes and related matters like emergency services as well as reforms like that in the sphere of medical education are being given due importance by the Government.

Dr. Paul informed that a new programme called 'District Residency Programme' has been notified, under which postgraduate medical student undergoing training shall be termed as a 'District Resident' and such 2nd year and 3rd year students will be posted for 3 months in district hospitals as a part of their medical course curriculum. This is a big reform that will promote contextual training for future specialist doctors while also improving specialized health-care service delivery in districts, stated Dr. Paul. This scheme will be implemented with the new joining batch of post-graduate medical students in 2020-21.

In reply to a media query about rising COVID-19 cases in Maharashtra, Health Secretary stated, most of the districts in Maharashtra have adequate facilities. There is frequent and rapid exchange of technical assistance between Centre and the Maharashtra Government. Centre is also providing PPEs, N-95 masks, HCQ, ventilators and other assistance to the Maharashtra Government.

In the context of a media query about the COVID-19 situation in Punjab, Health Secretary said, the information of augmented hospital facilities must be pro-actively put in public domain. State Governments have a big role to play in this matter, stated Shri Bhushan.

In reply to a media query about oxygen availability, the Health Secretary stated that certain decisions were taken in this regard in course of three meetings with states in the last week. The decisions include free inter-state and intra-state movement of vehicles containing oxygen cylinders, allowing oxygen-tankers to enter within city-limits even in daytime, inter-ministerial control room for supply of oxygen related matters at the level of Centre and formation of such control rooms at the level of states, micro-level management of oxygen at the level of states and hospitals/care centres and monitoring at the level of states to prevent oxygen hoarding and overpricing.

In reply to a query on healthcare workers who have laid down their lives in the fight against COVID-19, the Health Secretary stated, 62 insurance claims under PM's Pandemic Response Package for health care workers have been settled, while more than 130 are being processed by the New India Assurance Company.

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