

Union Health Secretary reviews the status of and public health response measures to COVID-19 in West Bengal, Delhi and Kerala

States/UT advised to gear up ‘testing, tracking & treatment’ strategy during the festival season

Additional thrust to be given to public awareness as well as enforcement of COVID Appropriate Behaviours

Posted On: 29 OCT 2020 4:55PM by PIB Delhi

Shri Rajesh Bhushan, Union Health Secretary reviewed the status of COVID in the States/UT of West Bengal, Kerala and Delhi and their public health response measures in a meeting held through Video Conferencing today, in the presence of Dr V K Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog, and Dr Balram Bhargava, DG, ICMR. Health Secretaries from the States/UT, NHM MD, DGHS and other senior health officials participated virtually. Concerns regarding rising cases in these States/UT were highlighted in the meeting.

Delhi has 29,378 active cases as of today with a Fatality Rate of 1.76% and a positivity rate of 7.9%. 5,673 new cases were recorded in the last 24 hours. There has been nearly 46% increase in the new cases over the past four weeks, and the positivity rate over the past four weeks has escalated by nearly 9%. The rising cases were attributed by the Delhi team to social gatherings during the festivities, the deteriorating air quality, increasing incidences of respiratory disorders, and clusters of positive cases at work places. The fatigue among frontline workers was also discussed.

The UT was advised to aggressively ramp up testing, increase RT-PCR tests, focus on contact tracing and effectively enforce isolation of the traced contacts within the first 72 hours. It was advised to focus on containment zones, and strict perimeter control to be implemented as per MHA guidelines. The health authorities were advised to give additional thrust to IEC practices and proactively promote wearing of mask and other COVID appropriate behaviours.

West Bengal has 37,111 active cases as of today. The Case Fatality Rate of the State stands at 1.84% and the positivity rate is 8.3%. The State has registered 3,924 new cases in the last 24 hours. The average daily cases have recorded 23% increase over last four weeks. There is 1% increase in the positivity rate over the last four weeks. Darjeeling, Nadia, Medinipur West, Jalpaiguri, Hooghly are the top districts showing increasing trend in cases. Whereas, Murshidabad, Nadia, Coochbehar, Kolkata and Darjeeling have registered increase in the weekly deaths last week. The tests per million population (TPM) stand at 41,261 whereas the national TPM is 77,220.

The State was advised to strictly follow the ‘test-track-treat’ strategy. West Bengal health authorities were advised not to compromise on testing and keep the level of daily tests at a higher level with

greater proportion of RT-PCR tests. It was advised to ensure proper Standard of Care and early identification as well as early hospitalisation of cases. It was also suggested to regularly monitor the symptom development and hospitalization trend amongst the home isolated patients. The State was advised to focus on rapid contact tracing, and quick isolation of the traced contacts to be effectively enforced.

The cases in Kerala are showing a rising trend. Total active cases are 93,369 as on date. The average daily cases have recorded 11% increase over the last four weeks. The number of new cases in last 14 days is 98,778. In the last 24 hours, Kerala has registered the maximum number of new cases with 8,790 cases. Thrissur, Alappuzha, Kottayam, Pathanamthitta, Malappuram are the top districts showing increasing trend in COVID cases. The State has been demonstrated better results in terms of COVID fatality. The fatality rate of State stands at 0.34%, although there has been increase in the weekly deaths in Thrissur (133%), Kollam (75%), Alappuzha (31%), Ernakulam (30%), and Kannur (15%).

Tests per million of the population are 66,755 and the positivity rate is at a significantly high level of 16.5%. The positivity rate has registered 41% increase over the last four weeks.

It was mentioned that the increase in the new cases due to festivities is a grave concern. The State has been suggested to ramp up IEC practices and promote mask wearing with more rigour. While Kerala has been monitoring contact tracing activities across borders with neighbouring districts and States, certain districts with very high positivity rates, like Malappuram, need to enforce better management.

The States/UTs were also advised to ensure enforcement of precautionary measures like maintaining social distancing, sanitization, wearing of masks, etc.

MV/SJ

HFW/Secy review Delhi, WB, Kerala/29thOctober2020/2

(Release ID: 1668445)