

We have a plan to ensure that vaccines would be available to all priority population groups, irrespective of the region where they reside: Health Secretary

We are in a position to not only augment and strengthen, but also add to our cold chain capabilities: Health Secretary

More than 79 lakh COVID-19 patients have recovered in India - highest number of recoveries in the world: Health Secretary

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More than 79 lakh COVID-19 patients have recovered in India. This happens to be the highest number of recoveries in the world. In the last week itself, on an average 51,476 cases recovered daily. This apart, more than 11.96 crore tests conducted so far and, on an average 11,18,072 tests were conducted daily in the last week. Cumulative positivity rate which is still decreasing, now stands at 7.18%, while the daily positivity rate in the last week was 4.2%. This has been informed by Union Health Secretary Shri Rajesh Bhushan in a press briefing on the actions taken, preparedness and updates on COVID-19, held at the National Media Centre in New Delhi today.

Shri Bhushan further informed that India still figures amongst the countries having lowest cases per million population. While the world average of cases per million is 6439, India has 6225 cases per million. While the world recorded 482 new cases per million population in the last 7 days, it was 235 new cases per million population for India in the same period. Similarly, while there were 7 deaths per million population in the whole world last week, India saw 3 deaths per million population in the bygone week. India still has one of the lowest count of 92 deaths per million population, while the world average is 160 deaths per million population. This apart, the number of active cases has gone below 6% in the country, while the recovery rate is more than 92%.

The Health Secretary further informed, 54% of new cases have been reported in 6 States & UTs in last 24 hours with Delhi reporting the highest of 5023 new cases, followed by West Bengal reporting 3907 new cases and then Kerala reporting 3593 new cases. Maharashtra reported 3277 new cases, Haryana reported 2427 new cases and Tamil Nadu reported 2257 new cases in the last 24 hours. This apart, 62% of new deaths have also been reported from 6 States & UTs in last 24 hours, which are Maharashtra, Delhi, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Punjab. Maharashtra has reported the highest 85 deaths in the last 24 hours.

Stating this factual information on COVID-19 in the country, Health Secretary reiterated and

appealed that everyone should be cautious in the ongoing festival season and always wear face-cover or mask in the proper manner, maintain 6 feet distance from others and wash hands with soap and water frequently.

In reply to a media query, Health Secretary informed that today morning's national figures show that 46% were RT-PCR tests and 49% were Rapid Antigen Tests, while 55 tests were carried out using TRUENAT and CBNAAT.

In reply to a query on the increasing number of cases in Delhi, DG-ICMR Prof. (Dr.) Balaram Bhargava replied, factors such as pollution, cold weather, festivals, wedding season, apart from travels in Delhi- NCR are leading to gatherings. A third spike has come now in Delhi after the first two spikes in June and September, which is showing more cases than before, he further added.

In reply to a query on vaccine administration, Health Secretary stated, "Whenever regulatory approval for vaccines are provided, we have a plan which would ensure that vaccines would be available to all priority population groups, irrespective of the region where they reside". Health Secretary also said, "We are in a position to not only augment and strengthen, but also add to our cold chain capabilities". Any large scale immunization would not only require a substantial increase in the number of cold chain points, but also a substantial increase in the number of cold chain equipment, he added.

In reply to another query, Health Secretary stated, central teams have gone to all the states, including Bihar, where elections pr bye-elections are being held. The reports given by the central teams on practice of COVID Appropriate Behaviours in those states have been shared with the state governments to draw their attention for follow-up actions. The states did initiate action to rectify the defects, he added and further said, Health Ministry is keeping a watch on the development of COVID situations in various states.

[Click here](#), to access the presentation made by the Health Secretary today.

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