



Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Eight out of top 10 districts with active COVID-19 cases are in Maharashtra: Union Health Secretary

Covaxin is now allowed for restricted use in emergency situation in public interest: Member (Health), NITI Aayog

Impressive speeding up of the COVID vaccination programme over the last ten days, from 10 lakh per day to 20 lakh per day: Member (Health), NITI Aayog

Mutant strain of SARS-CoV-2 has not been found incriminating in the surge of cases in Maharashtra: DG, ICMR

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Eight out of top 10 districts with active COVID-19 cases are in Maharashtra, stated Union Health and Family Welfare Secretary Shri Rajesh Bhushan in course of a press briefing on the actions taken, preparedness and updates on COVID-19, held at National Media Centre in New Delhi today. Pune with 18,474 cases tops the list, followed by Nagpur with 12,724 cases, then Thane with 10,460 cases and Mumbai with 9,973 cases. The other districts of Maharashtra in the list are Amravati, Jalgaon, Nashik and Aurangabad. The Health Secretary further stated that active cases are rising in the country, after touching the lowest mark in mid-February. In the last one month, the states like Maharashtra, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Haryana have shown a rise in the number of active cases, while the cases have shown a decline in Kerala, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, he further added. However, the seven days moving average of the daily death count remains low despite rise in active cases in the country, further informed Shri Bhushan.

Speaking in the media briefing, Dr. V.K. Paul, Member (Health) of NITI Aayog stated, "Covaxin is now allowed for restricted use in emergency situation in public interest". He explained saying "This has taken the authorization for Covaxin to the next level, that is, the same level at which Covishield has been operating". The same licensure now applies to both the vaccines, he added.

Informing about the COVID-19 vaccination scenario in the country, Shri Bhushan stated, more than 2.56 crore doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered till date. This includes more than 67 lakh people above 60 years and people aged 45-60 years with comorbidities. This apart, 71 lakh first doses and 40 lakh second doses have been given to healthcare workers and 70 lakh first doses and 6 lakh second doses have been given to frontline workers till date.



The Union Health Secretary also informed, “Within a period from 4th March when 10 lakh vaccines per day were being given, capacity has been ramped up to 20 lakh vaccines per day on 8th March”. In this context, Dr. V.K. Paul stated, “There has been an impressive speeding up of the COVID vaccination programme over the last ten days. Through the participation of the public and private sectors both, working as one system, the nation has enhanced vaccine coverage phenomenally”.

Press briefing on the actions taken, preparedness and upd...



Shri Bhushan also informed that, 71.23 percent vaccinations have been done in public healthcare facilities, while 28.77% vaccinations have been done by private facilities which are empanelled in Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, Central Government Health Scheme or a State Government's Health Insurance Scheme. However, in Odisha, Delhi, Telengana and Maharashtra, certain private healthcare facilities outside the ambit of the above-mentioned schemes have also been roped in for the vaccination programme on being recommended by the respective State Governments, on the basis of having adequate space, cold chain, vaccinators and arrangement to address AEFI. “Therefore, our doors are open to all private facilities”, stated the Union Health Secretary. The system has been flexible such that private healthcare facilities can do COVID vaccination for 24 hours throughout the week. The State Government hospitals have been advised to do COVID vaccination for a minimum of 4 days per week, so as to enable them to carry out Non-COVID essential healthcare services, he added.

Speaking about Adverse Event Following Immunization (AEFI), Shri Bhushan stated, it has occurred in a miniscule percentage. AEFI reported so far are 0.020% of the total immunizations that have been done and only 0.00025% hospitalization cases have occurred out of it, stated the Union Health Secretary.

In reply to a media query, DG, ICMR stated, “Mutant strain of SARS-CoV-2 has not been found incriminating in the surge of cases in Maharashtra”. Stating that “Maharashtra has shown worrisome trend”, he added, the surge in the state is just related to the reduced number of testing, tracking and tracing as well as COVID-Inappropriate behaviours and also large gatherings.

The presentation made by the Union Health and Family Welfare Secretary may be accessed [here](#)

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