



Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Dr. Harsh Vardhan reviews Public Health Response to COVID-19 and Progress of Vaccination with Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat

“India will have 51.6 Cr Vaccine doses by July and 216 Cr doses in the August-December Period”

States asked to Focus on Expansion and Improvement of Clinical Management

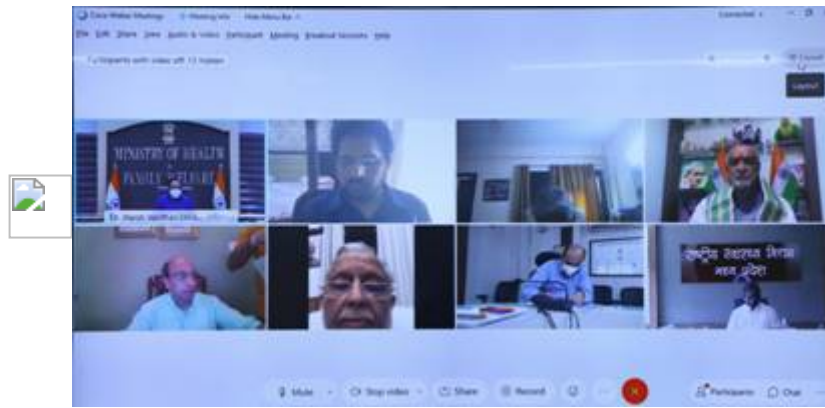
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Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare today interacted with State Health Ministers and Principal Secretaries/ Additional Chief Secretaries of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat states in the presence of Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare. These states/UT are depicting a higher growth rate in the number of daily cases, rise in positivity, high mortality and saturation of healthcare capacity.



Dr. Prabhuram Chaudhary, Health Minister (Madhya Pradesh) and Shri Jai Pratap Singh, Health Minister (Uttar Pradesh), Shri Suresh Kumar Khanna, Minister for Finance, Parliamentary affairs and Medical Education (Uttar Pradesh) were present virtually.





The Union Health Minister highlighted the critical challenges faced by the States: Gujarat has displayed a gradual increase in the positivity since April; the recovery rate stands at 79%, lower than the national average; near 100% ICU beds in Ahmedabad, Vadodara and Mehsana and 97% and 96% of oxygenated beds in Ahmedabad and Vadodara stood occupied indicating saturation.

Andhra Pradesh has had an increasing positivity rate since early April 2021; the weekly growth rate was as high as 30.3%; Chittoor, East Godavari, Guntur, Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam were flagged as districts of concern.

Uttar Pradesh saw an exponential growth in cases in a six-week period (~5,500 to ~31,000 cases and 2% to 14% positivity); Lucknow and Meerut have more than 14,000 active cases with all categories of bed showing more than 90% occupancy.

In Madhya Pradesh, 10 districts have more than 20% positivity with over 1 lakh active cases all over the State; Indore, Bhopal, Gwalior and Jabalpur were flagged as districts of concern. Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat were cautioned for having a high proportion of deaths in the age group 18-45 years.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan expressed a strong view that the present plateauing of COVID cases should not be taken as a sign for complacency but as a breathing space to expand, revamp and improve Health Infrastructure. State Health administrators were advised to increase ICU and oxygenated beds, undertake oxygen audits, take stock of availability of medicines in the State and strengthen their medical workforce.

Dr Sujeet K. Singh, Director NCDC presented the epidemiological findings and a granular analysis of the COVID trajectory in the States. He suggested continuing focus on the health infrastructure in small cities as people from nearby towns and villages would rush there in case of surge. He also requested the States to keep a tab on the variants of COVID through the INSACOG consortium. Ms. Vandana Gurnani, AS & MD, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare presented on the optimal and judicious utilization of vaccine doses.

A common point of consensus among the State Health Ministers was that vaccines had resulted in milder forms of COVID thereby preventing loss of precious lives. Taking note of the fact that all States require more vaccines to expand their vaccine coverage, Dr. Harsh Vardhan said that production is being steadily ramped up to cater to increased demand while vaccines that are being produced now continue to be equitably apportioned and swiftly sent to States/UTs. Detailing the ramping up of vaccine production, he said, “We will have 51.6 Cr vaccine doses by the end of July including the 18 Cr doses already administered. Sputnik has been approved. This along with the slated approval of the new vaccine of Zydus Cadila, Serum Institute of India- Novavax vaccine, Bharat Biotech’s nasal vaccine and the Genova mRNA vaccine will push the availability of COVID vaccines to 216 Cr doses in the August-December period.”



Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey thanked the Health administration of the respective states and healthcare workers on the ground for bravely resisting the onslaught of the Pandemic. He assured his colleagues in States that the Union Government will listen to all their requirements and try to fulfil them as per capacity.

States were advised to ensure complete utilization of available vaccination slots for 45+ age-group/HCW/FLW with awareness campaigns for conveying the importance of completing the second dose of vaccine. It was reiterated that States need to focus on reduction of vaccine wastage as that will be factored in subsequent allocations to that State. States were advised to constitute a 2/3-member team at State level on the lines of the dedicated team at Union Health Ministry to regularly coordinate with manufacturers for timely supplies of vaccine through 'Other than Govt. of India channel' and also to coordinate with Pvt. Hospitals for their procurement. The Union Health Ministry has already shared the list of Pvt. Hospital along with doses contracted and supplied with State/UTs.

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HFV/VC with 4 states/15thMay 2021/3

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