

Measures Taken to Minimize Threat of Any Resurgence of Covid-19 Pandemic

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Government of India continues to keep a close watch over COVID-19 situation in the country by strict observance of fivefold strategy of test-track-treat, Covid Appropriate behaviour and vaccination against COVID-19 to prevent and mitigate the impact of any resurgence of COVID-19 trajectory in the country.

Government of India has also established an Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Surveillance Consortium (INSACOG) for genomic sequencing and tracking the evolution of variant strains of SARS-CoV-2.

The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) is supporting the implementation of two key programme, the National Biopharma Mission (NBM) and the Ind-CEPI Mission, which have enabled the strengthening of the national vaccine development ecosystem, so as to effectively respond to pandemics.

Furthermore, 'Mission COVID Suraksha- the Indian COVID-19 Vaccine Development Mission', was launched as part of the third stimulus package, Atmanirbhar Bharat 3.0, for promoting research and development of India COVID-19 vaccines. The Mission is led by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and is implemented by Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC).

Support is provided to States/UTs to enhance preparedness and response capacities against COVID-19 and other public health emergencies. Various initiatives have been taken by the Government to provide technical guidance and further strengthen health infrastructure, availability of essential logistics including drugs and medical oxygen supply to manage COVID-19. Some of the major areas of intervention include:

- i. More than 150 guidelines/advisories/SoPs/plans have been provided to States/UTs.
- ii. Guidelines on Clinical management of COVID-19 with emerging scientific evidence widely circulated.
- iii. Guidelines for management of COVID-19 in children on acute presentation of COVID-19 as well as Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome (MIS-C) in children and adolescents found temporally related to COVID-19 have been issued.
- iv. The number of testing labs for detection of Covid-19 has been increased to 3062 labs as on 1st December 2021.
- v. Guidelines and checklists on prevention and clinical management of Mucormycosis disseminated to all States/UTs.
- vi. A Comprehensive Guidelines for Management of Post-Covid Sequel was issued by MoHFW after expert consultations to guide doctors on post-COVID-19 complications and their management.
- vii. States are supported in terms of supply of logistics which includes PPE Kits, N-95 masks, ventilators and drugs like Hydroxychloroquine, Remdesivir etc.
- viii. States have been supported with supply of oxygen cylinders and oxygen concentrators. States are also being supported in terms of installation of Oxygen concentrator plants/ PSA (Pressure Swing Adsorption) plants. States have also been advised to undertake oxygen consumption audit in hospitals including private hospitals and to undertake facility-wise/hospital-wise oxygen inventory mapping and advance planning for timely replenishment so that there is no stock out.
- ix. COVID-19 vaccine is made available free of cost for all citizens of the country aged 18 years and above, irrespective of their socio-economic status, at all Government COVID-19 Vaccination Centres (CVCs). Provisions have been made to improve access for elderly, specially-abled citizens, vaccination of persons in Mental Health Institutions, destitute & vagabonds etc. Under the 'Har Ghar Dastak'

campaign for improving COVID-19 vaccination rate, various initiatives including community awareness campaigning in collaboration with local religious and community leaders, CSOs, NGOs, NSS, NYK etc. is taken to ensure mobilization and counselling of the eligible population.

- x. Funding support is provided to States/UTs through various avenues.
- xi. During the F.Y. 2019-20. funds to the tune of Rs.1113.21 crore was released to the States/UTs under NHM towards management and containment of COVID-19 pandemic.
- xii. Since September 2020, the Union Government has allowed use of State Disaster Response Funds (SDRF) for various COVID-19 related activities.
- xiii. During the FY 2020-21, funds to the tune of Rs. 8257.88 crore has been released to the States/UTs towards the India COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health System Preparedness Package. This provided support to States for health infrastructure strengthening, expansion of laboratory network, surveillance and contact tracing, procurement of PPEs, N-95 masks, ventilators etc.
- xiv. In addition, 'India COVID-19 Emergency Response & Health System Preparedness Package: Phase-II' has also been approved by the Cabinet with Rs 23,123 crores (with Rs. 15,000 Cr as Central Component & Rs 8,123 Cr as State component) and is implemented from 1st July 2021. This includes support to State/UT level for ramping up health infrastructure including those in rural, tribal and peri-urban areas closer to the community, providing support for procurement of drugs and diagnostics to enhance service delivery at district and sub district levels for management of COVID-19 cases (including pediatric care) and for maintaining a buffer of drugs, support for IT Interventions such as implementation of Hospital Management Information System (HMIS) and expanding access to tele-consultations in all districts, and support for capacity building and training for all aspects of management of COVID-19.

Adequate doses to vaccinate all eligible 1st dose and due 2nd dose beneficiaries aged 18 years and above by December 2021 are made available to States/UTs.

The Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Dr Bharati Pravin Pawar stated this in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha today.

MV/AL

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