

PM chairs high-level meeting to review Status of Covid-19, Omicron & preparedness of Health Systems across the country

In view of the new variant, we should be Satark and Saavdhan: PM

Ensure that the health systems in the states, beginning from the district level, are strengthened:
PM

Government is alert and seized of the Evolving scenario; Continues to take Proactive Action and supporting States in their efforts of containment and management under the 'Whole of Government' approach: PM

PM: Focus should be on Prompt and effective Contact Tracing, Ramping up of Testing, Accelerating Vaccination and Strengthening Health Infrastructure

Centre to send teams to states with low vaccination, rising cases, insufficient health infrastructure to assist them

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PM Shri Narendra Modi chaired a high-level meeting today to review the status of Covid-19 and Omicron, the new Variant of Concern (VOC), public health response measures for containment and management of COVID19, strengthening of health infrastructure including availability of drugs, oxygen cylinders and concentrators, ventilators, PSA plants, ICU/oxygen supported beds, human resources, IT interventions and status of vaccination.

Officials briefed PM about the emerging scenario globally driven by the new variant, with an overview of surge in cases in countries having high vaccination coverage and presence of Omicron Variant. He was also apprised of the Technical Brief and priority actions recommended by WHO in the context of Omicron. A snapshot of the status of COVID19 and Omicron in the country, including States reporting a higher number of cases, districts reporting higher positivity, and higher number of clusters was presented to PM. The details of the Omicron cases reported in the country, including their travel history, vaccination status, and recovered status was also presented.

PM was briefed of the various actions taken since 25th November 2021 when the first advisory of the Union Health Ministry was shared with the States. Revised travel advisory for international passengers, review meetings with states/UTs on Covid-19 public health response measures, ramping up vaccination, installation of Oxygen supply equipments, etc., was briefed to PM.

After the presentation by officials, PM directed the officials for maintaining a high level of vigil and alertness at all levels. He directed the Centre to work in close coordination with the States to support their efforts of public health measures of containment and management under the 'Whole of Government' approach. The strategy of the Centre for proactive, focussed, collaborative and cooperative fight against the pandemic should guide all our future actions, the PM directed the officials.

In view of the new variant, we should be *Satark* and *Saavdhan*, the PM directed. The fight against the pandemic is not over, he said, and the need for continued adherence to COVID safe behaviour is of paramount importance even today.

PM directed the officials to ensure that the health systems in the states, beginning from the district level, are strengthened to meet any challenge posed by the new variant. It is important for States to ensure that the Oxygen supply equipments are installed and fully functional, he instructed the officials. He directed the officials to work with the states on a regular basis and review the status of preparedness of various components of health infrastructure including training and capacity building of human resources, timely availability of ambulances, readiness of states to operationalise COVID facilities for institutional quarantining, and effective and supervised monitoring of those in home isolation. He also directed officials for effective use of IT tools for tele-medicine and tele-consultation.

Heightened and close monitoring of emerging clusters and hotspots through and active, prompt and effective surveillance should continue, he stated. He directed for sending a good number of positive samples for genome sequencing to INSACOG Labs in a prompt manner. PM also directed to for accelerating the testing to ensure quick identification of cases for timely containment and treatment. Focus should also be on effective contact tracing for curbing spread of the transmission, he stated. PM directed officials that the Central Government should send teams to states with low vaccination, rising cases, insufficient health infrastructure to assist them improve the situation.

The PM was apprised of the progress in vaccination across the country. He was apprised that more than 88% of the eligible population is administered the first dose of COVID19 vaccine and more than 60% of the eligible population has received the second dose. Officials briefed PM that the door-to-door *Har Ghar Dastak* vaccination campaign to mobilise and vaccinate people has been able to motivate people to take the COVID 19 vaccine, and has shown encouraging results in boosting vaccine coverage. PM directed that States need to ensure that the eligible population is fully vaccinated against COVID19, and to proceed to meet the target in a

saturation mode.

The meeting was attended by Cabinet Secretary, Dr. V.K.Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog, Shri. A.K.Bhalla, Home Secretary, Shri. Rajesh Bhushan, Secretary (MoHFW), Secretary (Pharmaceuticals); Dr. Rajesh Gokhale, Secretary (Biotechnology); Dr. Balram Bhargava, DG ICMR; Shri. Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, Secretary (AYUSH); Shri Durga Shankar Mishra, Secretary (Urban Development); Sh. R.S. Sharma CEO NHA; Prof. K. Vijay Raghavan (Principal Scientific Advisor to Govt. of India) along with other senior officials.

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