No additional positive case reported in 25 districts from 15 states for last 14 days, while positive cases were reported there before: Health Ministry

Health Ministry showcases the example of Bengaluru COVID War Room as an effective way of leveraging technology to contain COVID-19

Movement of both inter-state and intra-state trucks and all goods carriers allowed, MSMEs engaged in the manufacture of essential items should be allowed to function without hindrances: MHA

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The number of COVID-19 positive cases stands at 9,152 as on date. A total of 857 people have recovered. A total of 308 people in the country have died because of the COVID-2019 infection. In the last 24 hours, 796 new cases and 35 deaths and also recovery of 141 persons have been reported. This was informed by the Joint Secretary, Ministry of Health &Family Welfare, Shri Luv Aggarwal, at the daily media briefing on the actions taken, preparedness and updates on COVID-19, held at National Media Centre, PIB New Delhi today. Informing about one positive development at field level which shows the result of the efforts of our frontline workers, Shri Aggarwal stated that in 25 districts from 15 states, no additional positive case has been reported for the last 14 days, while positive cases were reported there before.

Highlighting need to use technology for prompt response, the Joint Secretary said that the government is using technology for live case tracking, case management and for implementation and monitoring of containment plan. GIS Mapping is used for positive confirmed cases, identification of active intervention areas and containment plan implementation. Heat maps and predictive data analysis are used to identify areas needing future intervention. Rapid Response Teams and ambulance and quarantine management are being done through Integrated Command Centres. Remote digital medical consultation is also being done in some districts, to which medical stores are also connected.

Shri Aggarwal showed the example of Bengaluru to highlight effective management of COVID-19 using technology. In Bengaluru's COVID-19 War Room, software engineers, doctors, pilots, research scholars, psychologists, Red Cross workers and common citizens are collectively fighting against COVID-19. All callers are given important information through helplines which are manned from here. Government, start-ups and academic institutions have come together to form a platform, which is managed in the war-room; the platform provides real-time updates on positive cases, suspected cases and graphs of the evolving situation at taluka and district levels. Hunger Helpline number 155214 for serving migrant workers and poor people is also operated from the war room. War room has also been working to bust fake news about COVID-19. Bengaluru Municipal Commissioner Office

also has a unit functioning from the war room. Heat maps, identification and classification of hotspots based on isolation period and other such important works are carried out by the joint efforts of government officers and workers from private sector. In Bengaluru, those advised quarantine have to download Quarantine App which is GPS-enabled and requires patients to send a selfie every day. Corona Watch App tracks all positive cases. Corona Watch App informs people about their proximity to any positive patient. This multifaceted COVID-19 War Room, which leverages technology to help take superior decisions, has enabled Karnataka to control spread of COVID-19 to a large extent, the Joint Secretary informed.

The Joint Secretary informed that a Core Strategy Group has been formed in CSIR, based on [a detailed review of COVID-19 research, taken by the Union Health and S&TMinister Dr. Harsh Vardhan](#), along with CSIR and its 38 labs. The Core Strategy Group is working on digital and molecular surveillance, rapid and economical diagnostics, new drugs, repurposing of drugs and associated production processes. CSIR labs are working in collaboration with public sector and private sector units, medium and small-scale industry and various Ministries of the Government.

Shri Aggarwal informed that [more than 30 crore people have received financial assistance amounting to Rs. 28,256 crore under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package](#). He recalled the words of the Prime Minister "*Jaan Hai to Jahaan Hai*" and stated this is backed up by action. He added that the Government wants to protect lives as well as livelihoods during the lockdown.

He further informed that:

- [About 2 crore masks have been produced by around 78,000 Self Help Group members of 27 State Rural Livelihood Missions](#).
- [Under Exercise NCC Yogdan, NCC cadets are helping civil administration](#). More than 50,000 people have volunteered to offer their services in the fight against COVID-19.

Requesting everyone to download the Aarogya Setu app, the Joint Secretary informed that it enables citizens to assess their risk of COVID-19 and alerts them if they come near infected persons. About 3.5 crore people have already downloaded it, he informed. The app uses advanced algorithms, bluetooth and Artificial Intelligence.

Answering a media query, Shri Aggarwal informed that any person suspecting to have been infected with COVID-19 may contact either Central Govt. or State govt. helpline numbers, by which they will be guided based on symptoms, the specific situation and on the dedicated COVID Hospitals that have been set up in their area.

Informing that states are working continuously to enforce lockdown measures, the representative of the Home Affairs Ministry Ms. Punya Salila Srivastava informed that retired police personnel, NSS and NCC cadets, and officials of other departments too are assisting the police in enforcing lockdown measures. She further stated that [the Home Ministry has written to states asking them to follow lockdown guidelines of MHA in letter and spirit](#):

- The Ministry has clarified that both inter-state and intra-state movement of trucks and goods carriers are allowed, whether or not goods are essential. No separate permit or approval is required for cargo movement. Empty trucks or goods carriers are also allowed - since they may be going for pickup of goods or returning after delivery. Along with driver, one more person is allowed in the goods carrier. Local authorities have been asked to proactively facilitate the truck driver and cleaner of trucks to travel from their homes to the truck location.
- Local authorities are required to cooperate and facilitate the movement of workers of those organizations which have received permission to undertake official or commercial activities during lockdown.
- Railways, airports, sea ports and customs authorities have been authorized to issue passes for their staff and contractual labourers. They should ensure these passes are issued.
- States and UTs need to issue passes to workers of those firms which are exempted from lockdown restrictions. They should also ensure that manufacturing units near state borders too do not face any hurdles in functioning.
- Workers belonging to the MSME sector who are employed in supply of essential items such as wheat flour (*atta*), pulses (*dal*) and edible oil should not face any hurdles. Warehouses and cold storages too should be allowed to operate, whether or not these are for essential items.
- **These instructions are applicable to all areas except hot spots and containment areas.**
- **Social Distancing norms and proper hygiene should be maintained while performing all these activities.** States have been told to ensure that these instructions reach all district authorities and field

level agencies.

The Ministry informed these measures will help ensure that there is no shortage of essential commodities and services during the lockdown.

The representative of ICMR Dr. **Raman R. Gangakhedkar** informed that a total of 2,06,212 tests have been done so far. He further informed that [14 mentor institutes have been identified for augmenting testing capacity in the country](); these institutes will train other medical colleges and also examine whether new labs need to be set up. Assuring that sufficient testing kits are available, he informed that based on current stock and testing trends, we can test easily for six more weeks.

Replying to a media query on recently reported study on use of the drug Remdesivir for COVID-19 treatment, Dr. Gangakhedkar said that it is not a clinical trial, but only an observational study. He said that we will come to know of further developments through WHO Solidarity Trial, which has an arm that is looking into the matter.

Responding to another media query on a study which says that COVID-19 infection can be transmitted through shoes, Dr. Gangakhedkar stated that strength of evidence is of paramount importance in science. Stating that a very big piece of evidence is required to accept this conclusion, he said that the proposition cannot be accepted based on just one report.

The Principal Director General of Press Information Bureau, Shri K.S.Dhatwalia, informed:

- [Indian Railways has been continuing to feed the infrastructure sector and ramp up the supply chain during the COVID-19 lockdown.]() From 1st April to 11th April 2020, Railways has transported more than 1.9 lakh wagons of coal and over 13000 wagons of petroleum products.

LIVE tweets by [@PIB_India]() from the media briefing can be found on [this thread]().

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