

Updates on COVID-19

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Several steps for prevention, containment and management of COVID-19 are being taken by Government of India along with the States/UTs. These are being regularly reviewed and monitored at the highest level.

The 12th meeting of Group of Ministers (GoM) on COVID-19 was held at Nirman Bhawan, here today, under the chairpersonship of Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare. A detailed discussion was held by GoM on the impact of extended lockdown and to create a further roadmap. GoM also reviewed the efforts by Science & Technology institutions to deal with COVID-19 in diagnosis, vaccines, drugs, hospital equipment accessories and general wellness.

Department of Science & Technology, Department of Bio-Technology, Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Dept. of Atomic Energy (DEA) and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare are working together to:

- Create new rapid and accurate diagnostics that may give results within 30 minutes,
- Augment testing capacity through their 30 labs,
- Development of innovative pooling strategies to boost the number of people that can be tested,
- Indigenous synthesis of critical components that are limiting domestic test kit production, and
- Increase viral sequencing, which can help in epidemiology and to identify potentially important mutations.

Progress is also reported on vaccines development spanning inactivated virus, antibodies to major antigens, monoclonal, and RNA based vaccines. Convalescent plasma therapy has also been initiated on some sites.

Government is working with global partners to ensure that effective vaccines can be developed, and made available as soon as possible. India is a participant in the SOLIDARITY trial of the World Health Organization, through which the effectiveness of these therapies is being determined. Scientific task forces are evaluating existing approved drugs and repurpose them for COVID-19. CSIR has progressed into an indigenous synthesis of multiple promising anti-viral molecules such as Umifenovir, Favipiravir. Phytopharmaceuticals and leads from traditional medical systems are also being explored in parallel along with Ministry of AYUSH.

Production of ancillary support devices such as personal protective equipment, oxygen concentrators, ventilators, CSIR engineering labs is being augmented by indigenous designs of Sree Chitra Tiurumalai Institute of Medical Science and Technology (SCTIMST) under DST. Indigenous manufacturing of RT-PCR kits had started and will produce 10 lakh kits per month from May 2020. Rapid Antibody detection kits will also start manufacturing with a capacity of 10 lakh kits per month by May 2020. 5 lakh Rapid Antibody test kits are distributed in all States and Districts on the basis of high case burden. The present ventilator manufacturing capacity is 6000 ventilators per month. Necessary efforts in areas of diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines are being monitored on a war footing by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Additionally, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has shared forecasting tools with States/District administrators for better planning of infrastructure across different COVID facilities based on the assessment of caseloads.

Cumulatively, 1919 dedicated COVID-19 hospitals have been identified at both Centre and State level which includes:

- 672 Dedicated COVID Hospitals (DCH) (with 107830 isolation beds and 14742 ICU beds),
- 1247 Dedicated COVID Health Centres (DCHC) (with total of 65916 isolation beds and 7064 ICU

beds)

Hence a total of 1919 facilities having 1,73,746 isolation beds and total ICU beds 21,806 are available.

Before the lockdown, India's doubling rate was about 3 days. For the past seven days, the doubling rate is 6.2 days. 19 States/UTs (Kerala, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Ladakh, Himachal, Chandigarh, Puducherry, Bihar, Odisha, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, UP, Karnataka, J&K Punjab, Assam, Tripura) are presently showing a higher doubling rate, which is better than the national average, which reflects that rate of increase of cases in these places has been reduced to some extent.

An average Growth Factor of 1.2 since 1st April 2020 as compared to 2.1 in the two weeks proceeding that (15th March to 31st March) is observed, which is about a 40% decline $(2.1-1.2)/2.1$ in Growth Factor.

An increase of 1007 new cases and 23 new deaths has been reported since yesterday, with a total of 13,387 confirmed cases for COVID-19 in the country. As many as 1749 persons have been cured/discharged after recovery.

For all authentic & updated information on COVID-19 related technical issues, guidelines & advisories please regularly visit: <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/>.

Technical queries related to COVID-19 may be emailed at technicalquery.covid19@gov.in and other queries on ncov2019@gov.in.

In case of any queries on COVID-19, please call at Ministry of Health & Family Welfare helpline no. : +91-11-23978046 or 1075 (Toll-free). List of helpline numbers of States/UTs on COVID-19 is also available at <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/coronavirushelplinenumber.pdf>.

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