

Number of COVID-19 cases in India would have been 1.2 lakh by April 15, if only containment and no lockdown measures were implemented: Health Ministry Analysis

586 dedicated COVID Hospitals with more than 1 lakh isolation beds and around 11,500 ICU beds set up so far: Health Ministry

Agra has been successful in containing COVID-19 due to coordinated action by district administration, state government and frontline workers: Health Ministry

3.28 crore HCQ tablets available in public sector, 2.65 crore in private sector, 2 crore more being procured: Health Ministry

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The number of COVID-19 positive cases in the country stands at 7,447 as on date. A total of 239 people in the country have died because of the COVID-2019 infection. In the last 24 hours, 1,035 new cases and 40 deaths have been reported. A total of 642 people have recovered. 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.

The Joint Secretary further informed that Dedicated COVID hospitals are being set up, in order to provide proper treatment and stop spread of infection. So far, 586 dedicated COVID Hospitals have been set up, with a capacity of more than one lakh isolation beds and around 11,500 ICU beds. "This figure is being augmented every day, based on evolving situation", he stated. The Centre is ensuring supply of PPE, N95 masks, testing kits and ventilators in coordination with the states, he further said.

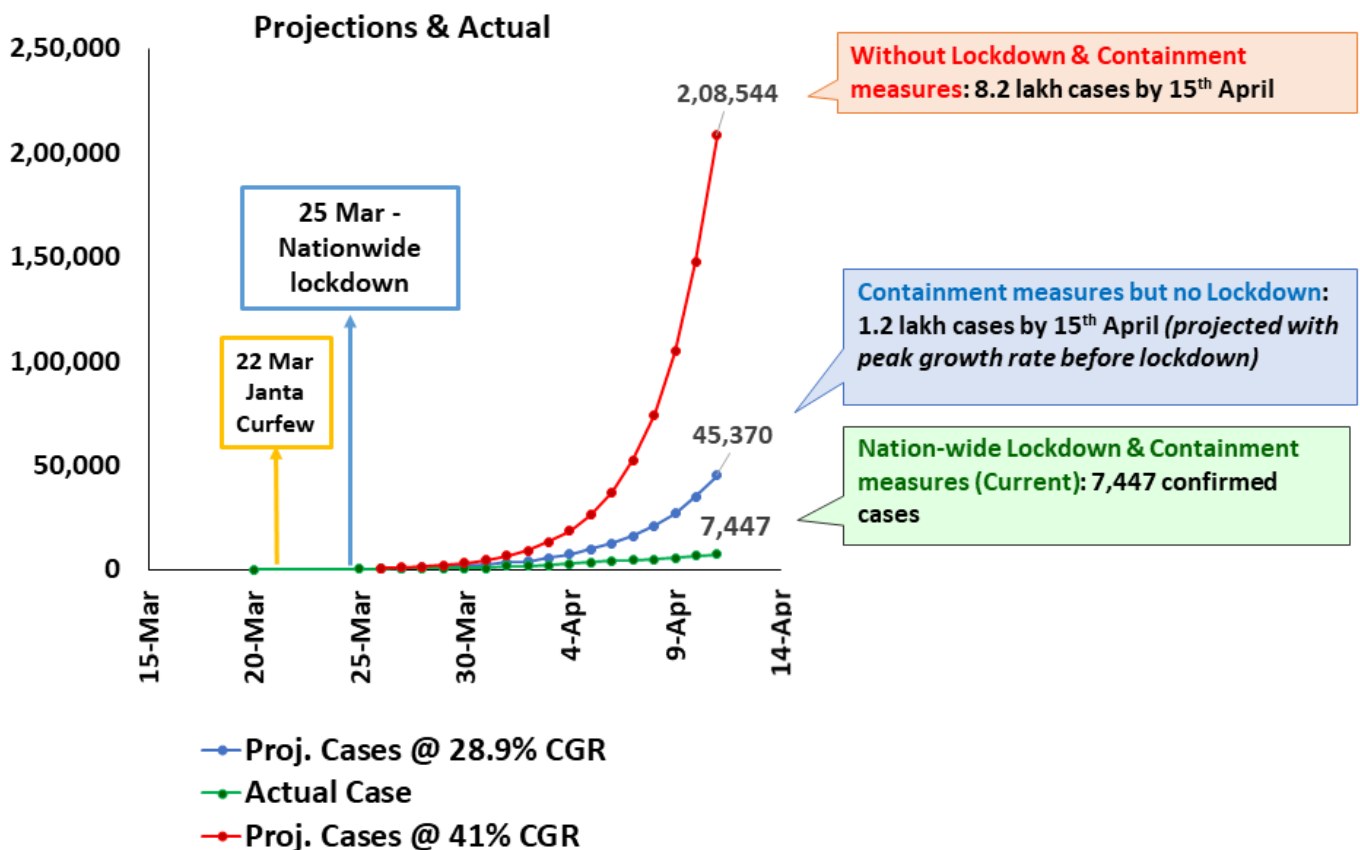
Shri Aggarwal also informed that:

- [Prime Minister took a video conference meeting with Chief Ministers and Governors of states and UTs](#), in which everyone expressed their collective resolve to save the nation from the COVID-19 pandemic, come what may, and to work towards it together.
- The Government's goal is to implement containment policy, containment action plan, contact tracing and clinical management of COVID-19 patients in proper manner, as per process, in coordination with states.
- [The Ministry of AYUSH has reiterated measures to enhance respiratory health and boost immunity for self-care during the COVID-19 pandemic](#). The advisory was issued on 31st March 2020, as a measure towards enhancing one's immunity. Districts have been asked to incorporate this in district-level contingency plan as well.

Informing the results of a statistical analysis conducted by the Health Ministry, the Joint Secretary informed:

- There would have been a total of 8.2 lakh COVID-19 cases by April 15, 2020, at a case growth rate of 41%, had no containment or lockdown measures been implemented. There would have a total of 1.2 lakh cases by this date, if only containment measures and no lockdown were to have been implemented. Since the nation implemented both containment and lockdown measures, the number of cases as on date is 7,447.

Criticality of Lockdown & Containment for India



Stating that major action is being taken up at the field level, the Joint Secretary cited the success story of **Agra, the first COVID-19 cluster in the country**, where action was taken at the field level by district administration, state government and frontline workers, in coordination with the Centre. The district conducted detailed contact tracing of cases and epicentre and hot spots were identified on map. Following this, 1,248 special teams were formed, who conducted house-to-house survey of 9.3 lakh people. The survey identified 2,500 symptomatic patients, who were further monitored. As part of a coordinated effort, Agra Smart City Control Room was converted into a War Room to combat COVID-19. Central Helplines were established and special teams were formed. At the same time, district administration worked on implementation of lockdown, as well as on setting up isolation and medical facilities, utilizing public private partnership. The Agra district administration worked simultaneously on other fronts, including distribution chain management, movement of essential commodities, provision of food & shelter for homeless and needy, food distribution for animals and risk self-reporting and helpline facility for citizens. Out of 92 positive cases in Agra district, 5 people have recovered and 87 people are being watched in hospitals, none of whom is critical, informed Shri Aggarwal, explaining how the coordinated and

systematic actions led to the success of Agra. A detailed presentation given by the Joint Secretary, on the success of Agra can be found [here](#).

Replying to a media query on hydroxychloroquin tablets, the Joint Secretary informed that 3.28 crore HCQ tablets are available in public sector and 2.65 crore tablets are available in private sector. Besides, the Government is trying to procure additional 2 crore tablets and provide them to private sector at field level.

Assuring that the response of the Central Government has been pre-emptive, proactive and to the extent of being over-prepared, Shri Aggarwal said that through a graded approach, the Centre has aligned its response with the evolving situation.

The Home Affairs Ministry stated:

- Home Ministry has written again to states and UTs today, asking them to provide necessary police security to doctors and medical staff - in hospitals during screening and in quarantine facilities.
- [MHA has issued the 5th Addendum to the guidelines issued under Disaster Management Act, in order to exempt operations of marine fishing / aquaculture industry and its workers from lockdown restrictions](#). Operations and processes in these industries such as feeding, maintenance, harvesting, processing, packaging, cold chain, sale and marketing will now be allowed. Maintenance of social distancing and hygiene will be the responsibility of respective organization heads and it shall be the responsibility of the district administration to ensure strict enforcement of these guidelines.
- Situation regarding essential supplies and commodities is satisfactory and is being monitored at every level.
- NCC and NSS cadets and civil defence volunteers have come forward to render their services in fighting COVID-19.
- Central Armed Police Forces are also working hard in stopping the spread of COVID-19, through improving awareness of force personnel and communities, setting up quarantine camps and providing food and help to stranded workers.

The ICMR representative informed that 1,71,718 samples have been tested till date, out of which 16,564 samples were tested yesterday. 146 labs in ICMR network and 67 private labs are functional as on date.

On a media query about the benefit of Rapid Antibody Based blood tests, the ICMR Representative stated, it will be beneficial in i) evaluating extent and trend of COVID-19 exposure and in ascertaining success of containment measures in hot spots, and also in ii) assessing whether health workers have become immune to the infection and can resume work.

The Principal Director General of PIB, Shri K.S. Dhatwalia informed that:

- [More than 1 million free hot cooked meals have been distributed to needy persons by Indian Railways](#).
- [The total cultivated area of summer crops \(including Rice, Pulses, Coarse Cereals and Oil Seeds\) has jumped up significantly](#), registering 11.64% increase over the last year, despite the restrictions and social distancing norms witnessed since last month, particularly after the commencement of nationwide lockdown.

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

Update from Maharashtra

In [a video address](#), the Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Uddhav Thackeray informed that [the lockdown in the state is being extended at least till April 30, 2020](#); he said the phrase "at least" is being used, since it depends entirely on the extent to which social discipline and not crowding in areas like markets are followed. He added that there is no other option to contain the spread of the virus and expressed the hope of winning the war against the virus with active public cooperation.

DJM/SC

