

Order placed for 1.7 crore PPE and 49,000 ventilators, 20 domestic manufacturers developed to supply PPE: Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

Current stock of Hydroxychloroquin is more than enough, Government is 100% prepared to meet emergent needs: Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

Group of Ministers discusses COVID-19 containment and management strategy and setting up of Dedicated COVID Hospitals: Health Ministry

The rate of positive cases has not increased substantially in last 1-2 months, ranging between 3%-5%: ICMR

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The number of COVID-19 cases stands at 5,734 as on date. A total of 166 people in the country have died because of the COVID-2019 infection. In the last 24 hours, 540 new cases and 17 deaths have been reported. 473 people have recovered so far. 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 order has been placed for 1.7 crore PPE and 49,000 ventilators, based on which supply has started to come. 20 domestic manufacturers have been developed to supply PPE. Shri Aggarwal further noted, "There is a feeling of fear being created that PPEs are not enough; we must understand that PPEs are not required for everyone, as per guidelines issued earlier. PPE must be used based on risk profile, its use at field-level should be as per the defined process and guidelines. What is important is that PPEs are used rationally for the right purpose and where it is needed". He clarified that PPE is not only cover-all - it is a mix of different components. All components are required only in high-risk zones, such as in labs where test samples are collected, in emergency rooms and in mortuary-related activities. In other zones, N95 masks and gloves will be sufficient. Reiterating that the Government is making efforts to provide sufficient stock to states, he reminded that it is also necessary that PPE is used in a rational and optimal manner, for the right purpose.

About supply of Hydroxychloroquin (HCQ), the Joint Secretary briefed that the nation has made proper

preparation and planning regarding current and future requirement of hydroxychloroquine. The current stock is more than enough and Government is 100% prepared to meet emergent needs, he further said. He highlighted also that hydroxychloroquine should be used as per norms. "HCQ is to be given only to contacts and doctors dealing with COVID-19 patients. It can be harmful to people suffering from cardiac diseases or irregularities. It should be used only by the specified categories of people."

Shri Aggarwal also informed that:

- A high-level meeting of Group of Ministers (GoM), consisting of Home Minister, Health Minister, External Affairs Minister, Civil Aviation Minister, Shipping and Chemicals & Fertilisers Minister, was held today. The meeting discussed containment and management of COVID-19 and setting up of dedicated COVID Hospitals and expediting these matters in coordination with states. The GoM discussed the strategy regarding labs and on increasing lab samples in hot spots and clusters. Supply of PPE, N95 Masks and Ventilators has been taken up. They highlighted that it is necessary that our healthcare professionals who are serving us like warriors receive full support of the community. The GoM also highlighted that it is imperative that we don't believe in any kind of fake news or rumours, so that unnecessary panic is not created. The GoM said that we need to be alert and obtain authentic information from Government of India or State Government's Call Centre numbers or seek correct information from the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare's website.
- The Government of India has approved 100% centrally-funded '[India COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health System Preparedness Package](#)' to support states in their fight against COVID-19.
- Health Ministry has formed high-level multidisciplinary teams to support states and UTs in COVID-19 containment plan, hospital preparedness and ventilator management. 10 such teams have been sent to 9 states, namely Maharashtra, Bihar, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh.
- [Indian Railways has decided to deploy more than 2,500 Doctors and 35,000 paramedic staff to meet the COVID 19 challenge](#). More doctors and paramedics are being recruited on a temporary basis by various zones. A significant portion of Indian Railways' chain of 586 Health Units, 45 Sub Divisional Hospitals, 56 Divisional Hospitals, 8 Production Units Hospitals and 16 Zonal Hospitals spread all over the country have been dedicated to combat COVID-19. Further, in order to prepare 80,000 isolation beds, Indian Railways is working to convert 5,000 train coaches into quarantine/isolation facilities for COVID-19. Conversion of 3,250 coaches has already been completed.
- [NGOs have been permitted to buy food grains directly from FCI for Relief operations](#) NGOs and Charitable Organizations are playing important role in providing cooked food to thousands of poor and needy people during this time of nationwide lockdown. To ensure uninterrupted supply of food grains to these organization.
- Two institutes of [Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research \(CSIR\) - Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology \(CCMB\), Hyderabad and Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology \(IGIB\), New Delhi have started working together on whole genome sequencing of novel coronavirus](#).

Speaking about commendable work being carried at different places to deal with lockdown, the Joint Secretary cited the examples of Karnal and Lucknow. Karnal district in Haryana has started 'Adopt A Family' campaign, under which people are contributing to support needy families during lockdown; under this, 13,000 families are being supported using Rs. 64 lakh contribution which has been received. 90,000 meals are also being distributed per day to support vulnerable groups; a dedicated Karnal Live Tracker to track home quarantine and an online local delivery app called 'Need On Wheels' to deliver fruits, vegetables and other items have also been started in Karnal. In Lucknow district, efforts are being made to use hotels as COVID-19 quarantine facilities.

The Home Affairs Ministry stated:

- States are taking many measures such as helplines, apps, relief camps, food camps and shelters to help people who are stranded due to the lockdown.
- More than 300 grievances were addressed via the MHA control room yesterday.
- Helpline for North Eastern Region 1944 is also providing services effectively.

ICMR informed that around 1,30,000 COVID-19 tests have been conducted till yesterday, out of which 5,734 were found to be positive. The rate of positive cases has not increased substantially in last 1-2 months, ranging between 3%-5%. 13,143 samples were tested yesterday.

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

- [Indian Railways has produced about 6 lakh re-usable face masks and more than 40,000 litres of hand sanitizers](#)
- [Ministry of Housing &Urban Affairs has launched a revised Version of Swachhata App to handle queries specific to COVID-19](#). This app has now been modified and strengthened further in order to enable citizens to get COVID-related complaints also redressed by their respective Urban Local Bodies.
- [Government of India has launched an online training module for management of COVID-19 named 'Integrated Government Online training' \(iGOT\) portal on DIKSHA platform of Human Resources Development Ministry](#).

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

DJM/SC

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