

Low Mortality Rate does not mean we can risk the lives of others: Member (Health), NITI Aayog

India is much ahead of Russia, France and UK in number of daily COVID tests conducted: Health Secretary

Posted On: 17 NOV 2020 7:43PM by PIB Mumbai

Mumbai / New Delhi, 17 November 2020

India's daily new COVID cases have been declining continuously. Less than 30,000 cases have been reported during last 24 hours. However we should be very cautious as the results of festivals like Durga Pooja, Diwali and elections in a few states will be visible in the coming weeks. India's COVID recovery rate is more than 93% and the total recoveries in the country is around 83 lakhs. When an average 40,365 new cases have been reported daily, an average 46,701 people have recovered daily during the last week. More than 12.65 Crore COVID-19 tests have been conducted so far. This has been stated by Shri Rajesh Bhushan, Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, at a media briefing on the actions taken, preparedness and updates on COVID-19, held at National Media Centre, New Delhi today.

Shri Bhushan also mentioned that, "India continues to be among the countries with lowest cases per million population in the world, our figure is as low as 6430 while there are countries having more than 20,000 cases per million population. India has reported 211 new cases per million population whereas the world average was 510, during last week. India's deaths per million population also remains lesser (94) than the world average (169). India has reported only three deaths per million population during the last week while many other countries are witnessing an increase in numbers."

While talking about the COVID-19 tests conducted he said that, "India is much ahead of Russia, France and United Kingdom when it comes to daily tests conducted".

Maharashtra, Kerala, Delhi, West Bengal, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh account for 76.7% of total active COVID-19 cases in the country.

Shri Bhushan spoke about the upsurge in number of COVID cases in Delhi and the action plan made by the Health Ministry in cooperation with the Delhi Government, Indian Council of Medical Research, NITI Aayog and AIIMS to control the chain of spread of the pandemic. "An average number of 57000 tests have been conducted from September to November, in Delhi. A steady increase in number of tests is crucial or else a huge number of people with infection might escape from our radar and it may result in further spread of the infection"

"There is a whole-hearted 360 degree effort to take care of the worrying situation which has emerged in Delhi, we all will face it together. The fact remains that we have to be vigilant. Beyond a stage this kind of an intensity of Pandemic can be very dangerous to lives, livelihoods as well as total fabric of the society. We as citizens have responsibility. A normal life is possible only when we lead a responsible life" said Member (Health), NITI Aayog, Dr. V.K. Paul.

"Follow COVID appropriate behaviour as a duty for the sake of the society and the nation. We all

are witnessing the situation in European countries like Italy, France etc where cases are increasing. One should learn from this scenario and act responsibly,” he added.

He also mentioned that, “People should understand that the infection is not over. Don’t be hesitant to get tested. We are doubling the capacity of testing in Delhi. People should ensure that if they have any symptom must approach nearest testing facility. When you test on time it will be beneficial to your family as well as the society. Low Mortality Rate does not mean we can risk the lives of others.”

He listed the following strategies being practised and to be implemented immediately in order to control the spread of the pandemic in the national capital

- 1. Increase in overall beds, including ICU beds:** The existing bed capacity will be increased from around 3500 to more than 6000 in 3-5 days. Union Government, Delhi Government and Private Sector will jointly work to accomplish this. There is an immediate plan to activate 5000 isolation and oxygen beds at Chattarpur Radha Soami Satsang Beas as an additional buffer in the NCR. Railways have made available around 1000 beds which are acting as a reserve now.
- 2. Double testing to 1.0-1.2 lakh per day; right mix of RTPCR and Antigen tests:** Testing will be increased to 1.2 lakh per day. ICMR, Government laboratories, Research Laboratories of Science & Technology departments will help in increasing the testing capacity. 10 mobile laboratories are being planned of which five will start functioning in the next 4-5 days. Also a right mix of test to be adopted so that optimum number and quality sharing between RT PCR and Antigen tests as per protocol is ensured
- 3. Strengthen and augment home care support**
- 4. Mobilize doctors / nurses:** Government has decided to mobilize doctors from Paramilitary, AIIMS etc. 75 Doctors and 250 Paramedics from Central forces are being flown in to Delhi.
- 5. Enforce quarantine of contacts**
- 6. Enforce containment zone SOPs:** A massive house to house survey to be conducted in around 4000 Containment zones. 3000 teams are currently on this task which will be increased to 7000-8000.

7. Follow COVID appropriate behaviour :

“There is complete cooperation from Delhi government in implementing the strategy to control the pandemic. Actions have already been taken on many decisions”, he added.

While answering a media query, he said that, “there are five vaccines which are at various Phases of trials of which two are in Phase 3 trials. Sputnik V Russian Vaccine has completed Phase 2 trial. We have great hope in the success of these five vaccines whose availability of doses is great in number. This will be able to manage the need of vaccines arising due to the pandemic.”

In a response to another query on the availability of beds in Delhi, Health Secretary mentioned that, “10 teams consisting of 3 members each have been sent to visit various hospitals in the NCR to have a dialogue and report about the transparency in allocation of beds.”

The presentations made in today’s briefing can be accessed [here](#)

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(Release ID: 1673517)