

153

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Government of India  
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare  
(Department of Health Research)

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Red Cross Building, New Delhi  
Dated: 07<sup>th</sup> September, 2021

**Subject: - Monthly Summary to the Cabinet for the month of August, 2021-Reg.**

The undersigned is directed to circulate herewith a copy of the unclassified portion of the **Monthly Summary for the Cabinet** pertaining to the Department of Health Research (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare) for the month of August, 2021.

  
(D. R. Meena)

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Email: dhrhq.icmr@gmail.com

To

1. All members of Council of Ministers
2. Deputy Chairman, NITI Aayog, Yojana Bhawan, New Delhi.
3. The Principal Information Officer, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, New Delhi

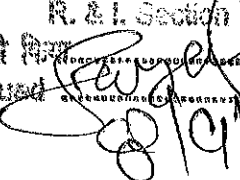
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The Director, Cabinet Secretariat, Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi-110001

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6. Secretary, Inter-State Council Secretariat, MHA, Vigyan Bhawan Annexe, New Delhi.

स्वास्थ्य अनुसंधान विभाग  
Department of Health Research  
आर. & एल. सेक्शन  
R. & L. Section

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452

**MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RESEARCH**

**Monthly Summary for the Cabinet for August, 2021**

The Monthly report on important issues/development for the month of August, 2021 in respect of Department of Health Research/Indian Council of Medical Research is submitted herewith for your kind perusal.

**Important policy decisions taken and major achievements during the month:**

**a) Global coronavirus COVID-19 management and measures in India:** Following new measures and initiatives were taken besides the timely COVID-19 testing and reporting.

1) **Expansion of COVID-19 testing facilities:** A total of 97 new testing labs (27 Govt. and 70 Private) were approved and functionalized for covid-19 testing in the month. Accordingly, a total of 6,08,19,306 samples have been tested during the month and the testing capacity was increased up to more than 20,00,000/day.

2) **Approved a total of 2885 (1324 Governments and 1561 Private) Labs for COVID-19 testing.**

**State-wise details:** Andhra Pradesh (134); Arunachal Pradesh (27); Assam (56); Bihar (71); Chandigarh (11); Chhattisgarh (57); Delhi (135); Gujarat (126); Goa (10); Haryana (77); Himachal Pradesh (35); Jammu & Kashmir (36); Jharkhand (50); Karnataka (205); Kerala (175); Maharashtra (281); Madhya Pradesh (128); Manipur (18); Meghalaya (21); Mizoram (12); Nagaland (15); Odisha (62); Puducherry (16); Punjab (67); Rajasthan (78); Tamil Nadu (287); Telangana (130); Tripura (6); Uttar Pradesh (280); Uttarakhand (66); West Bengal (161); Andaman & Nicobar Islands (5); Dadra & Nagar Haveli (1); Sikkim (4); Leh-Ladhak (4); Lakshdweep (10); Mobile testing lab (28).

**-Real-Time RT PCR for COVID-19: 1781 (Govt: 644+Private: 1137)**

**- TrueNat Test for COVID-19: 954 (Govt: 630 + Private: 324)**

**- CBNAAT Test for COVID-19: 130 (Govt: 42 + Private: 88)**

**- Other Molecular-Nucleic Acid (M-NA) Testing Platforms for COVID-19: 20 (Govt: 08 + Private: 12)**

*Note: Other Molecular-Nucleic Acid includes Abbott ID NOW, RT-LAMP, CRISPR-Cas9, and Accula™*

3) **Kits Distributed to Lab/States across the country during the month:**

RT PCR	RNA Extraction	VTM
2,84,500	2,26,724	73,520

**Genome sequencing for COVID-19 in North-East:** Screening revealed B.1.617.1, B.1.617.2 and B.1.1.7 SARS-CoV-2 variants. 98 partial S gene sequences submitted to INSACOG portal and 17 whole genome sequences for SARS-CoV-2 submitted to the GSAID portal; Studies using targeted

and whole genome sequencing of the breakthrough cases revealed that the B.1.617.2 or delta variant is variant of concern and predominant strain behind the breakthrough infections.

**Immunological response of Covishield™ vaccine in subjects with prior SARS-CoV-2 infection:** A single dose of Covishield™ vaccine may be sufficient for a significant immunological response in subjects with prior SARS-CoV-2 infection. Stratifying vaccines based on their SARS-CoV-2 IgG antibody titre before vaccination can save up to 795 million doses of vaccines in India.

**Detection of semi-quantitative anti-SARS CoV-2 SRBD IgG ELISA and antibody titers:** A total 1174 (579 serum samples collected under the COVID-19 Biorepository project and 595 post-vaccination sera) were tested using semi-quantitative anti-SARS CoV-2 SRBD IgG ELISA and antibody titers were estimated.

**Validation of serological test kits for COVID-19:** Validated a total of 08 serological test kits for COVID-19. This included 02 rapid antibody test kits, 3RNA kits, 2, RTPCR and 03 ELISA kits for detection of anti-SARS-CoV-IgG antibodies kit. Validation reports were released through the ICMR online portal for kit validation, after approval by competent authorities.

4) **Conducted Inter Laboratory QA/QC Programme (ILQC)** for 39 COVID-19 laboratories in northeast India.

**Monitoring the adverse events** in Covaxin vaccinated recipients.

5) **Undertook various activities related to following clinical trials:** 1) **OTAC Clinical Trial** "An international multicenter, randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial of the safety and efficacy of anti-coronavirus hyperimmune intravenous immunoglobulin for the treatment of adult outpatients in early stages of COVID-19; 2) **ANTICOV clinical trial** "Adaptive clinical trial for mild cases of COVID-19 using repurposed medicines" jointly by DNDi and ICMR; 3) **Recovery clinical trial** "Adaptive clinical Trial to assess the efficacy of baricitinib in moderate cases of COVID-19.

6) **Provided training to public health laboratories** of Khurda and Jajpur districts on Biosafety, sample processing, RNA extraction and RT PCR testing related to COVID-19.

7) **Evidence collection and presentation of evidence for the "47<sup>th</sup> National Task Force and Joint Monitoring Group on COVID-19 of ICMR and NITI Ayog** on Role of nutrition supplements in COVID-19; Results of sequence alignment of primers and probes of RTPCR kits to assess effectiveness in detecting VOCs of SARS CoV2; Presentation and discussion on evidence of nitric oxide in COVID-19 management; Review of national treatment protocol of COVID-19 in adults; Review of COVID associated mucormycosis advisory.

8) **Posted 30 tweets on Covid-19 testing and updates**, one tweet on snake day; two tweets on Insulin centenary symposium; one tweet on ICMR young diabetes registry; one tweet on COVAXIN effectiveness in Delta, Delta AY.1 and B.1.617.3 variants; 1 tweet on release of National Guidelines for Data Quality in Surveys; one tweets on heart failure biobank; one tweet on a new collaborative project- "Priorities for the Environmental Dimension of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) in India; one on 75<sup>th</sup> Independence day; one on ICMR video release; one on

Import dependence to export surplus related to COVID-19 diagnostic supplies; one on completion of 50 Cr COVID-19 tests.

- 9) **Addressed Queries regarding** possibility and severity of third wave, Covaxin trial in children, effect of delta plus variant.
- 10) Empowered Group-6 meeting for COVID-19 testing was convened under the chairmanship of Secretary DHR & DG ICMR on the 17.08.2021.
- b) **Establishment of rabies diagnostic facilities at Pune:** Developed a positive control for a real-time RTPCR assay for the detection of rabies virus, using in vitro transcribed RNA, and determined the limit of detection of the assay. Evaluated the performance of a commercial antibody conjugate for rabies diagnosis by Fluorescent Antibody Testing (FAT) using a set of post-mortem brain tissue specimens of animals.
- c) **Facilitated the launching of the** "Free Livestock Vaccination Drive against Anthrax" in Koraput district of Odisha.
- d) **Investigations of Acute Encephalitis Syndrome:** Out of a total of 37 samples (16 sera and 21 CSF) of 24 AES cases received, none found positive in JEV IgM ELISA. Out of 7 samples which showed indeterminate results in JEV IgM ELISA, 02 tested positive for anti-dengue IgM antibodies. Twenty-one cases were screened for Chandipura virus (CHPV) infection by IgM ELISA and all tested negative. Two samples referred from Gujarat tested positive in CHPV RTPCR.
- e) **Vector surveillance:** A total of 59 animal sera samples were received from Aurangabad and Chandrapur regions of Maharashtra, out of which 29 showed the presence of JEV neutralizing antibodies. Mosquito samples received from Aurangabad were screened for JEV and West Nile Virus, and all tested negative. Sand fly samples from Panchmahal, Gujarat were tested for CHPV by PCR, and all tested negative.
- f) **Rare disease consortium:-** Planned the operations of the Rare Disease consortium by first undertaking the systematic reviews on Burden of Rare Diseases in India from 2000 to 2021; and Therapies for Rare Diseases in India: cost and accessibility from 2000 to 2021.
- g) **Undertaking various programs** for PhDs, MPH, MSc (virology, biostatistics), DNB (Pathology), NCD Epidemiology Fellowship Program and Basic Course on Biomedical Research, India Epidemic Intelligence Service Certificate Programme *etc.*
- h) **Conducted an online Joint Services Disaster Management Course** on 'Emerging viral Diseases and management' as part of the Disaster Management Course for the Tri-Services (Army, Navy & Air-Force).
- i) **ICMR-National Institute of Pathology has been** selected as a Center for conducting "Work Place Based Clinical Assessment for Formative Assessment 2020" for DNB Pathology by National Board of Medical Examinations".

209

j) Two medical college level Viral Research Diagnostic Laboratories (VRDLs) at Government Institute of Medical Science, Greater Noida (UP) and Government Medical Collage Chamba (HP) have been sanctioned during the month August, 2021.

k) Technical Appraisal Committee meeting to evaluate the new Health Technology Assessment in India (HTAIn) studies and outcome reports of Studies completed was conducted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> of August, 2021.