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

2nd Floor, Red Cross Building, New Delhi  
Dated 16th January, 2021

**Subject: - Monthly Summary to the Cabinet for the month of December, 2020-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 December, 2020.

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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

Copy to:

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

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4. Secretary to the Vice-President of India (Up-Rashtrapati ke Sachiv), Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi.
5. PS to Prime Minister of India, South Block, New Delhi
6. Secretary, Inter-State Council Secretariat, MHA, Vigyan Bhawan Annexe, New Delhi.

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

**Monthly Summary for the Cabinet for December, 2020**

Monthly report in the format on important issues/ development for the month of December, 2020 is submitted herewith.

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

**a) Global Corona virus COVID-19 management 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 132 new testing labs (30 Govt and 102 Private) were approved and functionalized for covid-19 testing in the month. Accordingly, a total of 2,83,37,476 samples have been tested in the month and the testing capacity was increased up to more than 12,00,000/day.
- 2) **Approved a total of 2277** (1199 Governments and 1078 Private) Labs for COVID-19 testing.

**State-wise details:** Andhra Pradesh (121); Arunachal Pradesh (23); Assam (47); Bihar (63); Chandigarh (8); Chhattisgarh (47); Delhi (88); Gujarat (88); Goa (9); Haryana (52); Himachal Pradesh (32); Jammu & Kashmir (29); Jharkhand (43); Karnataka (176); Kerala (136); Maharashtra (207); Madhya Pradesh (103); Manipur (14); Meghalaya (19); Mizoram (11); Nagaland (14); Odisha (56); Puducherry (14); Punjab (56); Rajasthan (65); Tamil Nadu (235); Telangana (89); Tripura (4); Uttar Pradesh (227); Uttarakhand (59); West Bengal (121); Andaman & Nicobar Islands (5); Dadra & Nagar Haveli (1); Sikkim (3); Leh-Ladhak (4); Lakshdweep (2); Mobile testing lab (5)

- Real-Time RT PCR for COVID-19: 1266 (Govt: 529 + Private: 737)

- TrueNat Test for COVID-19: 881 (Govt: 628+ Private: 253)

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

**3) Status of COVID-19 vaccines development in India:** Following four ICMR collaborative vaccines programs are under different stage of development.

- a. **Development of Covaxin in partnership with Bharat Biotech International Limited (BBIL):** Initiated Phase 3 clinical trials in 25,800 participants at 26 centers across India. The trial and data collection is under progress.
- b. **Development of ZyCoV-D vaccine in partnership with Zydus Cadila Healthcare Limited:** Completed evaluation of protective efficacy of ZyCoV-D DNA vaccine against SARS-CoV-2 virus challenge in Rhesus Macaques. Completed enrollment of a prospective, randomized, adaptive, phase I/II clinical study to evaluate the safety and immunogenicity of Novel Corona Virus -2019-nCoV vaccine candidate by intradermal route in healthy subjects. The trial and data collection is under progress.

- c. **Development of COVISHIELD, Oxford recombinant vaccine in partnership with Serum Institute of India:** Initiated a Phase 2/3, Observer-Blind, Randomized, Controlled Study to Determine the Safety and Immunogenicity of Covishield (COVID-19 Vaccine) in 1600 Healthy Indian Adults at 15 sites across India. Enrolment completed, further data collection is under progress.
- d. **Development of Indigenous vaccine in partnership with Serum Institute of India (SIID):** Completed pre-clinical studies of the indigenous SIPL receptor-binding domain-virus-like particle (RBD-VLP) COVID-19 vaccine in the Syrian Hamster model and the results were shared with the respective stakeholders.
- 4) **Completed evaluation** of therapeutic efficacy of purified F(ab')<sub>2</sub> fragments of SARS-CoV-2 antiserum immunoglobulins in Syrian hamster model prepared by Biological E Limited, Hyderabad.
- 5) **Performed validation of 18 COVID-19 test kits:** During the month validated a total of 18 serological test kits for COVID-19, this included 12 rapid antibody test kits and 06 ELISA kits (including 05 and 01 kits for detection of anti-SARS-CoV-2 IgG and total antibodies, respectively). Final reports of validation issued through the web portal.
- 6) **Antiviral Screening of potential agents for COVID-19 (National priority):** Completed cytotoxicity (MTT) assays on two products received from various firms/ICMR, and the antiviral assay for these two compounds is under progress.
- 7) **Kits Distributed to Lab/States across the country.**

RT PCR	RNA Extraction	VTM
385736	255004	124690

- 8) **The following procurement were made regarding COVID-19 through HITES and ICMR Hqrs during the period.**

S. No.	Name of Item	Quantity of order
1	Viral RNA Extraction Kit	4.8 Lakhs
2	Cobas 6800 SARs CoV2 Assay	15,000
3	Real Time PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) Kits For Novel Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19)	15.0 Lakhs
4	Real Time PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) Kits For Novel Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19)	25.0 Lakhs
5	Real Time PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) Kits For Novel Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19)	9.5 Lakhs
6	Mobile RT-PCR Testing Laboratory	5 Nos.
7	CoviDxtm Mplex-4R (Reactions)	15 kits
8	Hiring agencies for community based survey of 12,000 samples	1

- 9) **Communicated advisory** to all the states on "Use of RT-PCR and Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) diagnosis for COVID-19"

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- 10) Initiated Phase III regulatory Trial of COVAXIN at Kolkata.
- 11) Initiated Phase III, Randomized, Double-blind, Placebo-controlled, Multicenter study to evaluate the efficacy, safety, immunogenicity and Lot-to-Lot consistency of BBV 152, a Whole-virion inactivated SARS-CoV-2 vaccine in adults  $\geq 18$  years of age at Kolkata
- 12) Initiated 3<sup>rd</sup> round of Population-based sero-surveillance survey for SARS-CoV-2 infection transmission at Chennai, Dibrugarh, Himachal Pradesh, Kolkata.
- 13) Conducted 2nd Training Workshop on Biosafety and Biosecurity at Kolkata, through lecture sessions on various aspects of Biosafety and Biosecurity and Fire Safety followed by hands-on demonstration of Hand washing, PPE donning and doffing, spill management, triple layer packaging etc.
- 14) Organized a virtual educational session for media and press on Regulatory Pathways for COVID Vaccine Development - Clinical Trials and Adverse Event Monitoring.
- 15) Conducted 'Jan Andolan against COVID-19' jointly with local State health Authorities of Himachal Pradesh in lower and upper Keylong, Lahual & Spiti areas by organizing a two-day video conferencing workshop for capacity building of the staff, dissemination of information on preventive aspects of COVID-19 through interpersonal contacts, lectures and use of poster, banners and pamphlets.
- 16) Imparted training for COVID 19 diagnosis through RT-PCR to various centers
- 17) Distribution of COVID 19 Awareness pamphlets and lectures for prevention of COVID-19 in state of Rajasthan:
  - a) Distributed 30,000 pamphlets in different areas of Jodhpur through Newspapers distribution channel
  - b) Distributed 4,000 pamphlets among population at Harikishanpura village, Jaipur and Antali village Bhilwara district (Rajasthan)
- 18) Published special issue on "India & COVID -19 (Part IV)", online Ahead of Print.
  - b) Released advisory on use of "Dry Swab RNA Extraction Free RTPCR Method" on ICMR portal.
  - c) Launched India Hypertension Control Initiative (IHCI) in Puducherry and program implementation plan (PIP) for NPCDCS program in Goa, Puducherry, Nagaland for the year 2021.
  - d) Undertook investigation of Milroy Disease in Ghughari Block, Mandla in coordination with State Govt. of Madhya Pradesh.
  - e) IMRVI study: Tested a total of 434 serum samples of post-MR vaccine campaign under the 'Impact of measles-rubella (MR) vaccination campaign on population immunity in India.
  - f) Developed HIV-1 viral load EQA panel (2nd round) using an Indian isolate and is ready for distribution to 60 national viral load testing laboratories.
  - g) Organized various online training programs and workshops viz. training to the 37 new Hospital Based Cancer Registries centers; training workshop on "Functioning of HBCRs";

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workshop on Quality assurance and hands on training for pathologists for Incidental Gallbladder Cancer centers; sensitization and training workshop on "Prevalence of microbiologically positive pulmonary Non Tuberculosis Mycobacterium (NTM) including Species Information for the states of Assam, Madhya Pradesh Meghalaya, Orissa & Tamil Nadu, under the Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme (RNTCP), India; sensitization training on prevention of Sexual Harassment of women at workplace to the staff of NCDIR, Bangalore; training on Green skill development programme "laboratory assistant for eco-friendly food testing laboratory.

- h) **Organized curtain raiser webinars at the India International Science Festival (IISF 2020)** on following: 'Communicable Diseases & Innovative Public Health Interventions', 'Effort and contribution in strengthening the health services in the unreached areas for improvement of tribal health'; 'Importance of society, culture and human behaviour in spread and containment of diseases especially in light of COVID-19', 'Science for Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Global Welfare'.
- i) **Observed 'World AIDS Day' at Agra, Kolkata, Pune** through conducting various activities viz. delivering a lecture on "HIV Sentinel Surveillance results and fast track targets for bending the HIV curve in India, educational thoughts on Global Solidarity, shared responsibility" among people living with HIV (PLHIV); displaying thoughts of HIV infected individuals on HIV and COVID-19.
- j) **Undertook Environmental related digital posters dissemination on:** 'National Pollution Prevention Day', 'Bhopal Gas Tragedy Day', 'World Soil Day, International Mountain Day', and 'National Energy Conservation Day'.