



No.Q-11030/01/2021-HR/eoffice-8090850

Government of India

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

2nd Floor, Red Cross Building, New Delhi
Dated 17th February, 2021

Subject: - Monthly Summary to the Cabinet for the month of January, 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 January, 2021.

(D. R. Meena)

Deputy Secretary to the Govt. of India

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

Copy to:

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

Copy also forwarded for information to:

1. Secretary to the Government of India, All Ministries/Departments.
2. The Chairman, UPSC, Shahjahan Road, New Delhi.
3. Secretary to the President of India (Rashtrapati Ke Sachiv), Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi.
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.

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

Monthly Summary for the Cabinet for January, 2021

Monthly report in the format on important issues/ development for the month of January, 2021 is submitted herewith.

Important policy decisions taken and major achievements during the month:

a) **Global coronavirus 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 76 new testing labs (11 Govt and 65 Private) were approved and functionalized for covid-19 testing in the month. Accordingly, a total of 2,80,68,096 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 2353** (1210 Governments and 1143 Private) Labs for COVID-19 testing.

State-wise details: Andhra Pradesh (124); Arunachal Pradesh (23); Assam (48); Bihar (63); Chandigarh (8); Chhattisgarh (47); Delhi (94); Gujarat (91); Goa (9); Haryana (55); Himachal Pradesh (32); Jammu & Kashmir (30); Jharkhand (43); Karnataka (180); Kerala (147); Maharashtra (211); Madhya Pradesh (104); Manipur (14); Meghalaya (19); Mizoram (11); Nagaland (14); Odisha (56); Puducherry (14); Punjab (58); Rajasthan (69); Tamil Nadu (253); Telangana (93); Tripura (5); Uttar Pradesh (231); Uttarakhand (62); West Bengal (123); Andaman & Nicobar Islands (5); Dadra & Nagar Haveli (1); Sikkim (3); Leh-Ladhak (4); Lakshdweep (2); Mobile testing lab (7)

-**Real-Time RT PCR for COVID-19** : 1334 (Govt: 539 + Private: 795)

- **TrueNat Test for COVID-19** : 885 (Govt: 627+ Private: 258)

- **CBNAAT Test for COVID-19** : 132 (Govt: 42 + Private: 90)

- **Other Testing Platforms for COVID-19** : 02 (Govt: 02 + Private: 00)

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 Phase III enrollment completed. Vaccine has been found to be safe as per analysis of the available data. Restricted use of vaccine has been authorized in India from Jan 3, 2021.

b. **Development of ZyCoV-D vaccine in partnership with ZydusCadila 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 more than 1000 healthy subjects. The trial and data collection is under progress. The interim data suggests

that the vaccine is safe and immunogenic with three doses when administered intradermally. Permission has been obtained by M/s Cadila Healthcare for conduct of the Phase III clinical trial.

- 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, vaccine found safe and immunogenic. Vaccine has been authorized for emergency use in India on Jan 3, 2021.
 - d. **Development of Indigenous vaccine in partnership with Serum Institute of India (SII):** 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) **Isolated new SARS-CoV-2 Variant of Concern (VOC)** from the positive COVID-19 cases who travelled from the United Kingdom to India.
 - 5) **Coordination and initiation** activities for Nation's COVID-19 vaccination program.
 - 6) **Initiated study on Clinical** and serological follow up of children with SARS-COV-2 (COVID-19) infection.
 - 7) **Established Adverse Events monitoring center** following COVAXIN vaccination.
 - 8) **Performed validation of 8 COVID-19 test kits:** During the month validated a total of 08 serological test kits for COVID-19. This included 03 rapid antibody test kits and 04 ELISA kits (including 03 and 01 kits for detection of anti-SARS-CoV-2 IgG and total antibodies, respectively) and 1 RNA kit. Final reports of validation issued through the web portal.
 - 9) **Antiviral Screening of potential agents for COVID-19 (National priority):** Completed cytotoxicity (MTT) assays on two candidate drugs against SARS-CoV-2 during the month. The report of one drug was conveyed to ICMR and other to the manufacturer.
 - 10) **Kits Distributed to Lab/States across the country during the month.**

RT PCR	RNA Extraction	VTM
2,37,916	1,50,708	1,23,460

- 11) The following procurements were made regarding COVID-19 testing through HITES and ICMR Hqrs during the period.

S. No.	Name of Item	Quantity of order	Date of Purchase Order
1	Abbott Architect SARs CoV IgG CLIA Kit	28000 Tests	30-Dec-20
2	SARS Cov2 IgG Antibody Test	37000 Tests	30-Dec-20

- 12) **Designed in-house primers** to detect D614G Mutation in Sars-CoV2 Spike protein.
 - 13) **Designed in-house sequencing primer** to detect UK variant N501Y of Sars-CoV2.
 - 14) **Initiated multi-centric study** on effectiveness of BCG vaccine in preventing n-Corona virus infection in elderly people in Bhopal city.
 - 15) **Initiated study** to assess Impact of COVID-19 on Maternal and Child health services in India.
 - 16) **Initiated a qualitative study** on psycho-social issues and challenges of individuals diagnosed with Covid-19 in eastern Uttar Pradesh.
 - 17) **Conducted 3rd round of Population-based sero-surveillance survey** for SARS-CoV-2 infection transmission at Dibrugarh, 3 districts of Madhya Pradesh Ujjain, Dewas and Gwalior; 30 clusters (villages/wards) across Gujarat state; 6 districts of UP viz. Gonda, Balrampur, Mau, Gautam Budh Nagar, Jyotibaba Phule Nagar (Amroha) and Saharanpur.
 - 18) **Monitoring and follow up of COVAXIN** vaccination program across India.
 - 19) **Sensitisation and Training** on Covid vaccine implementation and follow up.
 - 20) **Conducted QC for 22 labs** including Govt and private labs involved in COVID-19 RT PCR testing in the state of Odisha.
- b) **Surveillance study for Japanese encephalitis/Acute encephalitis syndrome (AES):** During the period tested 14 samples (including 4 sera and 10 CSF) of 10 AES cases. Samples from all cases tested negative in JEV IgM ELISA. Five cases were also screened for the Chandipura virus (CHPV) by IgM ELISA, and none tested positive. Also, 3 cases were screened by CHPV RT-PCR and all tested negative.
- Another 30 clinical specimens (CSF and Serum) received 15 AES cases admitted to BRD Medical College, were tested negative to Anti-OTs IgM, Dengue NS-1 antigen, anti-Leptospira IgM and Malaria RDT.
- c) **Distributed External Quality Assurance (EQA) panels** for Dengue, Chikungunya, Japanese Encephalitis IgM ELISA (For ELISA) to 34 VRDLs. Twelve VRDLs processed the panel and submitted the results. Decoding Reports of QA/QC testing were issued to 02 participating VRDLs during this month.
- d) **Investigation of Cohorts for Zika Epidemiology in India (COZEI) Study:** During the month, a total of 26 samples received under the Cohorts for Zika Epidemiology in India (COZEI) study were tested for IgM/IgG antibodies to Zika. Plaque Reduction Neutralization Test for Zika was done for 54 samples. Also tested a total of 12, 15 and 12 samples were for IgM antibodies to dengue, Chikungunya and Japanese encephalitis viruses, respectively. Another 62 serum samples received are being tested.
- e) **Undertaken more than 10 important meetings (Videoconferencing/ Webinar/ Virtual)** viz. meeting with officials of Eastern Coalfields Ltd. (ECL) regarding initiation of occupational health survey of coal mine workers of ECL; 139th Meeting of Health Ministry's Screening Committee (HMSC); meeting with UKRI/presentation of Elsevier

report; stakeholder consultation meeting to discuss the opinion for UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI) with reference to potential of UK-India collaboration; IAVI-USAID meeting to discuss capacity strengthening: Broader South-South linkages; Meeting to examine State-wise findings from NFHS-5 pertaining to C-Section, Anaemia, Stunting and malnutrition related indicators; meeting on 'In-depth analyses on prevalence, incidence and risk factors of wasting among under five children in India'; meeting to discuss the re-validation requests of serological test kits for COVID-19; meeting for Mission COVID Suraksha by BIRAC; online meeting of Augmentation of testing capacity for COVID-19 by Govt; meeting of the Biorisk Management Committee and Occupational Health Committee of the Polio Essential Facility; meeting with the co-investigators of the Cohorts for Zika Epidemiology in India (COZEI) project.

- f) **Filed two US patents** on 'Genetic markers for diagnosis of tuberculosis caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis', US Patent App. 16/806,577, 2020 and on "A medicament for the treatment of diseases by biofilm forming microorganisms", US Patent App. 16/607,061, 2020.
- g) **Instituted 'Bio-Safety Lab (BSL) - II & IIIA', 'Digital dissemination and IT support center', 'Digital display system for health messaging' and 'Dr. P.G.Tulpule Fellowship awards' at NIN, Hyderabad.**
- h) **Received WHO recognition** to ICMR-NICED, Kolkata as collaborating centre for research and training on diarrheal diseases.
- i) **Conducted community awareness programmes** on 'hypertension, diabetes mellitus, and stroke' under the 'Dibrugarh-HDSS platform' at the following sites: Titadimoru Gaon, Ekoratoli Christian Gaon, Greenwood Tea Estate, Majjan Tea Estate., Miripother Gaon, Konwar Gaon, Kachuwani Gaon, Nadua Tea Estate, Mokalbari Tea Estate, Oakland Tea Estate (Hazelbank), Chandoi Pother, Bokel Tea Estate, Romai Tea Estate, Singlijan Tea Estate, Jiliguri Gaon, and Tamulbari Tea Estate.
- j) **Undertook laboratory preparedness** for testing suspect human samples of avian influenza (bird flu) in Madhya Pradesh.
- k) **Health Technology Assessment in India**, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Department of Health Research
 - i. **2nd Webinar for the Policymakers:** A 2nd Webinar for Policymakers was held on 7th January 2021 from 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM IST, organized by HTAIn, DHR in collaboration with iDSI. Principal/ Chief Secretaries, Secretaries, Mission Directors from the State Government Health Departments/ Ministries were invited in the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to sensitize State Government Health Officials about HTA, its purpose, benefits and use.

- ii. **4th Virtual Board Meeting of Health Technology Assessment in India:** A Health Technology Assessment in India (HTAIn) Virtual Board Meeting was held on the **19th January, 2021 at 10:30 AM** under the Chairmanship of Prof. Vinod. K. Paul, Member, NITI Aayog and Vice-Chairmanship of Professor Balram Bhargava, Secretary, DHR and DG, ICMR. The purpose of the meeting was to evaluate the activities relating to the Health Technology Assessment and discuss the draft HTA Board Bill, 2019.
- iii. **Advance Training on HTA (Evidence Synthesis):** A three-days webinar on Evidence Synthesis through Systematic review methods was held from **20th-23rd January 2021** organized by HTAIn Secretariat, DHR in collaboration with iDSI. The purpose of the webinar was the capacity building of HTAIn Regional Resource Centres.