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

2nd Floor, Red Cross Building, New Delhi  
Dated: 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

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



(H C Mondal)  
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

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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.

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

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

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

**1) 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 44 new testing labs (3 Govt. and 41 Private) were approved and functionalized for covid-19 testing in the month. Accordingly, a total of 3,63,61,466 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 3011 (1336 Governments and 1675 Private) Labs for COVID-19 testing.**

**State-wise details:** Andhra Pradesh (144); Arunachal Pradesh (27); Assam (57); Bihar (79); Chandigarh (12); Chhattisgarh (58); Delhi (144); Gujarat (136); Goa (11); Haryana (78); Himachal Pradesh (36); Jammu & Kashmir (38); Jharkhand (52); Karnataka (210); Kerala (182); Maharashtra (304); Madhya Pradesh (129); Manipur (18); Meghalaya (22); Mizoram (12); Nagaland (15); Odisha (65); Puducherry (16); Punjab (68); Rajasthan (81); Tamil Nadu (305); Telangana (136); Tripura (6); Uttar Pradesh (286); Uttarakhand (69); West Bengal (166); Andaman & Nicobar Islands (5); Dadra & Nagar Haveli (1); Sikkim (4); Leh-Ladhak (4); Lakshdweep (10); Mobile testing lab (25).

**-Real-Time RT PCR for COVID-19: 1903 (Govt: 674+Private: 1229)**

**- TrueNat Test for COVID-19: 949 (Govt: 610 + Private: 339)**

**- CBNAAT Test for COVID-19: 131 (Govt: 43 + Private: 88)**

**-Other Molecular-Nucleic Acid (M-NA) Testing Platforms for COVID-19: 28 (Govt: 09 + Private: 19)**

*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
1,84,588	1,75,820	6,350

4) **Validation of serological and other test kits for COVID-19:** Validated 01 rapid diagnostic test kit for detection of anti-SARS-CoV- IgG and IgM antibodies.

5) **Biorepository of serum for anti-SARS CoV-2 IgG antibodies:** A 15 serum samples were collected and tested for anti-SARS CoV-2 IgG antibodies by ELISA under the Biorepository project and received another 04 serum samples of post vaccination sera were tested by semi quantitative anti-SARS CoV-2 SRBD IgG ELISA antibody titers.

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

- 7) **Undertaken assessment of immunological responses in breakthrough cases of SARS-CoV-2 in post COVID-19 vaccinated group:** Out of 453 cases enrolled in this study, > 98% of genome were retrieved from 220 cases by using NGS (Next-Generation Sequencing). 97.27% cases were of Delta and its derivatives, while 1 case each of Kappa and Beta variant were observed.
  - 8) **Initiated study on comparative assessment of BBV152 vaccine (COVAXIN™) antibody and antigen-specific responses in immunized population without past COVID-19 infection, individuals vaccinated after recovery from COVID-19 and non-vaccinated individuals with past COVID-19 infection:** A total of 124 participants were enrolled in Category-I with no past COVID-19 history and 130 participants were enrolled in Category-II with past COVID-19 history. So far, completed the follow up at 28 and 56 days post vaccination of 89 participants in Category-I and 91 participants in Category-II. Further analysis is under progress.
  - 9) **Initiated study on effectiveness of BCG vaccine on preventing n-Corona virus infection in elderly people in Bhopal city.**
  - 10) **Undertook various activities for initiating 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'; **Recovery Clinical Trial** 'Adaptive clinical Trial to assess the efficacy of baricitinib in moderate cases of COVID-19' jointly by University of Nuffield and ICMR.
  - 11) **Created and posted a short video message by noted Cricketer Sh Harbhajan Singh on tackling vaccine hesitancy on ICMR's as well as his Social Media handles.**
- b) **Organized virtual launch of i-DRONE** (First time in South Asia, a Make in India drone used to transport COVID-19 vaccines) in remote area of North East states.
  - c) **Establishment of National Consortium for Research and Development on Therapeutics for Rare Diseases in India.**
  - d) **Initiated the Cancer Epidemiology and Surveillance Training (CanEST) Program at Bengaluru.**
  - e) **Operationalized the Rabies Laboratory at Pune**, which is now fully functional and can perform full range of serological and molecular tests for laboratory diagnosis of rabies. Also initiated an Inter-Laboratory Comparison exercise for the diagnostic assays for rabies with the Department of Neurovirology, National Institute of Mental Health & Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru.
  - f) **National Vector Borne Disease Control Program:** During the month, 2221 IgM Antibody Capture (MAC) ELISA kits (1770 for dengue, 408 for Chikungunya and 43 for JE) were supplied to Sentinel Surveillance Hospitals and Apex Laboratories. A total of 122 MAC ELISA kits (54 for dengue, 32 for Chikungunya and 36 for JE) were supplied to DHR-VRDLs. Eight MAC ELISA kits (02 for dengue, 03 for Chikungunya and 03 for JE) were supplied to NIMHANS, Bengaluru. Also shipped External Quality Assurance (EQA) panels for dengue, Chikungunya and JE IgM ELISA to 80 VRDLs.
  - g) **Development and Technology Transfer for a Point of Care Device, Method and Kit involving Club Cell protein 16 (CC16) as a marker for Silicosis.** Developed an assay to assess the serum CC16 levels among workers with a history of exposure to silica dust and the technology for the assay has been

transferred to two companies. The assay works as a proxy biomarker and screening tool for early detection of silicosis and can be used periodically.

**h) Investigations of Acute Encephalitis Syndrome:** A total of 263 CSF and serum samples (71 from Maharashtra and 192 from UP) of the 139 cases were tested for JE and other viruses during the period.

Out of a total of 71 samples (31 sera and 40 CSF) from 43 cases of Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES) from Maharashtra, one sample tested positive for IgM antibodies to Japanese encephalitis and dengue viruses. Thirty-five samples were screened for Chandipura virus infection by IgM ELISA and PCR, and all tested negative. Eight samples which showed indeterminate reaction in JE IgM ELISA and on further testing, four of these tested positive for IgM antibodies to dengue virus.

Of the 192 clinical specimens (CSF and Serum) of the 96 AES cases admitted to BRD Medical College, Gorakhpur during the period, 11 tested positive for anti-JE virus IgM and 86 for anti -OTs IgM. The co-infection of JE virus and Scrub typhus was detected in 09 cases. One AES case was found to be reactive with Dengue NS-1 antigen and two AES patients sample was reactive with anti-Chikungunya virus IgM. All the samples were found to be non reactive in Malaria RDT.

Besides the above, 536 ILI (influenza-like illness) and SARI (severe acute respiratory infection) cases were screened. Out of these, 107 Influenza B (Victoria) and 25 Influenza A (A(H1N1) pdm09: 2; H3N2:23) were detected along with 41 SARS-CoV-2 positive cases.

Initiated experiments to develop a recombinant antigen expressed as Virus-Like Particles (VLP) for use in the IgM Capture ELISA for Japanese encephalitis, to reduce the cross-reactivity with antibodies to other flaviviruses. Initial results have been encouraging.

Also validated one batch of JE IgM ELISA kit (No. 21-044).

**i) Signed MoU** with NIAID/NIH, USA for cooperation on an International Centre of Excellence in Research (ICER).

**j) Signed LoI** with Ministry of Health & Social Protection, Bogota & Ministry of Science, Technology & Innovation, Bogota, Colombia.

**k) Organized** 'ECHO Online Cervical Cancer Screening Training Program'.

**l) Observed** 'World Mental Health Day' via organizing guest lecturers / webinars.

**m) Celebrating** "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav" by organizing **Fit India Freedom Run** across the country.

**n) Observed Hindi Pakhwada** at Jabalpur, Mumbai, through 'Hindi Kavita Paath Pratiyogita', essay writing competition etc.

**o) Celebrated** 'Gandhi Jayanti' and observed Swachata Pakhwada/Abhiyan' by Shramadaan at Belagavi.

**p) 25<sup>th</sup> Technical Appraisal Committee (TAC) meeting** of HTAIn was conducted on the 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2021.