



DAILY NEWS BULLETIN

LEADING HEALTH, POPULATION AND FAMILY WELFARE STORIES OF THE DAY
Friday 20210903

India logs 41,965 new Covid cases

India logs 41,965 new Covid cases (The Tribune: 20210903)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/coronavirus/india-logs-41-965-new-covid-cases-305018>

India logs 41,965 new Covid cases

India crossed two crore cases on May 4 and three crore cases on June 23.

With 41,965 people testing positive for Covid, India's total tally of cases rose to 3,28,10,845, while active cases have increased to 3,78,181, according to Union health ministry data updated on Wednesday.

The death toll has climbed to 4,39,020 with 460 more fatalities, according to the data updated at 8 am.

The number of active cases has increased to 3,78,181 and comprise 1.15 per cent of the total infections, while the national Covid recovery rate has been recorded at 97.51 per cent, ministry said.

It said that active cases increased by 7,541 in a span of 24 hours.

On Tuesday, 16,06,785 tests were conducted, taking the total cumulative tests done so far for detection of Covid in the country to 52,31,84,293. The daily positivity rate has been recorded 2.61 per cent, the ministry said.

The weekly positivity rate has been recorded at 2.58 per cent. It has been below three per cent for the last 68 days, it said.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease has increased to 3,19,93,644, while the case fatality rate stands at 1.34 per cent, the data stated.

With 1.33 crore Covid vaccine doses being administered on Tuesday, the highest ever in a single day, the cumulative doses given in the country under the vaccination drive has reached 65.41 crore, according to the ministry.

India's Covid tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7 last year, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16.

It went past 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, crossed 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one-crore mark on December 19 last year.

India crossed two crore cases on May 4 and three crore cases on June 23.

The 460 new fatalities include 115 from Kerala and 104 from Maharashtra, the ministry said.

It said that 4,39,020 deaths have been reported so far in the country, including 1,37,313 from Maharashtra, 37,318 from Karnataka, 34,921 from Tamil Nadu, 25,082 from Delhi, 22,823 from Uttar Pradesh, 20,788 from Kerala and 18,447 from West Bengal.

The health ministry said that more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities.

"Our figures are being reconciled with the Indian Council of Medical Research," the ministry said on its website, adding that state-wise distribution of figures is subject to further verification and reconciliation. PTI

Need urgent pollution policy

High density of air pollutants leads to low life expectancy (The Tribune: 20210903)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/editorials/need-urgent-pollution-policy-305673>

Need urgent pollution policy

A study by an American research group has put into stark numbers what we always knew — air pollution is a killer. The study, done by University of Chicago's Energy Policy Institute, says that air pollution can reduce the life expectancy of Indians by nine years. This means that, in cases involving the worst-affected regions and residents, Indian citizens could lose over 13% of their life expectancy. Apart from fewer years to live, those affected by air pollution must also suffer the pain of serious ailments, and the emotional and economic distress caused by them. The study reminds us that in the Indo-Gangetic plains, over 48 crore people regularly breathe in air that has pollution levels multiple times higher than in Europe and North America. All these facts, periodically emphasised by researchers, must serve as an alarm bell for citizens and policy-makers.

Last year, a study by the medical journal Lancet concluded that between 1990 and 2019, life expectancy in India rose from 59.6 years to 70.8 years, a gain of 11.2 years, or 18.7%. This study, however, noted that more years to live did not necessarily lead to a better life, as "people are living more years with illness and disability". United Nations projections show that India's life expectancy would rise to over 81 years by the year 2100 — but what would be the quality of lives of Indians then if the problem of air pollution is not immediately tackled? Interestingly,

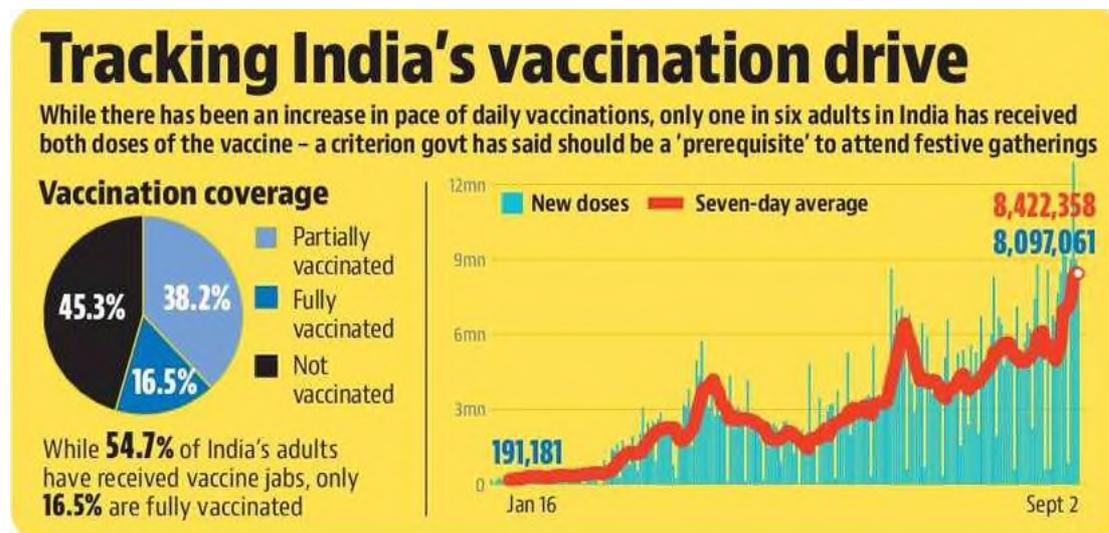
the Lancet study recorded a wide variance in life expectancy among states, ranging from 77.3 years in Kerala to 66.9 years in Uttar Pradesh. It also noted that air pollution — contributing to an estimated 1.67 million deaths — was the top risk factor for death in India. From these two facts, it can be concluded that air pollution is a big factor in the life expectancy of people in Kerala being 15.5% higher than those in Uttar Pradesh.

The University of Chicago study points out the benefits of urgent government interventions, as seen in China, where an effective policy has led to a reduction in the country’s air particulate production by 29% since 2013. In the interest of the people — and to reduce the burden on India’s crumbling public healthcare infrastructure — the Central and state governments must take similar measures to reduce air pollution.

Vaccination drive

Don’t attend mass events unless fully vaxxed: Govt (Hindustan Times:20210903)

<https://epaper.hindustantimes.com/Home/ArticleView>



The Union health ministry reiterated on Thursday that all mass gatherings should be discouraged ahead of the country’s upcoming festive season, and if attending such events is absolutely essential for someone, then full vaccination must be treated a prerequisite.

The second Covid-19 wave is “not yet over” in the country, and spike in cases has always been observed as soon as festive seasons get wrapped up, senior officials health ministry officials warned on Thursday.

While nationally the positivity rate continues to show an overall declining trend since the week ending May 10, several districts still have very high positivity rates, Union health secretary Rajesh Bhushan said during the government’s Covid-19 press briefing. A total of 39 districts

reported a positivity rate of over 10% in the past week, while another 38 districts had a positivity rate of 5-10%, he added.

Government experts urged people to get both their vaccine shots as soon as possible and to follow Covid-appropriate behaviour in the coming weeks.

Till Thursday night, around 700 million doses of the vaccine were administered to 514.6 million people, with 155.2 million people fully vaccinated and 359.4 million people receiving one shot, according to government data. When seen alongside the country's projected adult population of 940 million (according to the Census of India's National Commission on Population), this means that while 54.7% of India's adults have received jabs, only 16.5% of those above the age of 18 are fully vaccinated.

Several festivals across nearly all faiths such as Ganesh Chaturthi, Dussehra, Eid Milad un-Nabi, Diwali, along with holidays such as Gandhi Jayanti, are lined up in the coming 8-10 weeks. Covid infections saw a major spike in Kerala in the past two weeks – a phenomenon experts have attributed to Onam festivities and the laxity of restrictions on social movement through the festival.

“The key message we wish to convey to everyone is that we must be careful particularly in the context of the festive season. Therefore, we make a very strong plea even as we accelerate the vaccination programme... our precautions must continue. The time has not yet come to live life without wearing a mask. Like last year, this year also festivals need to be celebrated in a modified way. We will have to wait for celebrating festivals such as Ganesh Chaturthi, Navratri, Eid etc. with great fervour,” said VK Paul, member (health), Niti Aayog.

“It is best to celebrate within [your] family, and avoid crowding at places and stepping out unnecessarily. Shopping at market places must be done very carefully without overcrowding. The wave seems to be stabilising even though it is not over yet... virus mutations can still turn this tide against us,” said Paul.

Apart from celebrating at home, senior government experts stressed on the continuous importance of people being careful about ensuring Covid-appropriate behaviour is followed. They also urged that people should embrace vaccination as availability of doses is increasing.

Balram Bhargava, director general, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), underlined measures that he stressed are absolutely essential to stop new Covid-19 waves: wearing masks even after vaccination, avoiding gatherings and getting fully vaccinated.

“I have a few points to make: it is absolutely essential to wear a mask even after vaccination; mass gatherings should be discouraged, particularly in the upcoming festival season because we still have few districts which are having the problem; and full vaccination should be a prerequisite if it is absolutely essential or it becomes critical to have a gathering of some people,” he said.

Bhushan, while sharing data, also urged people to not drop their guard as the second wave was not over yet.

There are still 42 districts in the country that are reporting at least 100 new Covid-19 cases each day, he said.

As for weekly positivity, 39 districts are reporting weekly positivity rate of 10% or more, while another 38 districts currently have weekly positivity rate between 5% and 10%.

Centre has asked states to monitor districts reporting higher than 5% case positivity rate to get to the cause of increased disease transmission, and taking immediate containment measures have been suggested for those districts that are reporting higher than 10% case positivity.

It is also a matter of concern that the weekly case positivity rate that had dropped under 2% around the end of July and first week of August has again seen a slight increase – the weekly positivity rate in India currently stands at 2.62%.

Experts also emphasise the need for avoiding crowded places for now.

“Some things are basic when we talk about fighting an infectious disease that is as transmissible as Covid-19. Gatherings should be avoided and wearing a mask is mandatory. Vaccination is important and should be taken as it is proved that vaccines currently in use help the progression of disease to severe levels, and these certainly reduce deaths to a large extent.

The vaccines also work against variants in circulation; therefore, people should take these,” said Dr GC Khilnani, former head, pulmonary department, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi.

Nutrition (The Asian Age: 20210903)

<http://onlinepaper.asianage.com/articledetailpage.aspx?id=15809833>

Nuances of Nutrition

NATIONAL NUTRITION WEEK CELEBRATED IN THE FIRST WEEK OF SEPTEMBER HAS A THEME OF "FEEDING SMART RIGHT FROM START" THIS YEAR.

BINDU GOPAL RAO

The pandemic fueled work from home has brought the focus on health and nutrition to the forefront. Routines have been disrupted, health has been neglected and results are visible in terms of people suffering from physical and mental illnesses.

GET THE BASICS RIGHT

The theme for the National Nutrition Week emphasises the significance of proper nutrition intake right from childhood. "Through various awareness activities that are usually conducted to educate people on the need for nutrition in our bodies, the national nutrition week is a big enabler when it comes to guiding people towards proper nutrition habits and choices. The government also took up initiatives focused on nutrition and good food, healthy body, mind, and lifestyle," says Dr Babina N M, Chief Medical Officer Jindal Naturecure Institute.



Dr Babina N M
CMO Jindal
Naturecure
Institute



Divya Kotwani,
founder, health
culture, clinical
dietitian,

that they eat. Sharing knowledge with them and guiding them about the pros and cons of each food. They should know the importance of our home foods, for example pulses are important for a child's growth, rice is one of good carbs that can be easily digested, vegetables are an essential source of vitamins and minerals and fruits provide our body with the required fluids."

Vikas Chawla, founder
and director, Vedas

DOING IT RIGHT

Feeding smart right from the start inculcates and motivates people to ensure they keep a balanced diet with adequate hydration from the start of their days, as well as teach the young ones to follow the same for their course of life. Vikas Chawla, founder and director, Vedas Cure says, "The theme is highly resonating and significant with the ongoing societal conditions from the last year since pandemic struck our lives. The professionals were previously spending 10-12 hours working on laptops and now that timeline with work from home has risen without any boundaries."

Dr Susanta Kumar Hadatya, Consultant Neonatology and Pediatrics, Apollo Cradle & Children's Hospital, Motinagar adds, "Feeding the healthy food from the start is a right fuel for growing, learning and developing. Malnourishment including both under-nutrition and over-nutrition is the reason for many chronic health conditions in adulthood. Plenty of balanced nutrients are a must and not too many calories, fats or sugars are required in order to build a strong foundation for a healthy life."

Khyati Rupani, founder and chief nutritionist, Balance Nutrition says, "In urban regions, it is the influx of packaged foods mainly processed junk food high in preservatives, bread, refined food consumption that needs to be addressed. The solution to both these



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issues is to eat smart."

NUTRITION CHALLENGES

Malnutrition is a complex issue. India has the dubious distinction of being ranked at 94th out of 107 countries in the 2020 Global Hunger Index. "The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the malnutrition status of the marginalised section of society. The government has undertaken many initiatives such as Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and POSHAN Abhiyan. However, scaling up infrastructure, accurate identification of beneficiaries and strengthening Information, Communication and Education

efforts in such programmes is the need of the hour," says Dr. Priyanka Gupta Manglik, Practising Gynecologist, Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, Lucknow. Paraj Primiani, founder, ParaFit adds, "The first and foremost issue is low awareness regarding nutrition which we have been trying to deal with through national nutrition week since 1973. Along with this, high levels of malnutrition affect the health of masses badly; be it a child or an adult. We are observing a high number of infants with low birth weights due to maternal malnutrition."

STRENGTHENING THE CAUSE

Spreading awareness about the right feeding practices and awareness about the government-run nutritional programs and their importance in the community can lead more people to avail the benefits of the same. "Professionals and grass root level workers like Anganwadi workers, ASHA workers, and ANMs can be trained on the national nutritional programmes and can be useful in implementing them at the community level," says Dr. Himani Narula, developmental and behavioral pediatrician, director & co-founder of Continua Kids.

Good food acts as a fuel to your body and brain. Having a healthy breakfast, lunch and dinner with a balanced diet and exercise regularly helps to prevent various diseases boosting strong immune power

— Dr Divya Malik, Senior Nutritionist, Apollo Spectra Nehru Enclave, Delhi

Indian diets are traditionally heavier on the carbs side as compared to traditional western diets. "Foods like paneer, chicken, sea food, soya, eggs, tofu and sprouts should be incorporated



Dr. Himani Narula,
developmental
and behavioral
pediatrician,
director & co-
founder

in your diet and one should aim to eat 1 gram of protein per kg body weight. In simple terms, if you weigh 70 kgs then you should aim to consume 70 grams of protein daily," says Pallav Bihani, Founder, Boldfit.

Soumita Biswas, chief nutritionist, Aster RV Hospital adds, "Nutrition is essential for an individual's entire growth. Because a healthy mind dwells in a healthy body, we must include nourishment such as salts, vitamins, proteins, and so on in our daily diet."

EAT RIGHT

Feeding Smart right from the start is the best way for a healthy life. Nutrition brings in macro nutrients like protein, fat, carbohydrates, fibers and about 0.025 to 0.5% of active biological compounds needed for the body to perform at its optimal. "Good nutrition is what you invest for something unseen or unpredictable and when a situation arises, then the disciplined good nutrition comes to play in enabling the body to cope up with a health situation," says Amit Srivastava, chief catalyst, Nutri Today. The importance of good food should be added in the school syllabus as a special subject with creative projects and workshops, highlighting the importance of good food. "Whereas now due to pandemic social distancing guidelines and virtual learning have meant big shifts in family routines, and that may include how you feed your family. Good food acts as a fuel to your body and brain, especially true for younger and school-aged children. Having a healthy breakfast, lunch and dinner with a balanced diet and exercise regularly helps to prevent various diseases boosting strong immune power," concludes Dr Divya Malik, Senior Nutritionist, Apollo Spectra Nehru Enclave, Delhi.



Monsoon haircare

Monsoon haircare: Keep your scalp healthy with these tips (The Indian Express: 20210903)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/life-style/monsoon-haircare-scalp-healthy-tips-oiling-benefits-7474066/>

"A little care and some simple home remedies will keep the scalp problem-free and avoid clingy or frizzy hair," said Dr Rinky Kapoor, consultant dermatologist

monsoonMake sure that you diet is balanced to prevent scalp issues. (Source: Getty Images/Thinkstock)

Rains bring respite from the hot summer months, but they also bring along a host of seasonal illnesses and skin and hair woes.

"Rains disrupt the pH balance and cause scalp infections and other hair problems like dandruff, and increased hair fall. Also, did you know that hair fall can increase by up to 30 per cent during monsoons?" says Dr Rinky Kapoor, consultant dermatologist, cosmetic dermatologist and dermato-surgeon, The Esthetic Clinics.

But a little care and some simple home remedies is all you need to keep the scalp problem-free and avoid sticky or frizzy hair.

According to the expert, the key to taming your tresses lies in:

*Oiling twice weekly: Just a little oil will keep the hair happy. Take a small amount of oil and gently massage it on the scalp. You don't want to rub the oil in, just massage and moisturise to improve circulation. Shampoo after 15-30 minutes. You can use the oil at room temperature or warm it up a little before applying. Virgin coconut oil is a good choice or even those with antimicrobial ingredients like neem, tea-tree, and herbs like amla, and brahmi.

*Good shampooing practices: It goes without saying that you have to shampoo after getting wet in the rain. Rinse your hair with regular tap water first before applying shampoo. A SLS-free shampoo is gentle on hair and scalp and removes residue effectively.

*Using the right conditioner: Conditioning is mandatory. It reduces fizziness and prevents sticky tangles. Apply from mid length to ends. Don't go overboard with the amount of conditioner, a little is enough. Leave for about 10-15 minutes for best results.

*Air drying: Once you have rinsed out the conditioner, use a micro-fibre towel to soak excess water and let your hair air dry. This helps trap in the moisture in hair and avoids heat damage.

National Nutrition Week 2021

National Nutrition Week 2021: Simple dos and don'ts to boost digestive health (The Indian Express: 20210903)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/national-nutrition-week-dos-and-donts-good-digestion-anaemia-iron-7484073/>

Celebrity nutritionist Rujuta Diwekar explains the basics of good digestion; take a look digestion, dos and don'ts of good digestion, digestive disorders, indianexpress.com, indianexpress, rujuta diwekar, how to have good metabolism, national nutrition week, national nutrition week 2021, Here's how you should take care of your digestive health. (Source: Getty Images/Thinkstock)

Experts have often emphasised on the importance of maintaining good gut and digestive health for overall well-being.

As such, to mark the National Nutrition Week 2021, celebrity nutritionist Rujuta Diwekar took to Instagram to underline the basic dos and don'ts for good digestion.

- *Finish your lunch with ghee-jaggery
- *Have a banana every day, first thing in morning or as evening snack
- *Set your curd with raisins
- *Increase your physical activity/walking
- *Nap for 15-20 mins in the afternoon

ALSO READ |Snack time: Healthy food options to satiate your mid-day cravings

Don'ts

- *Don't stay dehydrated
- *Don't have chai/coffee post 4 pm
- *Don't eat your meals in wrong proportions. "Example, don't have more dal or sabzi than rice or roti," said Diwekar
- *Don't have laxatives and don't remove ghee, coconut, peanuts, etc from your diet
- *Don't stay inactive and irregular with exercise

Diwekar has regularly stressed including ghee and jaggery in one's diet. Adding jaggery can help avoid post-meal dessert cravings. "Rich in iron and essential fatty acids, this combo won't just keep sweet tooth at bay, but also help with hormones and immunity," she said in an earlier post.

According to Ayurveda, jaggery and ghee when taken together help detoxify the body. Besides, the combination helps keep the skin, hair and nails healthy. It boosts mood while also helping overcome problems of anaemia caused due to iron deficiency.

Portion control, immunity-boosting habits, and lifestyle tweaks including exercise, adequate sleep are some healthy habits one can add to their daily routine.

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Heart attack

Heart attack is becoming common among young people; a doctor explains the causes(The Indian Express: 20210903)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/heart-attack-young-age-group-causes-sedentary-lifestyle-mental-stress-7484512/>

Dr Subhendu Mohanty, head and senior consultant, cardiologist, tells indianexpress.com that cardiac arrest and heart attack are becoming more common in the younger age group than it was 10-15 years back

heart attackSmoking is a leading cause of heart attack among young people. (Source: getty images)

Popular TV actor and Bigg Boss 13 winner Sidharth Shukla has passed away at 40. His death was confirmed by Mumbai's Cooper hospital. According to a PTI report, Shukla suffered a "massive heart attack in the morning".

Dr Subhendu Mohanty, head and senior consultant, cardiologist, Sharda Hospital, Greater Noida, tells indianexpress.com that cardiac arrest and heart attack are becoming more common in the younger age group than it was 10-15 years back. "In the last two years or so, there has been rising incidence, so much that we have seen heart attacks in the age of 18 and 20 also."

What are the causes?

The most important reason behind this is the increased prevalence of smoking among young people, according to the doctor. "Secondly, it is the high mental stress that most young

professionals are going through. The third factor is decreased physical activity and a sedentary lifestyle that most of us lead,” says Dr Mohanty.

Some fitness buffs are also known to consume steroids; can that lead to heart attack too? “Theoretically, it is possible but we have not seen too many cases of heart attacks caused by steroid intake. There have, however, been occasional instances where young people taking supplements have developed heart attacks but that is not very common,” the doctor explains.

If you have diabetes, high blood pressure or high cholesterol, then you take control of those and consult a doctor regularly.

If you are healthy and do not have the above issues, here are some things to follow as recommended by Dr Mohanty:

*Regular physical activity for at least 30-45 mins, five days a week. Cardio exercises such as cycling, running, swimming, etc, are good for the heart, says the doctor. On the other hand, lifting excess weight does not work well for your heart. “Using low weights, say up to five kilos is fine. But while heavier weights may help develop muscle bulk, they may put extra pressure on your heart.”

*Take a break from work and spend time with your family and friends. Remember watching TV does not really count as a break because you may still be thinking about work.

Also Read |Here’s what to do if someone is having a heart attack

*Smoking has to be stopped completely. Doing it in moderation does not help at all. You may develop heart attack even if you smoke one cigarette in a day.

*Take good care of your mental health. There is no quantification of how much stress a person has because of which it gets frequently ignored.

*Include 250-200 gm of raw vegetables and fruits every day in your diet. Decrease the amount of salt intake. Empty sugars like soft drinks have to be totally avoided.

“If you take care of these, then there is a good 95-98 per cent chance that nothing is going to happen to you,” the doctor states.

Vaccines

Breakthrough challenge: On vaccines and the virus variants (The Hindu: 20210903)

<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/breakthrough-challenge-the-hindu-editorial-on-covid-19-vaccines-and-the-delta-variants-of-coronavirus/article36261085.ece>

Vaccine makers should move to making vaccines for the Delta variants

With over 66 crore vaccine doses administered since the vaccination drive commenced in January, India has now inoculated at least half its adult population with at least one dose, and 16% with two. There is a small,

Vaccines

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Vaccine makers should move to making vaccines for the Delta variants

With over 66 crore vaccine doses administered since the vaccination drive commenced in January, India has now inoculated at least half its adult population with at least one dose, and 16% with two. There is a small, discernible rise in the number of new infections. Kerala, which contributes the bulk of infections, also has among the highest proportions of the population who are double vaccinated. This apparent paradox underlies concerns about the rise in 'breakthrough infections', or confirmed infections in those who took the second dose at least two weeks earlier. A recent study by CSIR scientists found that nearly a quarter of 600 fully vaccinated care workers were reinfected. Earlier studies from the CMC Vellore, and PGIMER, Chandigarh, too have reported between 1%-10% of fully vaccinated health-care workers as having been infected. However, less than 5% of them have required hospitalisation and no deaths have been confirmed, indicating the effectiveness of vaccines in preventing severe sickness and death. Internationally too, the trend is clear. Israel and the U.S. in spite of high vaccination coverage, continue to report new cases; though here too, the infection rate is much higher in the unvaccinated. The prime suspects, internationally as well as in India, are the Delta variants and related sub-lineages that are believed to form the bulk of coronavirus infections. The Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) that tracks mutations in coronavirus strains has said that the breakthrough infections reported so far are within "expected" numbers. That is, vaccines in large, controlled clinical trials had demonstrated 70%-90% efficacy but lost considerable ability to reduce symptomatic infections when confronted with the Delta variants, and so a certain fraction of those fully vaccinated would continue to be vulnerable.

While it is a fact of evolution that viruses would mutate to be able to avoid antibodies, and vaccines, therefore, would have to keep being upgraded, it seems that the moment appears to have come too soon. A country like India, in spite of being a major vaccine producer in the pre-pandemic era, has only now managed to get production lines to deliver one crore vaccines a day. While other vaccines are in the pipeline, all of them are designed on the Wuhan-virus platform and although companies claim that the strength of m-RNA and DNA-based vaccine

platforms lies in the ability to quickly tweak them to accommodate new variants, there are no reports yet, anywhere in the world, of vaccine makers specifying a timeline for vaccines that are tuned to the Delta variants. Vaccine makers who may have got emergency-use authorisations but are a while away from launch, should ideally move to making vaccines for the Delta variants and not rely on their existing pipeline.

Vaccination

The virtue of consistency: on India's vaccination targets (The Hindu: 20210903)

<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/the-virtue-of-consistency/article36191384.ece>

India's focus must be on vaccinating a large number every day and not record highs

On August 27, Friday, India set a new record for a single day's vaccination — 10.7 million doses, up from 8.3 million vaccinations on the previous two days and over 6.3 million doses on August 23-24. However, on Saturday, the numbers dropped sharply to 7.9 million; 3.4 million doses were administered on August 29, but Sundays have always registered low numbers. A similar pattern was seen on June 21 — 8.7 million doses on a single day, which dropped to 5.8 million the next day and remained nearly stable at over six million for a week; the number of doses administered fell to three million-four million doses in the first half of July. The June 21 record appeared more to coincide with the day when the revised COVID-19 vaccination strategy came into effect, i.e., the Government procured 75% of the vaccines produced and supplied them to States for free. Though the record on August 27 does not coincide with any occasion, it does suggest that the intent was more to achieve a “momentous feat” of crossing the 10-million mark; the steep fall in vaccinations the very next day gives rise to scepticism. During the pandemic, the focus should not be on setting records but on consistently vaccinating a large number of people daily and ensuring that vaccines are available at all centres every day; uncertainty in vaccine availability does not help in increasing uptake especially among the poor.

A welcome spike: On India's COVID-19 vaccination record

With vaccination being a safe and sure way to drastically cut the risk of hospitalisation due to severe COVID-19 disease and death, efforts should be to quickly and consistently vaccinate large numbers each day. For this, equitable and a regular supply of a large number of doses to all States is needed. One sure way to increase the number of daily doses is when the Government procures 100% of vaccines produced with no separate allocation to private hospitals. Precious time and doses were wasted between May and July 15 when private hospitals utilised only 7%-9% of vaccines produced against an allotment of 25%. The Government has belatedly revised the June 7 policy such that manufacturers will not set aside

25% of vaccines produced for private hospitals but instead supply as per demand and allot the remaining to the Government. If the rationale for allowing the manufacturers to sell vaccines to private hospitals at a higher price was to fund vaccine research, the small uptake by the private hospitals does not meet that objective. Hence, the Government should procure all the vaccines produced as this will help in better vaccine allotment to States, reduce vaccine inequity and increase uptake, and States can plan daily vaccination strategies in a more organised manner.

Health-care delivery

Doctor at the door: On doorstep health-care delivery (The Hindu: 20210903)

<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/doctor-at-the-door-on-doorstep-health-care-delivery/article35965165.ece>

Doorstep health-care delivery can mitigate the effects of disruption caused by pandemics

Long before the pandemic struck, health experts had warned of a health epidemic — one that involved non-communicable diseases (NCDs). The last two years, however, managed to expose the frailties of even robust health systems in the country that saw not one, but two debilitating waves of COVID-19. It also exposed the chinks in what was traditionally believed to be the armour of health care — institution-based treatment. When access to these institutions was severed all of a sudden, States had to introspect about how they could bolster their health-care set-up in ways that would protect it from such disruptions. For Tamil Nadu, this introspection resulted in its ‘Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam’ scheme, a community-based intervention to tackle and treat NCDs and to address the crucial issues of prevention and early detection. Inaugurated by Chief Minister M.K. Stalin earlier this month, it involves a tentative budget in excess of ₹250 crore. It includes population-based screening for the 18-plus population for 10 common conditions — hypertension, diabetes, oral, cervical and breast cancers, TB, leprosy, chronic kidney disease, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, mental health — and the delivery of hypertension/diabetes drugs to patients aged 45-plus besides to those with restricted or poor mobility. The State, which has a high burden of NCDs, also acted on data that indicated very low community control rates for hypertension (7.3%) and diabetes (10.8%) among patients.

Once the tenacious link between NCDs such as uncontrolled diabetes and hypertension, and COVID-19 outcomes was apparent, it became clear that control of these health parameters was paramount and would necessitate uninterrupted access to health-care services. According to the India: Health of the Nation’s States report, in 2016, 55% of the total disease burden in India was caused by NCDs, with the burden of NCDs increasing across all States from 1990 to 2016. The disruption of access to health care during the pandemic did affect compliance to drug

regimens, and led to uncontrolled disease, with implications for quality of life too. It is ideal that nations prepare themselves to face further epidemics that might occur and cause similar disruptions in society by arming themselves to overcome such drawbacks. The Tamil Nadu initiative is a well-meaning notch in trying to address this; the efficacy of its chosen method of door delivery of drugs has been proven earlier with the supervised drug regimen, or DOTS therapy used in tuberculosis control. Ultimately, the success of a well-conceived programme rests in the proper implementation of each of its components. If Tamil Nadu is able to demonstrate, with this scheme, that it is possible to maintain the continuum of care even in the most trying of circumstances, then, here is a model that could inspire other States to follow suit.

RT-PCR tests must for flyers from 7 more nations (The Hindu: 20210903)

A healthcare worker collects swab from a man for a RT-PCR test at a testing centre in north Delhi on September 2, 2021. | Photo Credit: Sushil Kumar Verma

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/coronavirus-rt-pcr-tests-must-for-flyers-from-7-more-nations/article36250966.ece>

States must ensure strict compliance to stop import of new variants, says Centre.

Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan on Thursday said that with reports of new mutations in the SARS-CoV-2 virus and the rising number of variants of concern and interest, international passengers coming in from South Africa, Bangladesh, China, Mauritius, New Zealand, etc., will now undergo RT-PCR tests on arrival in India.

Also read: Coronavirus updates — September 2, 2021

“Passengers from the U.K., Europe and the Middle East are already required to take this test. International passengers are to undergo pre-arrival RT-PCR testing at least 72 hours before boarding and only asymptomatic passengers are allowed to board a flight to India. Now, these latest revisions have been communicated to the States to ensure strict compliance so that the import of variants into India may be prevented,” he explained.

He added that in case of symptomatic and/or positive international travellers, States must continue to implement stringent public health measures of contact tracing, quarantine, testing and ensuring COVID-19-appropriate behaviour.

The Ministry has also written to States and Union Territories asking them to strengthen their Whole Genome Sequencing activities, which are critical to establishing clinical epidemiological correlations.

The Health Secretary stated that the second COVID-19 surge is far from over and that, currently, 69% of COVID-19 cases are from Kerala. He added that Kerala currently has more than 1 lakh active cases, while four States — Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh — have between 10,000 to 1 lakh active cases.

“Forty-two districts in the country are still reporting more than 100 new cases each day, which is a cause of concern. However, India has now managed to fully vaccinate 16% of its adult population, while 54% has got one shot,” Mr. Bhushan said.

He added that Sikkim, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, and Himachal Pradesh have administered the first dose of COVID-19 vaccines to 100% of their 18-plus population.

Meanwhile, reiterating the need to continue wearing masks even after being fully vaccinated, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Director General Balram Bhargava said that mass gatherings should be avoided, and full vaccination should be made a pre-requisite for all gatherings. He added that India currently has about 300 cases of the Delta Plus variant but assured that the vaccine works well in these cases.

Also speaking at the conference, NITI Aayog Member (Health) V.K. Paul said that with the festive season round the corner, people shouldn't take the virus lightly.

“The problems with the virus still continue and we have to be careful. Unfavourable mutations can cause a problem. Pregnant women must get their vaccination for the safety of their child and themselves. Also, India is looking at evidence of the COVID vaccine booster dose requirement and a decision will be reached after due diligence,” he said.

Herd immunity

Grasping at straws: the race towards herd immunity (The Hindu: 20210903)

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/grasping-at-straws-the-race-towards-herd-immunity/article36035571.ece>

When people move, changing the demography of the ‘herd,’ or when new variants emerge, this can lead to loss of herd immunity

In the beginning of the pandemic, when vaccines were still undergoing clinical trials, the goal was to quickly reach herd immunity through vaccination an

Health sharing feature

All you need to know about Apple's Health Sharing feature (The Hindu: 20210903)

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/apple-vp-health-sumbul-desai-health-app-health-sharing-data-ios15/article34885362.ece>

iOS 15 brings secure sharing and new insights for users within the Health app. | Photo Credit: Apple Inc

Dr Sumbul Desai, Apple's Vice President of Health, dives into the Health Sharing feature that launches with iOS 15. It will let users privately share their data with a trusted partner or caregiver.

This year's Apple Worldwide Developer Conference brimmed with announcements for just the Health app alone. One of its new features is a new Sharing tab in the native Health app letting users privately share their data with a trusted partner or caregiver. This is indeed part of the company's long-term journey to become synonymous with health-tech.

(Subscribe to our Today's Cache newsletter for a quick snapshot of top 5 tech stories. Click here to subscribe for free.)

The Sharing feature seems to be a 'data engager', enabling those looking for specialised care or support to build a stronger, more informed support system in the health space. That said, the possibilities are endless: it could be an aging parent sharing their Activity and Heart health data with their family members, or a partner sharing their fertility window insights for family planning.

Apple's Vice President of Health Dr Sumbul Desai speaks with The Hindu about the new feature 'Health Sharing'. "For many of us, it's not only tracking our own health that we care about. It's the health of our family and loved ones, too, whether they live with us or far away," says Dr Desai, "To empower our users to build a more informed support system on their health journey, we are introducing a new way for users to choose to share their health data in a secure and private way with loved ones."

Community relevance

In India, the 'sandwich generation' (the age group of 40s to 50s caring for their parents and their children) and joint family set-ups are more common than ever, so more people may need access to relatives' health data wherever they are

That said, users can choose to share any of the over 100 data types. When setting up sharing, users will be guided through an on-boarding to help narrow down relevant health data to share,

along with suggested data categories where users have data from the last six months. Users can also choose what health alerts to share.

The shared data should be presented in a comprehensive way. For example, trends are highlighted to help users make sense of their health data and how it may be changing over time. Users can also choose to receive notifications when a new trend has been detected about their family member's data. The trend algorithms are built to look at both shorter and longer-term trends by looking at a given data type across one-month and six-month time intervals.

Easy communication about the shared health data is key to the experience as well. Users can look forward to a trend in messages to inform discussions with loved ones about their health. Embedding those communication tools into the health sharing tab makes it easy to reach out to check in or offer support and encouragement.

As more kids start using smartphones, there is a different potential for Health Sharing. Dr Desai points out, "For some people, the health of their kids is top of mind, for others it's aging parents. And then there is the ever growing generation of those taking care of both. For example, if my mother chooses to share with me, I have the ability to see if there have been any changes in her health data. If I see a noteworthy change, like her resting heart rate increasing, I can simply tap Messages and start a conversation with my mom."

Dr Desai assures Apple's privacy measures will be upheld in Health Sharing, explaining, "Privacy is fundamental to the design and development of our features. It's a central tenet at Apple; users won't have to sacrifice their own privacy in order to access their health data or share it."

This feature rolls out with iOS 15 which releases this September/October, but developers can access the public beta from July.

Infection (Hindustan: 20210903)

https://epaper.livehindustan.com/imageview_1022736_116195858_4_1_03-09-2021_3_i_1_sf.html

अमेरिका के बाद भारत में सर्वाधिक संक्रमण

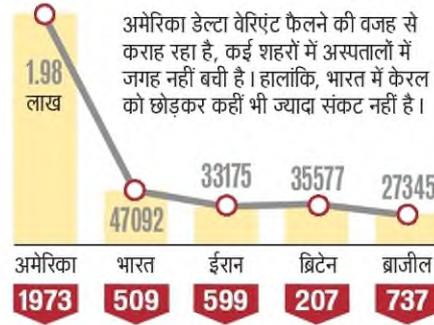
संकट

नई दिल्ली | हिन्दुस्तान ब्यूरो

देश में कोरोना का खतरा फिर बढ़ता नजर आ रहा है। करीब दो महीने बाद 47 हजार से ज्यादा नए केस दर्ज किए गए हैं जो दुनिया में अमेरिका के बाद सबसे ज्यादा हैं। अमेरिका में गुरुवार को 1.98 लाख मामले सामने आए।

दूसरी लहर का कहर अभी थमा नहीं: केंद्रीय स्वास्थ्य सचिव राजेश भूषण ने चेताया कि देश में साप्ताहिक संक्रमण दर में भले ही गिरावट की प्रवृत्ति देखने को मिल रही है, लेकिन कोरोना की दूसरी लहर अभी खत्म नहीं हुई है। देश में 39 जिलों में 31 अगस्त को खत्म हुए सप्ताह में साप्ताहिक संक्रमण दर 10 फीसदी से

गुरुवार को कहां कितने मामले



ज्यादा रही, जबकि 38 जिलों में यह दर पांच से 10 फीसदी के बीच रही।

केरल चिंता का सबब: भूषण ने बताया कि देश में अभी भी 42 जिले ऐसे हैं जहां कोरोना के प्रतिदिन 100

से ज्यादा मामले आ रहे हैं। केरल में हालात चिंताजनक हैं। कुल मामलों में 69 फीसदी अकेले वहीं से आ रहे हैं। वहां आज भी एक लाख से ज्यादा सक्रिय मामले हैं। महाराष्ट्र, कर्नाटक,

16%

पात्र भारतीयों को ही अब तक दोनों खुराक मिली हैं

54%

वयस्क आबादी को पहली खुराक मिली

नई मौतें

केरल में हालात भयावह

केरल के स्वास्थ्य मंत्री के सुधाकर ने कहा कि राज्य में हालात भयावह हैं। मरीजों की संख्या कम नहीं हो रही है। इसलिए राज्य में प्रवेश के लिए निगेटिव रिपोर्ट जरूरी कर रहे।

दिल्ली सरकार सतर्क

दिल्ली सरकार ने हालात को देखते हुए स्वास्थ्य देखभाल केंद्रों पर ऑक्सीजन उत्पादन संयंत्र लगाने व क्रायोजेनिक टैंकों को खरीदने को आवेदन मांगे हैं। > ब्योरा पेज 05

तमिलनाडु और आंध्र प्रदेश में सक्रिय मामले 10,000 से एक लाख तक हैं। सात देशों से आने वालों के लिए निगेटिव रिपोर्ट अनिवार्य की गई है। > त्योंहार घर पर मनाएं पेज 15