

Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Situation Update Report – 4

February 21, 2020

Global updates

As of 20 February 2020:

- **Global** --75,748 confirmed cases (548 new) of Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) reported
- **China** --74,675 confirmed (399 new), 2121 deaths (115 new)
- **Outside China** --1073 confirmed (149 new), 26 countries (1 new), 8 deaths (5 new)
- **One new country** (Islamic Republic of Iran) reported two cases of COVID-19 in the past 24 hours

WHO Risk Assessment: China – Very High, Regional Level – High, Global level – High

India Situation

Between 30 January and 03 February 2020, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) reported three cases of COVID-19 in Kerala. All three cases have fully recovered and discharged from the hospital. No further cases have been reported.

The Prime Minister's Office, MoHFW and Cabinet Secretary are closely monitoring the emerging situation on COVID-19 in India daily. Government of India (GoI) has issued travel advisories requesting the public to refrain from travel to China and that anyone with a travel history since 15 January 2020 from China will be quarantined on return. Further, e-Visa facility for Chinese passport holders has been suspended and existing visas (already issued) are no longer valid for any foreign national travelling from China to India. Screening of passengers is ongoing across all 21 airports, 12 major and 65 non-major seaports and border crossings. As on 21 February, 2020 close to 397,148 passengers from 3,835 flights have been screened.

States have made available additional manpower to undertake screening and provided other logistic support to airport public health officers. States that do not have airports or seaports, such as Haryana and Chhattisgarh, have reported that special awareness drives have been initiated at toll plaza, bus stations and railway stations.

Ministry of Tourism is coordinating with the Hotels Association in India to encourage wider self-reporting by travelers visiting religious and other tourist places in identified states. All 645 Indian evacuees from Wuhan have tested negative for COVID-19 and have gone back to their homes from the quarantine facilities.

National Institute of Virology, Pune of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) is the apex laboratory for reconfirmation of any positive samples as well as the quality assurance for the testing of samples for COVID-19. In addition, 13 Virus Research and Diagnostic Laboratories (VRDLs) and National Centre for Disease Control, New Delhi are performing testing for the COVID-19. Till today, a total of 2,722 samples have been tested of which only 3 samples had earlier tested positive (Kerala).

A 24x7 Control Room has been made operational (011-23978046) and IEC materials are being widely disseminated through various communications channels such as print, electronic and social media

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Situation in Kerala

In Kerala, the situation has stabilized with all the three patients have recovered and discharged from the hospital and are now under home isolation. However, the state remains on guard and the surveillance strengthening, contact tracing, isolation and response activities are ongoing.

As of 20 February, a total of 914 people are placed under surveillance, 907 are under home isolation and 7 are admitted in isolation facilities. Till date, 433 samples of suspected cases have been tested, of which 423 were negative, 3 positive and results of 7 pending.

The state and district control rooms in Kerala have been activated and daily meetings are being held. Additionally, the medical officers and junior nursing staff have been trained in surveillance and contact tracing. For all 14 districts a Medical Board has been constituted with specialty experts to provide effective care for the patients. There is ongoing work to strengthen professional bodies such as Indian Medical Association (IMA), Indian Academy of Pediatrics (IAP) and Private Hospitals Association on surveillance, infection prevention and control, and case management.

Ambulances have been identified in each district and are prepared to be available on call. Risk Communications has been strengthened to address rumor, fake news and miscommunications. Psychosocial support is being provided to families of suspected persons.

WHO Response

WHO Country Office for India (WCO) support at national level

WCO is closely working with key technical institutions of MoHFW including National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), ICMR and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MoIB) on disease surveillance, laboratory testing capacity and risk communications, respectively. Furthermore, WCO is ensuring that the information on suspected cases is being shared early and those confirmed being reported as per the International Health Regulations (2005).

WHO is supporting the Joint Monitoring Group on Emerging Diseases which brings together Line Ministries and agencies and has been providing continuous updates as well as technical guidance on risk assessment and reviewing preparedness and response.

WCO is providing support to ICMR on laboratory and research protocols and National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) for repurposing of Antiviral drugs for COVID-19.

WHO coordination with UN partners

WCO India and UNICEF are supporting MoHFW for preparedness and response planning including interventions for risk communication and community engagement. Furthermore, MoHFW is supported by UNICEF in coordination with WHO on the development of IEC materials and their dissemination

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among public through various communication channels. There are plans to augment this support based on needs assessment. The field offices of UNICEF have been coordinating with their respective State governments to plan their support in case COVID-19 situation escalates.

WCO India has kept UN country team and health partners updated on COVID-19 situation with daily information package and frequent meetings (held on 18, 20 and 21 February 2020).

WCO support in Kerala

WCO is closely working with the Principal Secretary, Directorate of Health Services and the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) and extending full support to the state as well as to districts through the extended network of WHO field personnel.

- The WHO medical officers have been repurposed in the state and districts and are actively supporting capacity building, coordination of meetings and attending to the state and district control room support. A total of eight WHO consultants have been deployed in 14 districts of Kerala for rapid response. WCO is supporting in strengthening of surveillance and response measures.
- WHO has shared updated technical information and facilitated partnerships with private hospitals in Kerala to provide isolation facilities.
- Additional support was provided to Kasaragod district to improve surveillance, contact tracing and data analysis.

WCO support to other States

In others states of India, the WHO field team is supporting in the tracking of the passengers returning from China, training of medical officers and rapid response teams, engaging with state and district officials of the IDSP for coordination and support, sharing daily updates at state and district level and, in some states, have assisted in airport assessment and translating COVID-19 guidance documents in local languages.

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