



PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
(Research Unit)
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
Government of India



COMBATING THE THIRD SURGE OF COVID-19

Active monitoring by the Government helps contain spread

February 08, 2022

Ever since COVID-19 started spreading in the world and in India, the Government of India has been swift in taking actions to contain it, and protecting its citizens. Since the first surge, the government has taken prompt action to ensure the safety of Indian citizens. The Indian government has been one step ahead when it comes to dealing with COVID and has been taking proactive measures to contain the damage which has wreaked havoc across the globe. After the second surge, just when we thought that the worst was over, early November 2021, the COVID Omicron variant (B.1.1.529) sprung up in certain parts of the world and started spreading in all countries. However, with the experience of successfully tackling the first two waves, the Government started preparing itself well in time as the Omicron started spreading and the **WHO announced it as a Variant of Concern (VoC) on 26 November, 2021.**

Prompt Response by the Government

The Government of India had sprung into action well in time, as on **25 November, 2021 and 27 November, 2021**, the Union Health Secretary wrote to all the States/UTs advising them regarding criticality of scrupulous implementation and rigorous monitoring of the three-pronged surveillance strategy of screening and testing international travellers & their contacts, routine sentinel surveillance and surge surveillance, and timely sending of RT-PCR positive samples to designated INSACOG Genome Sequencing Laboratories (IGSLs), along with enhanced testing and monitoring of COVID-19 hotspots.¹

¹ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1775895>

Constant Review & Monitoring

26 November, 2021: India had 10,549 new Covid-19 cases, with active cases being less than One per cent of total cases. Nevertheless, the government actively started preparing to tackle any resurgence in cases and was determined to ensure that the damage was kept under control.²

27 November, 2021: Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi chaired a high-level meeting to review the emerging situation of Omicron and India's preparedness in terms of public health measures.

28 November, 2021: A meeting was chaired by the Union Home Secretary where the overall global situation in wake of Omicron virus was comprehensively reviewed. Various preventive measures in place and those to be further strengthened were discussed. The review and updation of SOPs on testing & surveillance of incoming international passengers, especially for those countries identified 'at risk' category was also discussed. The strengthening and intensification of genomic surveillance for variants through the INSACOG network was agreed upon with a focus on sampling and whole genome sequencing of international passengers especially from those countries where Omicron variant had been detected.³

30 November, 2021:

- The Union Health Secretary chaired a virtual meeting with States/UTs to review COVID-19 public health response measures and preparedness amid reports of Omicron variant of COVID19 across various countries. In the meeting, the states were specially advised to take serious steps in order to prevent the spread of Omicron. The central government advised the states to undertake effective surveillance of international passengers; those coming from "at risk" countries were to be tested upon arrival, and wait at the airport till their report was available. States were further asked to strengthen their testing infrastructure and undertake contact tracing of positive individuals. States also were advised to ensure the preparedness of their health infrastructure, including the availability of ICU, O2 beds, ventilators, etc. The State Surveillance Officer was made in charge of daily monitoring to track and contain the

² <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1775199>

³ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1775895>

spread of transmission of any VoCs in the country.⁴

- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare issued revised [guidelines](#) for international travellers arriving in India. All international travellers were required to:
 - Submit complete and factual information in self-declaration form on the online Air Suvidha portal before the scheduled travel, including last 14 days travel details.
 - Upload a negative COVID-19 RT-PCR report. The test should have been conducted within 72 hrs prior to undertaking the journey.
 - Submit a declaration with respect to the authenticity of the report and will be liable for criminal prosecution, if found otherwise.
 - Give an undertaking on the portal or otherwise to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India, through concerned airlines before they are allowed to undertake the journey that they would abide by the decision of the appropriate government authority to undergo home/institutional quarantine/ self-health monitoring, as warranted.
 - Undertake testing on arrival, should preferably pre-book the test online on Air Suvidha Portal, to facilitate timely testing.⁵

02 December, 2021: The Union Health Ministry [reviewed](#) the status and progress under “Har Ghar Dastak” with States/UTs. The ‘Har Ghar Dastak’ nation-wide COVID-19 vaccination campaign has resulted in an increase of 1st dose coverage by 11.6 per cent since introduction of the campaign. While the 2nd dose coverage increased by 28.9 per cent in the same period (as on 2 January, 2021).⁶

08 December, 2021: The Central Government [reviewed](#) the Public Health response to Covid-19 in the light of emergence of OMICRON and the progress of vaccination with States/UT, wherein states were advised to enhance testing, surveillance and prompt dispatch of samples to INSACOG labs for genome sequencing. The five-fold strategy of Test-Track-Treat-Vaccinate-adherence to COVID Appropriate Behaviour (CAB) was highlighted as the mainstay of public health response strategy for effective and timely control and management of COVID19 and its variants by Union Health Secretary as he reviewed the public health preparedness to the Omicron variant of COVID-19. Active Covid-19 cases in India were at

⁴ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1776404>

⁵ <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/GuidelinesforInternationalarrivalsdated30thNovember2021.pdf>

⁶ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1786925>

93,733 on 8 December, 2021 and India's Covid-19 vaccination coverage exceeded 130 crore.⁷

21 December 2021: The Government of India also significantly increased the testing capacity for Covid-19 related tests. As on 14 December 2021, more than 3,000 operational laboratories were conducting COVID tests and reporting to Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) on RT-PCR, TruNat, CBNAAT and Other Molecular Nucleic Acid Tests for Covid-19.⁸

23 December, 2021: The Central Government reviewed the Covid-19 status and preparedness in States/UTs, in view of the Omicron variant. States were advised to be vigilant and monitor case positivity, doubling rate, clusters of new cases across districts. The 5-fold strategy for tackling the Omicron threat was re-emphasised. The five points of focus were **Containment, Testing and Surveillance, Clinical Management, COVID safe behaviour, and Vaccination**. States were asked to implement night curfews in containment zones, ensure contact tracing of COVID positive people, increase bed capacity, ensure logistics like ambulances and enforce mechanism for seamless shifting of patients, among others.⁹

In the subsequent days, not letting its guard down, the Government of India kept monitoring the situation on a regular basis with the states and all the requisite support as provided to the States/UTs to combat the third surge. The Union Health Secretary held meetings with States/UTs on [27 & 28 December, 2021](#), and [07 January, 2022](#).

During the month of January 2022, the Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare virtually interacted with the state health ministers, to review public health preparedness for Covid-19. The Minister held more such meetings during the month, i.e. on [02 January](#), [10 January](#), [25 January](#), [28 January](#), and [29 January](#).

Containment

The relentless effort of the Government of India along with that of the States/UTs resulted in containing the spread of COVID to a great extent. Against claims that in the third surge,

While it was anticipated that COVID cases in India could go much higher, the number of

⁷ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1779568>

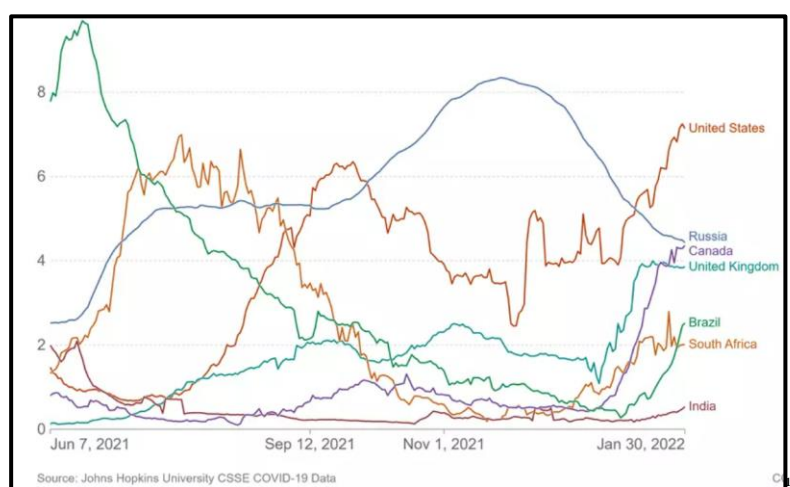
⁸ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1783810>

⁹ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1784559>

cases in India started declining after a peak of 3.47 lakh cases (as reported on 21 January, 2022).¹⁰ On 07 February, 2022, the country reported 83,876 cases with a recovery rate at 96.19 per cent, and a daily positivity rate of 7.25 per cent.¹¹

Comparatively, USA, a country with the biggest health infrastructure in the world, on the other hand, reported upwards of 7.68 lakh cases on 21 January, 2022.¹² The death rate in the country has also been on a rise, with upwards of 3,200 announced on 04 February, 2022.¹³ The USA reported nearly 2.89 lakh cases on 04 February, 2022.¹⁴

Daily new confirmed Covid-19 deaths per million (John Hopkins University CSSE Covid-19 data)



Vaccination

- The Government of India pushed on increased vaccination to achieve the goal of full vaccination of the eligible beneficiaries. As on 03 Feb, 2022, India's cumulative COVID-19 vaccination was nearly 169.63 crore. On 30 January, 2022 India successfully managed to fully vaccinate over 75 percent of its adult population.
- Vaccination of age-group 15-18 years started from 3 January, 2022 and Precaution dose for HCWs, FLWs and co-morbid 60+ groups from 10 January, 2022.
- As on 07 February, 2022, more than 4.94 crore people between 15-18 years of age have been vaccinated with the first dose, and more than 58.41 lakh people have been

¹⁰ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1791353>

¹¹ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1796015>

¹² https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#trends_dailycases

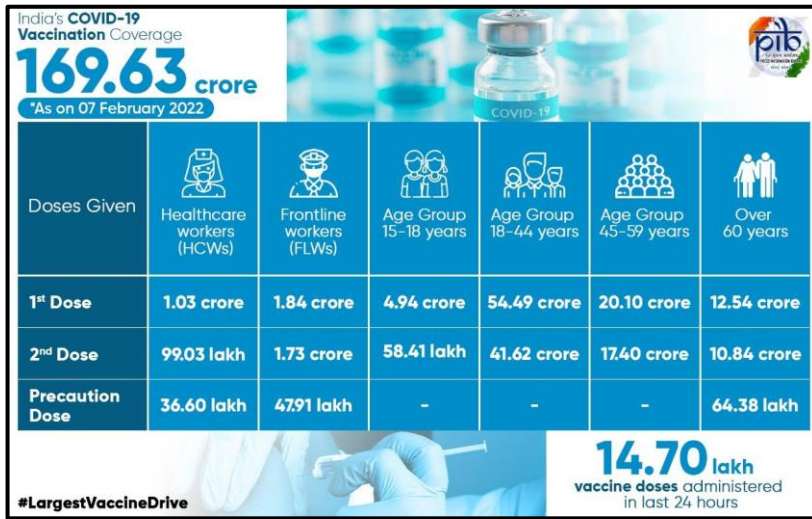
¹³ https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#trends_dailydeaths

¹⁴ https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#trends_dailycases

¹⁵ <https://ourworldindata.org/covid-deaths>

vaccinated with the 2nd dose.¹⁶

- Over 1.48 crore people, including healthcare workers, frontline workers and people



above 60 years of age have been administered with the precaution dose of Covid-19.¹⁷

- States have been advised to establish separate dedicated Covid Vaccination Centres for 15-18 years age group; Separate Vaccination team and separate queues for 15-18 age group to be maintained at all other CVCs.

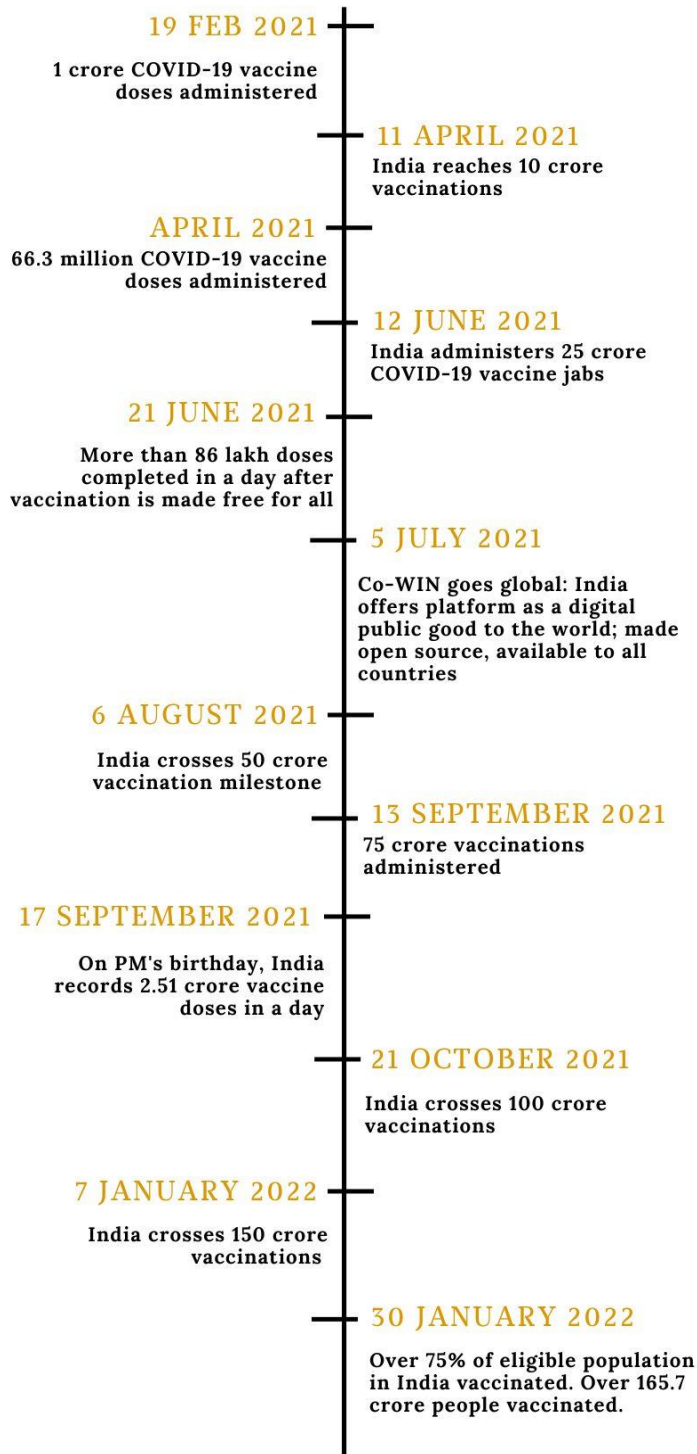
¹⁶ https://twitter.com/PIB_India/status/1490556892925804545?s=20&t=fbBELXCflz5WdV88Hltm2w

¹⁷ https://twitter.com/PIB_India/status/1490556892925804545?s=20&t=fbBELXCflz5WdV88Hltm2w

Infrastructure

Medical Oxygen Production¹⁸

MILESTONES IN COVERAGE



VACCINATION IN INDIA



As per records of Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation (PESO), based on the daily report submitted by the manufacturers, the daily production capacity of Liquid Oxygen is 8778 MT/Day. The Government had sanctioned 1563 Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) oxygen generation plants of which 1524 have been commissioned. These include 1225 PSA plants which have been installed and commissioned under PM CARES Fund in every district of the country. Additionally, 283 PSA Plants are established by PSUs of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Ministry of Power, Ministry of Coal, Ministry of Railways and 54 PSA plants received under Foreign grants.¹⁹

Apart from boosting the availability of Medical Oxygen in the country, as on 03 February, 2022, a total of 3737 PSA plants have been installed in the country from various sources with a total commissioned oxygen capacity of 4504 MT. Moreover, 1,14,000 Oxygen Concentrators have been provided to States under PM CARES (1 lakh) and ECRP-II (14,000).

[Financial Assistance to Combat COVID Pandemic](#)²⁰

The Government of India has been supporting States in their endeavor to manage COVID-19 since the beginning of pandemic. Requisite support is provided to States/UTs to enhance preparedness and response capacities against COVID-19 and other public health emergencies.

In terms of financial assistance, support has been provided to States under ECRP packages in FY 2020-21 and 2021-22. To see State/UT wise funds released towards the ECRP during F.Y. 2020-21 and 2021-22 [click here](#).²¹

[Co-WIN Update](#)²¹

a) Registration on Co-WIN –Instead of the earlier limit of four members, now six members can be registered using one mobile number on Co-WIN.

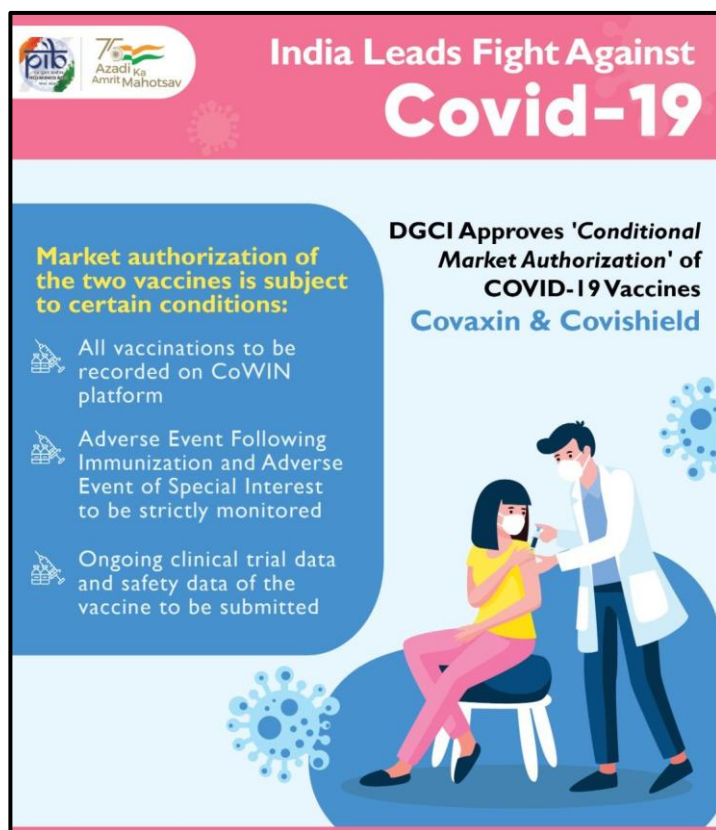
b) Revoke Vaccination Status- A new utility feature has been introduced under raise an issue in Co-WIN account through which the beneficiary can revoke its current vaccination status to new vaccination status, like from fully vaccinated to partially vaccinated and from partially vaccinated to unvaccinated status.

¹⁹ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1781722>

²⁰ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1780144>

²¹ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1780144>

Govt. approves Conditional Market Authorisation of Covaxin & Covishield



1. Firms shall submit data of overseas ongoing clinical trials of the product with due analysis on six monthly basis or as and when available, whichever is earlier.
2. The vaccine shall be supplied for programmatic setting and all vaccinations done within the country to be recorded on CoWIN platform and Adverse Event Following Immunization [AEFI], Adverse Event of Special Interest [AESI] shall continue to be monitored. The firm shall submit the safety data including AEFI and AESI with due analysis on six monthly basis or as and when available, whichever is earlier as per NDCT Rules, 2019.

Resources:

1. <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1775895>
2. <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1775199>
3. <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/GuidelinesforInternationalarrivalsdated30thNovember2021.pdf>
4. <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1775895>
5. <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1776404>

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8. <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1779661>
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25. https://twitter.com/PIB_India/status/1489108699608088585?s=20&t=FZO8g8uCClviMvYzV8YdrQ

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