



INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH

Department of Health Research – Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
Government of India

Media report (1st February to 7th February 2020)
(ICMR IN NEWS)

(Syed Adil Shamim Andrabi)
Information Interface Officer

Preface

The PR Unit/PRO office of ICMR since last one and half years have reached from (where is ICMR located) to (everyday mention of ICMR and DG ICMR in National Media). This change from where to why signifies the media visibility and importance of our organization within this stipulated time duration.

Every week Indian Council of Medical Research and Director General ICMR are mentioned by dozens of daily news papers, periodicals and magazines including online editions.

This week report (ICMR IN NEWS dated 1st February to 7th February 2020) includes the mention Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in 28 newspapers including top newspapers such as Times of India, The Hindu, Hindustan Times, Outlook India among others.

As an organization we first need to fill internal information vacuum at the headquarters as well as the Institutes for better visibility of ICMR which will pave way for complete dilution of external information gap between ICMR and external public including media, government and other related organizations.

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Coronavirus: Anticipating rise in samples to be tested, says ICMR lead epidemiologist

February 1, 2020/Yahoo News

Telangana can conduct tests for Coronavirus, results in 6 hours

February 1, 2020/The New Indian Express

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128 test negative as Indian scientists hunt for coronavirus medicine

February 2, 2020/Hindustan Times

Three more people suspected to be infected with coronavirus admitted in Hyderabad hospital

February 2, 2020/The Hans India

Kerala confirms 2nd coronavirus case, patient stable

February 3, 2020/The Times of India

Study on bats and bat hunters in Nagaland to be probed

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February 6, 2020/The Indian Express

Coronavirus outbreak: ICMR gets nod for 'restricted use' of two anti-HIV drugs

February 6, 2020/Yahoo News

Coronavirus: 563 killed in China, government in India takes this big decision for treatment

February 6, 2020/OBN



Coronavirus India live update: All 645 evacuees from Wuhan test negative for the deadly infection

February 6, 2020/Live Mint

'Gangakhedkar brought sex-workers on board with policy makers'

February 6, 2020/The Times of India

Coronavirus Update: ICMR Gets Emergency CDSCO Nod For Use Of Cocktail Of Anti-HIV Drugs On NCoV Patients

February 6, 2020/Medical Dialogues

AFMC to host one of Defence ministry's 10 new labs dedicated to virus research

February 7, 2020/Hindustan Times

NIV Alappuzha given state nodal laboratory tag for testing nCoV

February 7, 2020/The New Indian Express

Coronavirus: Anticipating rise in samples to be tested, says ICMR lead epidemiologist

February 1, 2020/Yahoo News

The number of samples to be tested of suspected coronavirus infections is expected to go up and the government is enhancing its capacity to ensure that any possible spread in the country is arrested, the lead epidemiologist at the **Indian Council of Medical Research said** on Friday. “Our preparedness levels are high, nationally. At NIV (National Institute of Virology), Pune, about 750 samples can be tested every day. Each test takes about four hours. As of today, we have reagents (chemicals needed for tests) to carry out at least 10,000 diagnostic tests,” he said.

Till Friday morning, 70 cases of suspected infection were tested. All but one has come out negative. The one positive case is that of a Kerala student, who had recently returned from Wuhan — the Chinese city that is the epicentre of the coronavirus outbreak. Gangakhedkar said everyone who had travelled to Wuhan and was showing symptoms of infection would be screened and tested. “Early diagnosis is crucial. The longer it takes to diagnose or trace the contacts (of an infected person), the greater is the chance that the disease can spread to more people. Hence, all symptomatics (people with symptoms) who travelled to Wuhan and returned will be screened and tested,” he said. He said efforts were being made to ensure that diagnostic services were available in all parts of the country. “We have a network of 106 virus research and diagnostic laboratories. NIV in Pune is the nodal laboratory where presently samples are being screened and tested. Another 12 laboratories, close to international airports, will also start screening samples,” he said.

Telangana can conduct tests for Coronavirus, results in 6 hours

February 1, 2020/The New Indian Express

The necessary medical equipment required for testing the Novel Coronavirus (nCov) cases in the State reached the **ICMR** lab set up in Gandhi Hospital on Friday, making it capable for testing for the deadly virus which has killed over 200 in China. The officials noted that a sufficient number of ‘reagents’ had been received from National Institute of Virology (NIV) Pune, which would be used to detect the virus in the sample. These reagents are different chemical substances and gels which will be added in various predetermined proportions to check for the virus in the sample. “We have been given a string of guidelines by the NIV team in Pune, which are updated to us in real time. They have given us a dedicated courier person as well to collect various samples and bring it here. Once we receive them, the test is done in a three-step process which can tell the results in under six hours,” noted Dr Nagamani K, HOD of the Microbiology and Virology Department overseeing the testing process at Gandhi Hospital. Speaking to Express, she further explained that to ensure that the testing in the lab is as per standards, they would do trial runs.

[Coronavirus: Anticipating rise in samples to be tested, says ICMR lead epidemiologist](#)



February 1, 2020/The Indian Express

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[128 test negative as Indian scientists hunt for coronavirus medicine](#)

February 2, 2020/Hindustan Times

One hundred and thirty samples have so far been tested in the country’s apex laboratory - Indian Council of Medical Research’s National Institute of Virology in Pune, of which 128 have returned negative for coronavirus even as the Union health ministry on Sunday confirmed a second positive case of the virus in India.

The second case has also been reported from Kerala, and the man has a travel history from the outbreak city of Wuhan in China.

“Second positive case of Novel Coronavirus patient, has been reported in Kerala. The patient has a travel history from China. The patient has tested positive for Novel Coronavirus and is in isolation in the hospital. The patient is stable and is being closely monitored,” the health ministry said in a statement.

The Government is maintaining strict surveillance of the suspected cases.

“Community surveillance is being done currently of 763 passengers, who have a travel history from China, in 26 states,” said Preeti Sudan, Union health secretary. Meanwhile, another Air India flight with 323 Indians from China, particularly Wuhan city landed in Delhi Sunday morning. Dr R Gangakhedkar, epidemiology and communicable diseases head, ICMR, said research was on to check which vaccine and medicines could work against this new virus that has not been found in humans before.

[Three more people suspected to be infected with coronavirus admitted in Hyderabad hospital](#)



February 2, 2020/The Hans India

Three more people suspected to be infected with coronavirus have been admitted to Fever Hospital in Hyderabad on Saturday. Also, the patients have recently arrived from China. With the newly admitted patients, the count of the patients suspecting of getting infected by coronavirus touched to 18. However, of the total, 11 persons were tested negative for coronavirus and the test results of seven other patients are awaited. The **ICMR** lab of Gandhi Medical college will start conducting tests for coronavirus on Monday. The team of three that arrived from the centre to check the hospitals' preparedness for the coronavirus have granted permission to Gandhi Hospital to conduct the tests and handed over the testing kits.

[Kerala confirms 2nd coronavirus case, patient stable](#)

February 3, 2020/The Times of India

Kerala reported the country's second novel coronavirus case on Sunday, with a male student of a university in Wuhan admitted to Alappuzha medical college hospital testing positive for the virus. The first case, that of a woman medical student who is undergoing treatment, was reported in Thrissur on Thursday. State health minister K K Shailaja told reporters after a meeting in Alappuzha that the second person who tested positive — one among four admitted to the isolation ward at Alappuzha medical college hospital — had returned to Kerala on January 24. "Three of those admitted were studying in China while the fourth person is a relative of one of them. We are waiting for test reports of the others," she said. The Union health ministry and the **India Council of Medical Research** have permitted the Kerala unit of National Institute of Virology in Alappuzha to conduct tests for coronavirus. "Though we have facilities, we were not supposed to conduct the tests. There was a delay in getting test results from Pune NIV," Shailaja said. Wuhan in China is the ground zero of the virus outbreak which had infected over 14,500 people and led to 305 deaths till Sunday evening. Despite strong measures to contain the outbreak, including the Chinese government locking down Wuhan and adjoining cities in Hubei province, the virus continues to spread rapidly.

[Study on bats and bat hunters in Nagaland to be probed](#)

February 3, 2020/The Hindu

The government has ordered an inquiry into a study conducted in Nagaland by researchers from the U.S., China and India on bats and humans carrying antibodies to deadly viruses like Ebola, officials confirmed to The Hindu.

The inquiry comes as officials worldwide grapple with the spread of novel coronavirus 2019, from Wuhan, China, to 20 countries, that has resulted in over 300 deaths. The study came under the scanner as two of the 12 researchers belonged to the Wuhan Institute of Virology's Department of Emerging Infectious Diseases, and it was funded by the United States Department of Defense's Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). They would have required special permissions as foreign entities. The study, conducted by scientists of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, the National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS), the Wuhan Institute of Virology, the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in the U.S. and the Duke-National University in Singapore, is now being investigated for how the scientists were allowed to access live samples of bats and

bat hunters (humans) without due permissions. The results of the study were published in October last in the PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases journal, originally established by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.



“The **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** sent a five-member committee to investigate. The inquiry is complete, and a report has been submitted to the Health Ministry,” a senior government official told The Hindu. The U.S. Embassy and the Union Health Ministry declined to comment on the inquiry. In a written reply to questions from The Hindu, the U.S. Centre for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta said it “did not commission this study and had not received any enquiries [from the Indian government] on it.” An American official, however, suggested that the U.S. Department of Defense might not have coordinated the study through the CDC. The study, ‘Filovirus-reactive antibodies in humans and bats in Northeast India imply Zoonotic spillover’, published in PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases states the researchers found “the presence of filovirus (e.g. ebolavirus, marburgvirus and dianlovirus) reactive antibodies in both human (e.g. bat hunters) and bat populations in Northeast India, a region with no historical record of Ebola virus disease.”

Hyderabad hospital begins testing for coronavirus

February 3, 2020/Outlook India

Suspected coronavirus cases from both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh will now be tested in Hyderabad with the health authorities setting up the necessary facility at the government-run Gandhi Hospital here. Telangana Health Minister Etela Rajender on Monday inaugurated the facility at Gandhi Hospital's **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** lab. He said samples from the suspected cases in both the Telugu states will be examined in the hi-tech lab for which the Centre has provided rapid diagnostic kits. He said the test kits can be used to conduct tests on swab samples of 30 people in a day. With the settings up of this facility, the authorities will be able to save the time in sending the samples to National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune. The Health Minister said that the test result will now be available in 10 hours. Currently, it is taking two days to send the samples to Pune and get the report. So far, 20 people with suspected coronavirus symptoms approached Fever Hospital. Their blood and swab samples were sent to NIV, Pune. Rajender said none of samples were tested positive. The authorities are awaiting results of eight other samples. Almost all these people had returned from China and they voluntarily approached the hospital, where 40-bed isolation ward is kept ready for patients with suspected coronavirus symptoms. A similar isolation was has been set up at Gandhi Hospital. Officials said some additional beds were arranged at Chest Hospital as a precautionary measure. All teaching hospitals in Telangana will be added to the list of hospitals providing symptomatic to patients of suspected coronavirus. The health authorities have urged frequent flyers with a travel history to China and other countries where coronavirus cases are being reported, to voluntarily get themselves admitted to designated hospitals in Hyderabad.

[Coronavirus India updates: 406 people kept at ITBP facility; Two hospitalised for symptoms of coronavirus in Kottayam](#)



February 3, 2020/Live Mint

The Centre has set up a task force to monitor the situation arising out of the novel coronavirus with representatives from the Ministries of Health, Home, Civil Aviation and Women and Child Development, Union Minister G Kishan Reddy said on Monday. The move came amidst reports that a third case of novel coronavirus was detected in Kerala and the person had recently returned from China.

"A task force has been set up to monitor novel coronavirus situation. The first meeting of the task force will be held today. We will discuss what all precautions need to be taken to prevent the spread of the virus," Reddy said.

The virus originated in Wuhan in December and has since then spread to various cities around the world. Tests conducted for coronavirus on 406 people, who were evacuated to Delhi from China's Wuhan city to a ITBP facility have been negative till now, a senior official of the border guarding force said on Monday.

"Periodical medical checks are being done and all the tests conducted on the inmates for possible coronavirus exposure have been negative till now," an ITBP spokesperson said. "Four isolation beds have been kept prepared at the facility in case it is required and doctors from AIIMS and Safdarjung are visiting regularly to assist the medical team of the force that is posted here round-the-clock," the spokesperson said. A total of 406 people have been kept at the Indo-Tibetan Border Police facility in Chhawla area of the national capital after they were brought in two batches from Wuhan onboard separate Air India flights.

[Ticks and mites cause infection, AES: Study](#)

February 4, 2020/The Times of India

A recent study conducted at Patna Medical College and Hospital (PMCH) has held ticks and mites responsible for rickettsial infection, which can lead to acute encephalitis syndrome (AES) in children. Over 150 children in the state, primarily in Muzaffarpur district, died of AES last year. A research done by PMCH paediatrics department head Dr Anil Kumar Jaiswal, as a part of study under **Indian Council of Medical Research**, revealed that around 20% children suffering from AES had rickettsial infection. House dust mites and ticks are the carriers of the germ which causes this infection which led to AES in some of the kids.

Samples of 400 children suffering from AES were sent to King George's Medical College in Lucknow for the test, which was done by Dr Anita Jain. In around 20% of the samples, rickettsial infection was found to be the cause behind AES in kids.

"Symptoms like fever, convulsion and alteration of senses happen in rickettsial infection, which are found in kids suffering from AES," said Dr Jaiswal. He added: "AES is not a disease, but a symptom which happens due to various reasons. One of it is Japanese Encephalitis. There is also a theory that it occurs due to toxin from litchi, for which there are no medicines. But the good thing is that we have medicine to fight rickettsial infection and it has been included in the protocol of the state government." However, paediatricians also said rickettsial infection cannot be termed as the universal cause behind AES as it had been established in only 20% of the samples. Indian Academy of Paediatrics vice-president Dr Nigam Prakash Narain and Dr Jaiswal said: "Hypoglycaemia was the common cause in all the cases and children who were malnourished and from lower income group were the common sufferers. There is also a theory that toxin from litchi had caused AES which is true in few cases.

State, ICMR Bangalore to ink pact for cancer registry

February 4, 2020/The Times of India



Soon, each and every case of cancer will be registered in the state as the health department is planning to sign an MoU with **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)**, Bangalore, which will provide a software to the health department to register each case of cancer along with other details such as part of body, stage of cancer at the time of diagnoses. Cancer has emerged as one of the non-communicable diseases, which has attracted attention of the health authorities. The state-of-the-art government's cancer hospital is all set to get inaugurated. At a time when studies suggest that 70% of cancer cases are diagnosed at an advanced stage, the state government does not have the actual figures of cancer cases and actual burden of disease in the state. In the state, there are only six hospitals including government and private, which have their own hospital-based registry of cancer. However, the health department is planning to prepare a population-based registry to find out the actual burden of different kinds of cancers in the state, said a health department official. The health department has no details of the actual number of patients suffering from different kinds of cancers such as cervical, gall bladder, oral, head and neck, lung, stomach, colorectal, and oesophagus whereas in females, breast cancer, cervix cancer and ovarian cancer in the state. With the new cancer registry, the health department will be able to find out the actual number of patients of each kind of cancer in the state.

Kerala declares state calamity after third coronavirus case

February 4, 2020/Gulf Times

The Kerala government yesterday declared the outbreak of coronavirus a state calamity after a third case was confirmed. Health Minister K K Shailaja said however "this is not meant to create a panic." Shailaja's announcement came soon after a meeting of the State Disaster Management Authority. "Today there are 2,239 people in the state under observation of which 2,155 are in their homes, while 84 are in hospitals. The government has sent 140 samples so far for testing, of which 46 are negative and the results of the rest are awaited. It was today that the third case in the state was confirmed positive and it is from Kasargode," Shailaja added. All three cases which have tested positive were medical students – one girl and two boys – who were studying in China's Wuhan province. The condition of all three is stable and they are being closely observed in isolation at state run hospitals. Special control rooms have been opened in all 14 districts of the state. Meanwhile, four samples from Odisha, which were sent to the National Institute of Virology in Pune, tested negative yesterday, while one person's result is awaited. Two more suspected people have been kept in the isolation ward in a hospital in Bhubaneswar. Suspected coronavirus cases from both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh will now be tested in Hyderabad with the health authorities setting up the necessary facility at the government-run Gandhi Hospital in the city. Telangana Health Minister Etela Rajender yesterday inaugurated the facility at Gandhi Hospital's **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** lab. He said samples from the suspected cases in both states will be examined in the hi-tech lab. He said the test kits can be used to conduct tests on swab samples of 30 people in a day. In New Delhi, Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba held a review meeting to take stock of the situation, even as the government issued a new travel advisory that urged everyone to refrain from travel to China.

'No litchi link to kids' deaths in Bihar'

February 4, 2020/The Times of India



Almost half of children who died due to acute encephalitis syndrome (AES) in Bihar's Muzaffarpur in mid-2019 had no history of litchi consumption, whereas majority of the rest were less than two years' old and therefore not quite able to eat the fruit, preliminary studies have concluded ruling out litchi toxins as the cause of those deaths. In the wake of these findings, **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** has ordered further investigation to ascertain the cause of sudden rise in deaths due to AES in Bihar last year. The Council will launch a study in April-May with the onset of summers to probe the matter, an official said. "So far, majority of the investigations — by Indian as well as international researchers — have ruled out litchi consumption as a cause of these deaths. Hence, further probe is required to ascertain the cause and capture it," the official told TOI. In June 2019, Bihar witnessed a sudden spike in AES-related deaths with over 125 fatalities and more than 550 cases recorded in the state. While the state government had blamed heat wave and litchi toxins as the cause of these sudden deaths, public health experts and researchers have pointed to malnutrition and poor health infrastructure in the state to contain the disease.

Indian Council of Medical Research Offers Drug For Coronavirus Treatment

February 4, 2020/Outlook India

Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) says it is offering an "experimental repurposed drug" for treatment of confirmed cases of novel coronavirus within the country. Responding to the panic over the deadly China virus outbreak, Raman Gangakhedkar, head of Epidemiology and Communicable Diseases (ECD) division, ICMR, told Outlook that "Even as other people are searching for cures, ICMR has certainly started thinking in terms of providing one of the medicines, which is still an experimental repurposed drug, on compassionate grounds." Declining to identify the drug, given the tendency of people in India to indulge in self-medication, Gangakhedkar says as it is an experimental drug and should not be used by a person who suspects he has coronavirus. "So we are not publicizing this. We have suggested its use only in cases where there is documented evidence of the person having the virus. Only then will you be offered this treatment. Also, only if you feel comfortable, should you take this drug," says Padma Shri awardee Gangakhedkar. Despite the high transmission efficiency, Gangakhedkar feels there is no need to panic if people observe healthy and hygienic practices everyday such as washing hands, not spitting, and using clean tissues or handkerchief while sneezing or coughing, etc. Gangakhedkar also says that coronavirus has a very low mortality rate, though it has very high transmission efficiency. The deadly coronavirus has killed more than 425 people and infected a further 20,000 in China, nearly all of them in central Hubei province -- the epicentre of the outbreak -- and spread to two-dozen countries since it emerged in December. India has reported three cases of coronavirus. All three patients from Kerala recently returned from China's Wuhan city.

[nCoV: Govt. earmarks aerobridges at dedicated gates at airports](#)

February 4, 2020/The Hindu



The government on Tuesday said it would take extra measures to screen passengers for the novel coronavirus (nCoV) such as earmarking aerobridges at airports for passengers evacuated from Wuhan to prevent the virus from spreading. “Earmarked aerobridges will be used at 7 international airports [Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Cochin, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai] at the dedicated gates to screen passengers for symptoms of coronavirus to ensure effective prevention,” said Preeti Sudan, Secretary (HFW), on Tuesday. Advising the States/UTs to be more vigilant, the Secretary said screening of passengers is now on at all 21 airports. This comes after it came to light that all the three Indians who have tested positive to the nCoV were co-travellers on the flight from Wuhan on January 24. A release issued by the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** says 534 suspected cases have been tested as on Tuesday. Till date, three of the 534 tested are confirmed laboratory positive for the 2019 virus. Of the tested samples till date, 160 are from the quarantine centres set up for the individuals evacuated from Wuhan. In addition to the National Institute of Virology, Pune, 11 Virus and Research Diagnostic Laboratories (VRDLs) are testing for the 2019 virus from respiratory samples from suspected cases as on Tuesday. The Air India announced that it was suspending its only remaining flight to Hong Kong from February 7 to March 28. The airline had earlier suspended its flights to Shanghai. The GoAir announced on Tuesday that it would offer full waiver on cancellation and rescheduling fee for flights to and from Singapore, Bangkok and Phuket until February 29.

[One in 10 Indians will develop cancer during their lifetime: WHO](#)

February 5, 2020/Hindustan Times

One in 10 Indians will develop cancer in their lifetime and one in 15 will die of it, the International Agency for Research on Cancer’s (IARC) World Cancer Report released by the World Health Organization (WHO) on Tuesday said, highlighting the grave risk posed by the illness. The numbers are higher than India’s own internal numbers that say one in nine people have the risk of developing cancer.

“The estimates are marginally different as the IARC modelling is done using **Indian Council of Medical Research**-National Cancer Registry Programme (ICMR-NCRP) data, which is collected from 36 population-based registries and 236 hospital-based registries across states to calculate national estimates and state-wise trends,” said Dr Prashant Mathur, director, ICMR-National Centre for Disease Informatics and Research, which runs NCRP and is working to publish the latest nationwide registry data in April. The sharpest rise is in cancers of the breast and colorectum, associated with being overweight, low physical activity, and sedentary lifestyles, while cervical cancer rates have fallen because of improved hygiene in most parts of in India, according to the report. The WHO classifies India’s national cancer registry programme among the world’s “high quality population-based registries”, which is the international gold standard for cancer estimates.

The WHO-ICAR report puts the number of cancer cases reported in India in 2018 at 1.16 million and deaths in the country at 784,800 in the same time period. “NCRP doesn’t publish mortality (death) estimates as the medical certification of death in India is poor, which makes the data incomplete,” said Dr Mathur.

[Battling the epidemic: India readies treatment protocol for Coronavirus](#)



February 5, 2020/The Economics Times

India's top health research agency is working on a standard treatment protocol for dealing with coronavirus infections, said people with knowledge of the matter. This will comprise a cocktail of antiretrovirals used to treat HIV/AIDS, similar to protocols being followed in China. The **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** has approval from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) to allow a combination of lopinavir and ritonavir — approved for AIDS treatment — to be used if coronavirus infections turn into a public health emergency in India. The outbreak that began in the Chinese city of Wuhan has led to 427 deaths, with infections pegged at 20,000. There is currently no known treatment for the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV). “There are no large studies done so far on the treatment of coronavirus. However, as an alternative, ICMR... may recommend these drugs for treatment of coronavirus,” said a senior health ministry official. The people cited above stressed that the approvals are being taken as a precaution against emergencies. “As of now, there are only three cases in India,” another official said. “We are still studying the data. An in-principle approval has been taken from the DCGI for these drugs to be used for coronavirus in case it turns virulent. But we will want to wait and watch, and not create any panic.” The three persons diagnosed with the infection are in Kerala and were studying in Wuhan.

[Coronavirus curbs on visitors from China](#)

February 5, 2020/The Telegraph

India on Tuesday restricted any further entry of Chinese or China-resident foreigners into the country and said it was monitoring nearly 4,000 people in homes, quarantine centres and hospitals to guard against the novel coronavirus (nCoV). The Indian embassy in Beijing said existing visas would no longer be valid but clarified that intending visitors with compelling reasons to travel to India should contact the embassy or India's consulates in Guangzhou or Shanghai.

The **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)**, the agency coordinating nationwide testing for nCoV, said 534 samples had been tested up to Tuesday of which three — belonging to three patients in Kerala — have tested positive.

Among the 534 samples, 160 are from Indian nationals who returned from Wuhan on special Air India flights and are housed in quarantine centres at Manesar and west Delhi, the ICMR said. But 3,935 other people who have returned from China in recent weeks are currently under “community surveillance” in 29 states and Union territories, the health ministry said. These people have been asked to stay home for at least 14 days after their return from China, said a senior official with the National Disease Surveillance Control, New Delhi. District surveillance units across the country are monitoring them. The 3,935 people under home quarantine are among over 89,500 passengers screened at airports across the country since India initiated airport screening more than two weeks ago. “We use certain criteria of suspicion to recommend quarantine for some people,” the official said.

The health ministry has repeatedly asserted over the past two weeks that all people who have a travel history from China should report to health authorities if they develop any symptoms of nCoV illness within 28 days after their return.

India: ICMR working on drug for nCOV

February 5, 2020/WION



The number of confirmed deaths from China's coronavirus outbreak jumped on Wednesday (Feb 5) to nearly 500. The **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** is now working on the standard treatment protocol for digging with coronavirus infections.

Click on below link to watch video

<https://www.wionews.com/videos/india-icmr-working-on-drug-for-nCoV-278720>

DCGI approves restricted use of anti-HIV drugs for novel coronavirus

February 5, 2020/The Hindu

The Drug Controller General of India has approved the “restricted use” of a combination of drugs used widely for controlling HIV infection in public health emergency for treating those affected by novel coronavirus (nCoV), official sources said on Wednesday. According to government sources, apex health research body **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** had sought an emergency approval from the DCGI for the “restricted use” of the combination of two medications — lopinavir and ritonavir — for treatment of the respiratory ailment.

“We did our own docking studies and found that this could be a potentially useful drug against nCoV,” an ICMR official said. This combination along with other drugs has been used in clinical trials in China, where the coronavirus first emerged, and Thailand for treating nCoV-affected patients. “The DCGI has given a no objection for restricted use of this drug combination — lopinavir and ritonavir — in case of a public health emergency on patients affected by nCoV as per the treatment protocol designed by the ICMR,” a government source said. “Before using this combo of drugs on any patient, the doctor has to take an informed consent from the patient,” the source said.

Coronavirus outbreak: ICMR gets nod for ‘restricted use’ of two anti-HIV drugs

February 6, 2020/The Indian Express

The **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** has obtained permission for “restricted use in public health emergency” of two second-line HIV medications for use against the novel coronavirus (nCoV). Top Health Ministry officials said these medications are to be used only in “vulnerable” cases, as they are not without side-effects. Senior citizens, children, those with existing conditions such as diabetes and heart disease are among those considered vulnerable. Meanwhile, two of three nCoV patients in the country have already started showing signs of lower viral load with traditional treatment, officials said. According to sources in the Health Ministry, although they continue to test positive for the virus, the lowering of viral load seems to suggest that in healthy young individuals — like all these three patients — the virus may not need aggressive medication. A senior official said, “The viral load of the first two nCoV patients has come down tremendously on its own. Although they are still positive, they are showing very good recovery. This shows that if you are young and healthy, the virus can be controlled.” On the second-line HIV medications, officials said 70 per cent of HIV-positive people in India are on first-line drugs.

Coronavirus outbreak: ICMR gets nod for 'restricted use' of two anti-HIV drugs



February 6, 2020/Yahoo News

Security personnel outside the special isolation ward set up at Kochi Medical college in Kerala. (PTI) The **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** has obtained permission for “restricted use in public health emergency” of two second-line HIV medications for use against the novel coronavirus (nCoV).

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Coronavirus: 563 killed in China, government in India takes this big decision for treatment

February 6, 2020/OBN

The number of deaths in China due to coronavirus is increasing. So far 563 people have been infected with this virus, while more than 28 thousand people are infected. On Wednesday, 73 people died due to this virus. After continuously increasing deaths in China, a big step has been taken in India to treat this virus. The Drug Controller General of India (DGCI) has approved limited use of a mixture of drugs used to control HIV infection in the treatment of corona virus patients. Official sources gave this information on Wednesday. According to government sources, the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)**, the apex body of health-related research work, had sought emergency permission from DGCI for limited use of a mixture of the two drugs in the treatment of this respiratory disease. An ICMR official said that we have done some studies on these drugs and found that the combination of these drugs can be effective in the treatment of corona virus. This combination is also being used in China along with some other medicines. A patient of corona virus has also been successfully treated with its use in Thailand. Sources said that before using these two medicines, the doctor has to get the approval of the patient. Explain that so far three patients in India have been found to be suffering from corona virus. All three cases have been reported in Kerala. Among them are a student and two students, who were studying in the Wuhan city of China, the center of the corona virus, and recently returned from there. They have been kept in isolation wards of various hospitals and their condition is stated to be stable. In addition, many people with symptoms of corona virus have also been kept under medical supervision, however, except for three, no other cases of corona virus have been reported in the country.

[Coronavirus India live update: All 645 evacuees from Wuhan test negative for the deadly infection](#)



February 6, 2020/Live Mint

The deadly novel coronavirus has so far spread to at least 24 countries, including Germany, Australia and the United States. China has reported an increase in fatalities as the virus has claimed over 500 lives. Nearly 25,000 infection cases have been reported. The Indian government on Monday set up a task force to monitor the situation arising out of the novel coronavirus with representatives from the Ministries of Health, Home, Civil Aviation and Women and Child Development, Union Minister G Kishan Reddy said. The virus originated in Wuhan in December and has since then spread to various cities around the world. Here are the latest updates from India of the deadly coronavirus: The government on Thursday said all 645 Indian citizens evacuated from China's Wuhan and kept in isolation at Army Base camp at Manesar in Haryana and ITBP camps in Delhi tested negative for the deadly virus. It said that as of February 6, 1,38,750 passengers from 1,265 flights had been screened for novel coronavirus illness but no new case was detected.

India has so far reported three confirmed cases of nCoV from Kerala. Three medical students studying at the Wuhan University who returned to India recently tested positive for the virus. Besides, 510 samples were tested by **ICMR** network laboratories, of which all had tested negative except for the three already reported positive cases. The three cases are clinically stable, the ministry said in a statement.

['Gangakhedkar brought sex-workers on board with policy makers'](#)

February 6, 2020/The Times of India

Sixty-one-year old Raman Gangakhedkar - awarded Padma Shri under the category of science and technology this year - is a paediatrician and public health expert. "I have never been a type who applies for any award or hankers after it. This award simply epitomises the life and times of researchers like me whose work is endorsed and recognized," Gangakhedkar told TOI. Currently, working as the the head of epidemiology and communicable diseases division at the union health ministry's **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)**, Gangakhedkar has been associated in various capacities as researcher and innovator at various departments of ICMR for over three decades. Gangakhedkar made a significant contribution to the field of communicable diseases with an exemplary career in HIV/AIDS prevention and control. His services in the field of public health began with his early years spent in the National Institute of Nutrition and at the National Institute of Immuno-haematology wherein he worked on sickle-cell disease. "With a sense of commitment to the impoverished, I continued to work in the government setup and in a step that was bold even by the standards of those times," said Gangakhedkar. When there were only few doctors willing to work for patient with HIV in Mumbai, he decided to work in the field of HIV/AIDS.

ICMR deputed him to the John's Hopkins University, US for a Masters in Public Health. He returned enthused for the management of this deadly disease in the challenging Indian public health setup.

Coronavirus Update: ICMR Gets Emergency CDSCO Nod For Use Of Cocktail Of Anti-HIV Drugs On NCoV Patients



February 6, 2020/Medical Dialogues

In a significant move to battle the epidemic, the Central Drug Control Organisation (CDSCO) has given an emergency approval to **India Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** to use a combination of anti-HIV drugs- 'Lopinavir and Ritonavir' tablets for the treatment of novel coronavirus (nCoV) patients in India.

The Drug Controller General of India has approved the "restricted use" of a combination of drugs used widely for controlling HIV infection in public health emergency for treating those affected by a novel coronavirus (nCoV), official sources told PTI on Wednesday. According to government sources, apex health research body Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) had sought an emergency approval from the DCGI for the "restricted use" of the combination of two medications — lopinavir and ritonavir — for treatment of this respiratory ailment. "We did our own docking studies and found that this could be a potentially useful drug against nCoV," an ICMR official said. This combination along with other drugs has been used in clinical trials in China, where the coronavirus first emerged, and Thailand for treating nCoV-affected patients.

"The DCGI has given a no objection for the restricted use of this drug combination -- lopinavir and ritonavir — in case of a public health emergency on patients affected by nCoV as per the treatment protocol designed by the ICMR," a government source said.

AFMC to host one of Defence ministry's 10 new labs dedicated to virus research

February 7, 2020/Hindustan Times

The Ministry of Defence has begun work on setting up 10 new laboratories across the country, primarily to conduct research on viruses. "The labs, which were already in the pipeline, have recently been sanctioned," said Lt General Anup Banerji, director-general, Armed Forces Medical Services, during a media interaction on Thursday at the 68th Armed Forces Medical Conference in Pune. Banerji said, "We are treating Corona virus as a national emergency and as part of the armed forces we are putting in all efforts to control it. We have also set up 60 centres in the Northeast to reach people in far flung areas and provide them medical services if required." While the locations of the laboratories are yet to be decided, one of them will be located inside Armed Forces Medical College (AFMC) in Pune, said a senior defence official, requesting anonymity, adding that the labs will work on research, diagnosis and treatment of new and existing viruses, accessing medical expertise from within the defence staff. As per information released at the press meet, the 10 laboratories will be set by the Defence ministry in collaboration with the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)**. The labs will exist in a three tier-structure - national, state and district level - and will work on virus detection and treatment on the lines of the National Institute of Virology (NIV). Established in Pune in 1952, NIV, under the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), is involved in the research of arthropod borne viruses. In addition to this the ICMR, in collaboration with the Maharashtra government, is also setting up two additional labs at Mumbai's Kasturba hospital and Nagpur's Indira Gandhi Medical College, especially to deal with the Coronavirus.

NIV Alappuzha given state nodal laboratory tag for testing nCoV

February 7, 2020/The New Indian Express



As the state tightens its vigil against the novel coronavirus (nCoV), the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Alappuzha, has been designated as the state nodal laboratory for testing nCoV. The Alappuzha unit is also entrusted with the task of ensuring the collection and transport of suspected nCoV samples. The **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)**, an apex body in India in biomedical research, has entitled nodal laboratory tag to the NIV Alappuzha. The samples thus collected will have to be sent to NIV, Pune. A guidance note in this regard has been issued to NIV Alappuzha. “The apex laboratory for nCoV testing and declaration of result is NIV Pune. But eleven viral research and diagnostic laboratories (VRDL) at the national level have been identified for testing nCoV. NIV Alappuzha is one among them,” said an officer of the health department.

According to the officer, Government Medical College (GMC), Kozhikode GMC Thiruvananthapuram and GMC Thrissur have been designated as VRDLs that would screen the samples and sent them to NIV Alappuzha.

At the same time, in the ICMR guidance note, it has been mentioned that as a state-level VRDL, the Alappuzha centre should keep close contact with other VRDLs regarding the collection of samples. Also, the result of the sample will have to be shared with NIV Pune within 24 hours.

With regards,

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