



INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH

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

Media report (25th January to 31st January 2020)
(ICMR IN NEWS)

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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 25th January to 31st January 2020) includes the mention Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in 30 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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Four suspected coronavirus cases test negative, screening stepped up

January 25, 2020/The Indian Express

Coronavirus: India extends travel advisory to 12 more airports

January 25, 2020/The Hindu

Harsh Vardhan holds high-level meeting, reviews preparedness against coronavirus

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UGC adds 1,000 'quality academic journals' to its list

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Coronavirus: Hope to shorten time to test samples, says NIV director

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nCoV tests may be conducted in Hyderabad soon

January 28, 2020/The Hindu

Coronavirus outbreak: Only 1 of 3 required samples from suspected patient sent to NIV Pune from Ujjain

January 28, 2020/The Times of India

633 People Being Monitored in Kerala, Samples of Six Suspected Coronavirus Cases Sent for Testing: Minister

January 28, 2020/Letest LY

India ups testing mechanism as coronavirus fears grip the nation

January 29, 2020/Hindustan Times

Coronavirus outbreak: Three still quarantined, doctors wait for test results

January 29, 2020/The Times of India

India and Coronavirus: Suspected Cases, Isolation Wards And More

January 29, 2020/The Quint

Hyderabad ICMR lab among four across India to detect novel Coronavirus

January 29, 2020/The Times of India

Madhya Pradesh: Three-member team at Gandhi Medical College to deal with Coronavirus scare

January 29, 2020/The Times of India

Are enough kits for coronavirus sampling available with NIV?

January 29, 2020/Down to Earth

'Clean Ward' mooted to treat highly infectious diseases

January 30, 2020/The Hindu

Coronavirus scare: Health dept overlooks WHO protocol

January 30, 2020/The Times of India

India's first case of coronavirus confirmed in Kerala

January 30, 2020/The New Indian Express

Cabinet Secy reviews preparation to deal with coronavirus

January 30, 2020/Outlook India

Refrain from travelling to China: India tells its citizens

January 30, 2020/The Times of India

First Indian case of coronavirus in Kerala

January 30, 2020/Live Mint

Novel coronavirus: 2 new suspected cases in Hyderabad

January 31, 2020/The New Indian Express

Four suspected coronavirus cases test negative, screening stepped up

January 25, 2020/The Indian Express

Four samples suspected to contain novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) have tested negative at the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, top officials at the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** told The Indian Express on Friday.

As on Friday evening, five people — three in Mumbai, and one each in Hyderabad and Bengaluru — were quarantined after they displayed symptoms of the infection. Two samples from Mumbai and one each from Hyderabad and Bengaluru were sent to NIV. “All four samples with suspected novel coronavirus that were sent to NIV for investigations have tested negative,” ICMR director general Dr Balram Bhargava told The Indian Express. Officials have said that the suspected cases will be observed for 28 days. Maharashtra epidemiologist Dr Pradeep Awate said, “Neither China nor the World Health Organization has transmission period for this virus. Usually, it takes only a few days for coronavirus symptoms to surface. We are observing these cases for double the period. It will provide sufficient window to detect any symptoms.” Maharashtra Director of Health Services Dr Archana Patil has also issued an advisory about the virus and said that there was no case so far in the state. Respiratory illnesses are common during this season and surveillance measures have been stepped up, Patil said, adding that a list of do’s and don’ts has also been issued.

Coronavirus: India extends travel advisory to 12 more airports

January 25, 2020/The Hindu

The Health Ministry extended its travel advisory to 12 more airports in addition to the current seven on Friday, with the World Health Organisation (WHO) confirming that 830 cases of coronavirus infection have been reported from China, along with 25 deaths, as on Thursday. A senior official said the Ministry was in touch with the WHO “for co-ordinated effort to tackle the novel virus and dynamic situation”.

Two persons who returned from China have been kept under observation at a Mumbai hospital. As many as 1,789 passengers underwent thermal screening at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport till January 19, while 262 passengers were screened in Hyderabad. Across India as on January 24, 20,844 passengers from 96 flights have been screened, and on Friday 4082 passengers of 19 flights were screened. “No nCoV case has been detected in the country so far. National Institute of Virology, Pune, is fully geared up to test samples. Ten laboratories under the **Indian Council of Medical Research’s** Viral Research and Diagnostics Laboratories network are also equipped to test such samples...,” said a release from the Ministry on Friday. The Health official said people returning from China under observation in Mumbai have not tested positive for coronavirus. “We advise against spreading panic. Furthermore, the Indian nurse in Saudi has a different strain of the coronavirus and is under treatment,” he said.

[Harsh Vardhan holds high-level meeting, reviews preparedness against coronavirus](#)



January 25, 2020/Devdiscourse

Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Saturday held a high-level meeting in Delhi with senior officers of the Health Ministry, **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** and National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), to review the preparedness against novel coronavirus. "The situation is being closely monitored at the highest level for adequate preparedness. All the officials of my Ministry, concerned departments and States/UTs have been put on high alert for Novel Coronavirus. We are taking all required possible precautions to manage all possible scenarios", a release from the Ministry read. The Union Health Minister has directed for multidisciplinary central teams to be formed and sent to the several states where thermal screening is being done at the seven designated airports, including New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Kochi. Harsh Vardhan also informed that no novel coronavirus case has been detected in the country so far. However, 11 persons were put under observation; out of which four have tested negative for the virus. The Union Minister also said that various steps have been taken up and continual efforts are being made by the Health Ministry in close coordination with the Ministry of Civil Aviation, MEA, State Governments, and WHO. "Close monitoring is being undertaken for all the passengers who are arriving from China and Hong Kong across 7 International Airports in India," he added. (ANI)

[Coronavirus: How fear has gripped the world](#)

January 25, 2020/Pune Mirror

The China office of the World Health Organisation (WHO) was informed regarding a cases of pneumonia of unknown etiology or unknown cause, detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China in December 2019. Since then the novel Coronavirus has set alarm bells ringing for health community across the globe. By January 3, 44 patients with pneumonia of unknown etiology had been reported to WHO by national authorities in China. Out of those 44 cases, 11 were severely ill. The count was raised up to 1,287 cases and 41 deaths in 29 provinces of China, including district and cities. According to WHO "Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARSCoV). The National institute of virology in Pune geared up for sample tests. It recently tested four samples of suspected patients, but all showed negative. However, the ministry continued its efforts to stop the virus from transmitting in India by working closely with the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Ministry of External Affairs and issuing guidelines and advisories on a regular basis. Health Minister Harshvardhan reviewed preparedness regarding nCoV with senior officers of ministry, **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** and National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) and decided that seven teams would visit states & designated airports. The NCDC Call Centre was made operational. According to media reports, China rushed to build a new hospital in just ten days to treat the patients of the killer virus. China had set up a national research team of 14 experts to help prevent and control the disease.

[The fight goes on](#)

January 25, 2020/The Week



Screening for breast cancer and diagnosing it early are the only ways to win the war against the dreaded disease. The emphasis on preventive action and making women 'breast aware' was a key takeaway from a day-long THE WEEK Connect conference in Delhi. The theme was 'expanding breast cancer care for Indian women'. Dr Mande said the low survival rates for breast cancer patients were "embarrassing" for the country. To fight the disease, we need to understand the tumour through better studies using all novel technologies that are available. Though she was aware of it, my mother hid it from us. Women in India tend to hide the disease. They should report the slightest inconvenience. The event, which top oncologists, researchers, medical students, survivors and journalists attended, saw vibrant discussions on the disease that kills more Indian women than any other cancer. Experts from premier institutions such as AIIMS, Tata Memorial Centre and Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology talked about the rising incidence of breast cancer and the genetic links, the importance and nuances of screening, the relevance of genome sequencing, latest treatment modalities, and the experience and practical issues that confront a patient. Dr Balram Bhargava, secretary, department of health research, and director general, **Indian Council of Medical Research**, said the government had embarked on an ambitious programme to screen for non-communicable diseases through the planned 1.5 lakh health and wellness centres. He also emphasised the importance of self-examination. "Though the incidence of breast cancer in Indian women is one-third of that in the west, the numbers diagnosed early in our country is much lower," he said.

[Rajasthan govt issues advisory against novel coronavirus](#)

January 26, 2020/Big News Network

Jaipur (Rajasthan) [India], Jan 25 (ANI): In the backdrop of the threat posed by Coronavirus, the Rajasthan government on Saturday has issued an advisory to all departments asking them to be aware of the symptoms of the virus and take precautionary measures. The state government has issued an advisory as a precautionary measure against the novel coronavirus. "As a precautionary measure we have asked the all relevant departments to be aware of the symptoms of the virus and if some affected person lands in the state proper steps should be made to deal with solution," Rajasthan Health Minister Raghu Sharma told ANI. He also asked the government of India to provide screening facilities at every airport in the country. Earlier in the day, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan held a high-level meeting in Delhi with senior officers of the Health Ministry, **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** and National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), to review the preparedness against novel coronavirus. The Union Health Minister has directed for multidisciplinary central teams to be formed and sent to the several states where thermal screening is being done at the seven designated airports, including New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Kochi. Harsh Vardhan also informed that no novel coronavirus case has been detected in the country so far. However, 11 persons were put under observation; out of which four have tested negative for the virus. (ANI)

[India issues advisory against travel to China as Coronavirus scare peaks](#)



January 26, 2020/Hindustan Times

India issued on Saturday a new travel advisory asking citizens to avoid all “non-essential travel” to China while a senior adviser to the Prime Minister held a meeting with top bureaucrats to review the country’s preparedness in tackling the outbreak of a deadly new virus that is rampaging through central China.

According to officials aware of the development, principal secretary to Prime Minister, PK Mishra chaired a high level meeting attended by the cabinet secretary as well as the secretaries of home affairs, external affairs, defence, health and family welfare and civil aviation . The meeting, the sources said, was convened at the directions of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to review mechanisms amid fears that the contagion could play havoc if it reaches India. A 24X7 call centre at the National Centre for Disease Control in Delhi— +91-11-23978046— has also been activated to encourage passengers with travel history to China, who develop symptoms such as fever, cough, respiratory disease etc, to self-report. The call centre will direct suspected cases to experts in their area, and will also monitor details of passengers provided by the ministry of external affairs. Harsh Vardhan held a review meeting early on Saturday with experts from **Indian Council of Medical Research**, National Centre for Disease Control, health ministry etc. and formed seven central teams that will visit the states where thermal screening is being done at the seven designated airports (New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Kochi). The central teams that are expected to reach the states on Sunday shall consist of a public health expert, a clinician and a microbiologist. They shall review the end-to-end preparedness for management and control of nCoV in the states including reviewing that the infection control, surveillance and other guidelines are being followed properly or not.

[Coronavirus: How fear has gripped the world](#)

January 26, 2020/Outlook India

The China office of the World Health Organisation (WHO) was informed regarding a cases of pneumonia of unknown etiology or unknown cause, detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China in December 2019. Since then the novel Coronavirus has set alarm bells ringing for health community across the globe. By January 3, 44 patients with pneumonia of unknown etiology had been reported to WHO by national authorities in China. Out of those 44 cases, 11 were severely ill. The count was raised up to 1,287 cases and 41 deaths in 29 provinces of China, including district and cities. According to WHO "Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARSCoV). A novel coronavirus (nCoV) is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans. Coronaviruses are zoonotic, meaning they are transmitted between animals and people. Detailed investigations found that SARS-CoV was transmitted from civet cats to humans and MERS-CoV from dromedary camels to humans. Several known coronaviruses are circulating in animals that have not yet infected humans. The virus, causing an outbreak in China, was identified as a novel Coronavirus. Since then, Wuhan city of China made headlines in the media reports on a daily basis for being the epicentre of the outbreak of deadly virus.

Central team coming today to review nCoV

January 26, 2020/The Hindu



Steps taken for management and control of Novel Coronavirus (nCoV) in Telangana, isolation wards in government hospitals and other aspects would be reviewed by a three-member multidisciplinary Central team, which would reach the State on Sunday. The Central team consisting of a public health expert, a clinician and a microbiologist, would reach the State on Sunday. Officials from the State Health Department, and Regional Office for Health and Family Welfare department would accompany them.

Thermal screening

Apart from Telangana, the Central teams would visit six more States where thermal screening of passengers at airports is taken up.

Orders to this effect were issued by Union Health Minister of Health and Family Welfare Dr Harsh Vardhan, who held a review meeting with senior officers of the Health Ministry, **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** and the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) on Saturday.

RGIA

Here, the Central teams would visit Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA), Shamshabad, where passengers coming in flight from Hong Kong are screened using thermal scanners and thermal guns. Apart from the airport, they would review arrangements at Sir Ronald Ross Institute of Tropical and Communicable Disease (Fever Hospital), Nallakunta, which has isolation wards for people suspected to be having nCoV.

From the past a few days, people who took flight from Hong Kong to land in Hyderabad are being screened using thermal scanners and thermal guns.

CPR: A lifesaver or death ritual?

January 26, 2020/The Asian Age

The **Indian Council of Medical Research** recently drafted a position paper on Do Not Attempt Resuscitation (DNAR) orders for medical practitioners in India.

You have seen CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) in movies and TV shows. Someone has a cardiac arrest or goes through trauma (electrocution, drowning etc...). A hunky hero or some burly bystander pulls the victim to safety and starts pounding on his/her chest with all his might, breathing into his/her mouth, etc. A few coughs, some jerks, eyes open and within a jiffy the victim bounces back to life, as if nothing had happened. But in reality, only 2% to 18% of people who receive CPR survive. According to some senior doctors and studies, more often than not, untrained people, including paramedics, sometimes end up breaking the ribs of patients while performing CPR on old dying patients. Of course, all this with the good intention of saving the life of a person! And despite the rescuer's best efforts, death is by far the more common outcome. The Indian Council of Medical Research recently drafted a position paper on Do Not Attempt Resuscitation (DNAR) orders for medical practitioners in India. Throwing some light on the subject, Dr Nagesh Simha, a palliative care physician from Bengaluru, who is also member of the steering committee of ELICIT, an inter-speciality taskforce on End Of Life Care in India says, "Death is inevitable in case of elderly patients and those with terminal illness. By performing CPR on them, you may revive their heart but in the process damage their ribs and quality of life if they survive."

[Health ministry team to visit seven states for prevention of Novel Coronavirus](#)



January 26, 2020/The New Indian Express

Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Saturday held a high-level review with senior officials of the health ministry, **Indian Council of Medical Research** and the National Centre for Disease Control to oversee the current situation, preparedness and steps being taken for prevention and management of Novel Coronavirus (nCoV) in India. The government said that 11 people, who had returned from China, have been put under observation but samples taken from four have tested negative for the virus at the ICMR-National Institute of Virology, Pune. Results are awaited for the rest of the suspects and no nCoV— which often manifests itself through flu-like symptoms and fever— has been detected in the country so far. “The situation is being closely monitored at the highest level for adequate preparedness,” said the ministry. It was also decided that multidisciplinary central teams will be formed and sent to the seven states where thermal screening is being done at the seven designated airports — New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Kochi. “The team shall consist of a public health expert, a clinician and a microbiologist and will reach the designated states on Sunday,” a statement said.

[UGC adds 1,000 ‘quality academic journals’ to its list](#)

January 27, 2020/The Times of India

The University Grants Commission (UGC)’s ‘Consortium of Academic and Research Ethics (Care)’ has so far added around 1,000 Indian academic journals to its list since it was formed last November, and the list is growing, said Bhushan Patwardhan, vice-chairman of UGC. He said the UGC was seeking to add more ‘credible Indian journals’ to its list under Care. Patwardhan, who was in the city recently, said Care has stakeholders from across fields such as statutory bodies, academies and councils to review the journals every quarter. Last November, the UGC had formed Care to ‘prepare a list of credible quality journals’ in the fields of social sciences, humanities, languages, arts, culture, Indian knowledge systems etc. The move came after bogus journals, predatory and paid academic journals started mushrooming across the country. “Studies showed that 88% of journals in the UGC approved list were dubious. India has earned a very bad reputation because of this in the past 15 years. So we wanted to create a credible database of reputed journals to stop the practice of pay and publish,” he said. Pointing out that the consortium has bodies such as the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, the **Indian Council of Medical Research** and the Indian Council of Social Science Research, he said the members together decide which journals are good to be included in the list.

Coronavirus: Hope to shorten time to test samples, says NIV director

January 28, 2020/The Indian Express



The **Indian Council of Medical Research** National Institute of Virology (ICMR-NIV) has completed tests on 19 samples and ruled out the presence of the 2019 novel coronavirus so far. ICMR officials told The Indian Express that a total of 20 samples have been received. On Monday, six samples were sent to NIV of which five have tested negative and one sample is still in the process of testing, highly placed officials in the ICMR said. When contacted, Dr Priya Abraham, who recently took charge as the new director of ICMR-NIV, told The Indian Express that they hoped to shorten the time taken for testing suspected samples for novel coronavirus from six hours to three hours. “Presently we are performing conventional PCRs and are awaiting the specific probes from abroad,” she said. “We have been uploading the reports within 12-18 hours so far given that the samples arrive all through the day,” Dr Abraham said. ICMR-NIV is a national influenza centre and WHO reference laboratory for avian influenza A(H5N1) in the South East Asia region. “We are fully geared with diagnostic testing for the novel coronavirus that is rapidly evolving,” Dr Abraham said. The virus has affected over 2,800 people and caused over 80 deaths in China. “We have to be vigilant,” Dr Abraham said, “When a sample is received by ICMR-NIV, it is tested for a slew of known respiratory pathogens like the flu virus, pandemic H1N1 and others before tests are taken up for the novel coronavirus,” she explained.

ICMR drafts standard treatment guidelines for AB-PMJAY

January 28, 2020/APN News

We all know that the Ayushman Bharat Yojana is primarily implemented to help the poor and vulnerable families in rural and urban India to seek free healthcare services. However, for this scheme to serve better to the said people, the National Health Authority (NHA) has embraced the Standard Treatment Guidelines (STGs), which are drafted by the **Indian Council of Medical Research** Institute (ICMR). In fact, NHA and ICMR putting efforts to continuously update the STGs imposed on the Ayushman Bharat – Prime Minister Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) so that the scheme is more effective. The scheme basically provides health coverage of up to INR 5 lakhs to over millions of families across the country every year. Up till now, the ICMR has drafted STGs for 30 treatment modalities, some of which include –

- Cataract
- COPD
- Hysterectomy
- Hemodialysis
- Emergency management of ureteric stones
- Respiratory failure due to any cause
- PTCA
- Systemic thrombolysis
- Coronary artery bypass grafting (CABG)
- Low cardiac output IABP inspection post-operation
- Asthma
- Epilepsy
- Stroke
- D&C

[nCoV tests may be conducted in Hyderabad soon](#)

January 28, 2020/The Hindu



In about 10 days, tests for Novel Coronavirus (nCoV) may be conducted in Hyderabad. A tweet from the official account of Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare stated that four labs of **Indian Council of Medical Research's (ICMR)** Viral Research and Diagnostics Lab Network in four cities, including in Hyderabad, were activated to test samples. Currently, all samples are being sent to the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, for the tests. There are three ICMR project facilities at Telangana — Gandhi Hospital, Osmania General Hospital (both in Hyderabad), and another in Warangal. Superintendent of Fever Hospital and director of Institute of Preventive Medicine, K. Shankar said that the one at Gandhi Hospital might be selected for the purpose in all probability. The laboratory would be checked and funds will be issued accordingly. If samples are tested in Hyderabad, it will save precious time taken to transport samples to the NIV. Health Minister Eatala Rajender is scheduled to hold a meeting on Wednesday on the State's preparedness to deal with nCoV.

Notified courier services

Swab samples collected from people admitted to the isolation ward of the Fever Hospital are sent to NIV in private vehicles, escorted by staff from Health Department. Dr Shankar said that they have another option to send the samples — through three courier services approved by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

[Coronavirus outbreak: Only 1 of 3 required samples from suspected patient sent to NIV Pune from Ujjain](#)

January 28, 2020/The Times of India

Madhya Pradesh health department only took swab sample of deadly coronavirus suspected patient admitted in Ujjain hospital in Madhya Pradesh, admitted CMHO Ujjain Dr Mahavir Khandelwal. As per **ICMR** and union ministry of health and family welfare (MoHFW) protocol of clinical specimens of tissue sampling from lung and two serum samples apart from swab samples should also be sent to national institute of virology (NIV) Pune for suspected coronavirus patients. The patient was placed in quarantine on Monday in Ujjain. "Protocols are in place for anyone with symptoms sore throat, cough and high grade fever. Breathless is serious condition. It is for anyone who has a recent travel history of travel to China and anyone who came in contact with anyone who travelled to china in last 15-days," said MP three-member coronavirus expert monitoring team head, Dr Parag Sharma. He admitted that MoHFW guidelines call for specimen collection of three tests. The result of the swab sample for the with symptoms of the deadly strain that has killed over 100 people worldwide is expected in 15 to 20 days, said Dr Khandewal. The suspected patient was studying MBBS in China. He is expected to be in quarantine till NIV Pune results are known. US CDC recommends collecting multiple specimens, including lower (bronchialveolar lavage, sputum and tracheal aspirates) and upper (e.g., nasopharyngeal and oropharyngeal swabs) respiratory samples, serum and stool specimens.

633 People Being Monitored in Kerala, Samples of Six Suspected Coronavirus Cases Sent for Testing: Minister



January 28, 2020/Letest LY

Kerala Health Minister KK Shailaja on Tuesday said that 633 people, including 197 "new ones" were being monitored in the state in the backdrop of reports about the spread of coronavirus globally. "Out of those who are being monitored, only seven are hospitalized. So far, 16 people have been hospitalized, of which nine have been discharged. Samples of 10 people have been sent to the Pune Virology Institute for testing. Six of them have tested negative and results four are awaited," said Shailaja. In addition, samples of six suspected cases were sent on Tuesday. The samples have been sent for inspection as per **ICMR** guidelines, she added. "Strong measures are being taken to prevent coronavirus infection. So far no confirmed cases have been reported in Kerala. The health department is preparing a mechanism to deal with it," said Shailaja. Kochi airport already has a surveillance system and a new surveillance system has been installed at Thiruvananthapuram airport, she said. She said the Health Department has mentioned that those returning from China must be prepared for voluntary surveillance. (ANI)

India ups testing mechanism as coronavirus fears grip the nation

January 29, 2020/Hindustan Times

India has strengthened arrangements to deal with the deadly coronavirus amid its spread to other countries and reports of more deaths and new cases related to the outbreak from China, according to officials aware of the matter. The Union health ministry has designated four more advanced laboratories for testing related to the virus along with the **Indian Council of Medical Research**-National Institute of Virology (ICMR-NIV) laboratory in Pune. The ICMR-NIV is testing four to six samples daily, and the number of suspected cases is on the rise. So far ICMR-NIV has tested 20 samples of people quarantined across the country. None of the tests have been positive. "There is no coronavirus positive case in the country so far. We have added four more labs for testing and will soon add five more. All our labs are state of the art," said Union health minister Harsh Vardhan. The four ICMR labs designated for testing are in Alleppey (Kerala), Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Mumbai. Hundreds of Indians studying in Wuhan, the epicentre of the coronavirus outbreak, have returned to India this month for the Chinese Lunar New Year holidays. The officials said a dedicated three-member central team of experts has been sent to various states to review preparedness at the ground level.

"Additional investigations are needed to determine how the patients were infected, the extent of human-to-human transmission, the clinical spectrum of disease, and the geographic range of infection," said ICMR in a statement. The government has also extended the screening facilities for travellers coming from China to 13 more airports. This takes the number of airports, where checking happens for symptoms of the coronavirus infection, to 20. The Union health ministry is procuring extra thermal body scanners to meet the need for more screenings.

Coronavirus outbreak: Three still quarantined, doctors wait for test results



January 29, 2020/The Times of India

Of the three persons quarantined at RML Hospital following the outbreak of coronavirus in China's Wuhan, one is a 48-year-old businessman who returned from Beijing on January 17. He has fever, body ache and difficulty in swallowing. The others are a 34-year-old businessman and a 24-year-old student suffering from milder symptoms similar to common flu. The doctors say isolation will be maintained till the test results are out as they have a history of travel to China. While two of them are residents of Delhi, the third person comes from Noida, said Dr Meenkashi Bhardwaj, medical superintendent of the hospital. "We are completely ready. The isolation ward has eight beds, which can be increased if required. We are following all infection-control practices and using protective equipment while dealing with the suspected cases," she added. Till Monday, 33,552 passengers arriving to India from China in 155 flights have been screened for a possible exposure to the respiratory virus. Till January 14, 17 samples have been received by the **ICMR**-NIV lab, out of which 14 have been found negative. Many people have been kept under observation in several states. The Centre has stepped up vigil in areas bordering Nepal as well.

India and Coronavirus: Suspected Cases, Isolation Wards And More

January 29, 2020/The Quint

More than 2,000 people have been screened at airports across India from 137 flights for suspected Wuhan coronavirus. The samples are being sent to National Institute of Virology (NIV) Pune for testing. As per Director Dr. Priya Abraham, 20 such samples have been confirmed to be negative.

Coronavirus: 3 under isolation in Delhi hospital

Three persons suspected to be infected with the novel coronavirus have been admitted at the Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) hospital here, an official confirmed on Tuesday. Speaking to IANS, the Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the RML hospital said: "The three persons, all residents of the national capital, were admitted on Monday afternoon. They had travelled to China." The PRO said that two of them showed symptoms, but all three of them were placed under isolation. "Tests have been conducted through National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC). Reports were expected in four to five days." The RML has been selected as the nodal centre for isolation and treatment suspected and confirmed coronavirus cases. However, no case has been confirmed yet. Isolation wards have also been set up at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS).

Hyderabad ICMR lab among four across India to detect novel Coronavirus



January 29, 2020/The Times of India

The Union ministry of health and family welfare on Tuesday announced that testing for the dreaded Novel Corona Virus (2019-nCoV) will begin at the **ICMR** lab in Hyderabad and at three other places in the country. In fact, several suspected cases of the virus which has now spread to at least six countries, have been reported in Hyderabad city. The samples are being sent to the National Institute of Virology (NIV) Pune. In a bid to cut out the time and hassle of transporting the samples (likely to have the highly contagious virus) the decision has been taken. The ICMR lab in Hyderabad, located in the Gandhi Medical College at Secunderabad, is biosafety level four lab which is the highest level and at par with the NIV lab. ICMR has 10 labs in the country. The labs are only used for research and are not used for testing samples even in case of outbreaks. “The plan is to prepare it in 7-10 days for testing of samples. Since many suspected cases are being reported, the sample load is expected to increase,” said Dr K Shankar, director Institute of Preventive Medicine (IPM), Meanwhile, Hyderabad has a Biosafety Level 2 lab at the Institute of Preventive Medicine (IPM) where tests for Swine flu are currently done but the lab is not prepared as yet to do tests for more contagious viruses. It is currently stuck in an upgradation process.

Madhya Pradesh: Three-member team at Gandhi Medical College to deal with Coronavirus scare

January 29, 2020/The Times of India

Madhya Pradesh health department only took the swab sample for the deadly Coronavirus suspected patient admitted at a hospital in Ujjain, admitted CMHO Ujjain Dr Mahavir Khadelwal. As per **ICMR** and Union ministry of health protocol, clinical specimens of tissue sampling from lungs and two serum samples should also be sent to National Institute of Virology (NIV) in Pune. Dr Khandewal was in Bhopal in a meeting with top health department officials, including MP health commissioner Prateek Hajela. Specimen collection, packaging and transport guidelines for 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) were issued by the ICMR and Union ministry of health on January 20. The result of the swab sample with symptoms of the deadly strain that has killed over 100 people worldwide is expected in 15 to 20 days, said Dr Khandewal. The suspected patient was studying MBBS in China. He is expected to be in quarantine till NIV Pune responds. Meanwhile, a three-member team to deal with Coronavirus was formed at the Gandhi Medical College (GMC) here on Tuesday. It includes, GMC associate professor, department of pulmonology, Dr Parag Sharma, Dr RK Jain and Dr Nikunj Agrawal. “Protocols are in place for anyone with symptoms of sore throat, cough and high-grade fever. Breathlessness is serious condition. It is for anyone who has recently visited China and anyone who came in contact with anyone who travelled to China in the last 15 days,” said Dr Sharma. A five-bed quarantine facility for management of suspected Coronavirus strain has also been established in the GMC.

[Are enough kits for coronavirus sampling available with NIV?](#)

January 29, 2020/Down to Earth



Specimens of suspected novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) patients will be tested at the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)**'s laboratories at Alappuzha, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Mumbai, besides the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has said.

All four labs will work under the guidance of the NIV. However, the number of kits available for diagnosis at the labs and their sufficiency is not clear at the moment.

The test for the coronavirus uses a nucleic acid amplification-based assay called polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and a more sensitive form called real-time polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR), Priya Abraham said in an emailed reply to Down To Earth (DTE). "With reference to your concern, we would like to inform you that adequate contingency for testing is available with ICMR-NIV and Viral Research & Diagnostic Laboratories," Abraham said in reply to a question on how many kits were available with the NIV and network labs.

A second follow-up mail asking how many kits were available is yet to be answered. This story would be updated once the reply is received.

She added that the testing protocols being followed at the NIV were according to World Health Organization-recommended guidelines for the novel coronavirus.

"Reducing test time depends on the protocol used and an average of 12-24 hours is the window as sometime multiple tests may have to be run," Abraham said about the time it would take for a test result to come out.

['Clean Ward' mooted to treat highly infectious diseases](#)

January 30, 2020/The Hindu

Health Department officials are mulling setting up of a 'Clean Ward' where people suffering from rare and highly infectious diseases such as Novel Coronavirus (nCoV), Ebola and Nipah virus can be admitted. The design and infrastructure of the ward would be such that infections from the patients would not spread to doctors, nurses or anyone else on the premises. Besides an isolation ward, ICU with ventilators and general wards will also be made available to the patients. Depending on the severity of disease, one would be shifted from one ward to another. All such facilities are proposed to be located in a single building.

Currently, anyone is suspected to have nCoV is admitted at Sir Ronald Ross Institute of Tropical and Communicable Diseases, better known as Fever Hospital, in Nallakunta. If the patient's condition worsens followed by severe difficulty in breathing, he/she has to be rushed to Gandhi Hospital for ventilator support.

This can be avoided if the Clean Ward is set up with all other supporting facilities in one building.

Testing in city

Meanwhile, a day after the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare stated that four labs of **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)**'s Viral Research and Diagnostics Lab Network in four cities, including Hyderabad, were activated to test samples for detection of nCoV, Telangana Health Department officials said the ICMR lab at Gandhi Hospital here will be chosen for the purpose. Staff at the hospital will be trained in handling and testing the samples. It is learnt that reagents and testing kits would be supplied to perform the tests. It will take around 10 days to initiate such tests.

India's first case of coronavirus confirmed in Kerala

January 30, 2020/The New Indian Express



Hours after Kerala reported India's first confirmed case of novel coronavirus, the Centre on Thursday decided to test all individuals who returned from China after January 15, for possible infection. The condition of the victim, a female medical student in China's Wuhan, is stable. The diagnosis was confirmed by the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune. The student initially underwent treatment at the Thrissur General Hospital, from where she was shifted to the Thrissur Medical College. Kerala Health Minister KK Shailaja said there was no need to panic as the state had started precaution and preparation since the start of the China outbreak. "The patient had symptoms of cold and cough and given the travel history, necessary tests were carried out on the samples collected," Union health secretary Preeti Sudan told this newspaper. Officials in NIV, Pune said the confirmation in the case came through matching of the genome sequence of the virus shared by China. "We carried out the test following two testing protocols. Both confirmed the presence of the virus," they added. A third test known as "next gen sequencing test" will be done on the sample and the final result will be declared by Friday.

Cabinet Secy reviews preparation to deal with coronavirus

January 30, 2020/Outlook India

Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba on Thursday reviewed the country's preparedness to deal with coronavirus as the first case was reported from Kerala.

A female medical student of a university in the Chinese city of Wuhan, the epicentre of the outbreak, tested positive for the virus that has killed 170 people in China and is spreading worldwide. "The patient tested positive for novel coronavirus and is in isolation in a hospital," the Health Ministry said.

It added the student is stable and being closely monitored. Priya Abraham, the director of **ICMR**-NIV in Pune, said 49 samples have been tested till now at the national institute of virology and one came out positive. "The positive sample belongs to a student from Kerala who was studying in Wuhan. Now a next test known as "next-gen sequencing test" will be done on her sample and the final result will be declared till tomorrow evening," Abraham said. The Cabinet Secretary reviewed the preparedness with the ministries of Health, External Affairs, Defence, Home Affairs, Civil Aviation, Information & Broadcasting, Labour & Employment, and Shipping and it was decided that all travellers from China since January 15 will be tested for nCoV. A video conference with Chief Secretaries of the states and UTs was also taken by the Cabinet Secretary, an official statement said.

"All those who have come from China after 15th January, 2020 shall be tested as there in an incubation period for the virus," the health ministry said in a statement. The Cabinet Secretary has stressed upon the need for 14 days' home isolation for all those who have returned from China, the statement said, adding that it is also advised that trip to China should be avoided.

Coronavirus scare: Health dept overlooks WHO protocol

January 30, 2020/The Times of India



Amid growing concern over deadly coronavirus outbreak across the globe, including India, it seems the state health department officials are not bothered about the WHO protocol. They are busy discussing about 'mild' and 'severe' strain of coronavirus, even as emerging global threat Novel Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) has claimed over 100 lives so far. Assuming that the suspected patient from Ujjain suffered only 'mild' infection, the officials only sent two specimens (swab sample and serum) to NIV Pune. The Ujjain patient was declared negative for coronavirus virus on Wednesday, but the Union government's National Centre of Disease Control (NCDC) deputy director Dr Suhas Dhandore later said that complete sampling guidelines should have been followed by the MP health department. Thereafter, joint director (disease surveillance) Dr Rajesh Kathal said, "The Ujjain patient will be kept in quarantine for 28 days. I will ask the state surveillance officer for testing protocol received from the Union government." He admitted that the patient's blood samples is sent to NIV, if patient is considered critical. "We do not know how the body is secreting the viruses. This is Novel virus. On the basis of information gathered so far, the WHO has recommended that body fluids need to be collected so that could we have correct information," said NIV Pune scientist B and coronavirus nodal officer Dr Sumit Bhadwaj. Union ministry of health and **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** adopted WHO guidelines for MERS-CoV includes testing of six specimens from suspected patients.

Refrain from travelling to China: India tells its citizens

January 30, 2020/The Times of India

A few days ago, India had issued a travel advisory to its citizens asking them to take certain health precautions during their visit to China to avoid getting infected by the Coronavirus. However, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has now revised its travel advisory taking into account the worsening state of health affairs in China. According to the news reports, in the wake of more cases of Novel Coronavirus (nCoV) being reported in China, India has asked its citizens to avoid visiting the Republic of China. Formerly, the advisory written by the ministry said that travel-related cases of Coronavirus are appearing in several countries, and it is advised that all non-essential travel to China is best avoided. Now, the ministry has clearly asked Indians to refrain from travelling to China. Airlines in India that operate flights to Southeast Asia have directed the cabin crew members and pilots to wear N95 masks and abide by all possible precautionary measures. A few flights have also been cancelled. Reportedly, IndiGo will temporarily stall the operations of its Delhi-Chengdu daily flight from February 1 to 20, 2020, and the Bengaluru-Hong Kong flight. In addition, the airline is avoiding any layover for its staff in China. So far, the 27 samples tested at **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)**'s National Institute of Virology laboratory in Pune have come out as negative.

[First Indian case of coronavirus in Kerala](#)

January 30, 2020/Live Mint



India on Thursday reported its first case of novel coronavirus, putting the focus on the extent of preparedness in the world's second-most populous nation to deal with a virus that has wreaked havoc in neighbouring China and is spreading swiftly across the world. An Indian student of Wuhan University in China tested positive in Kerala, the health ministry said. Wuhan, the capital of Hubei province in central China, is the epicentre of the outbreak. But the infection has spread to all 31 provinces of China, killing 170 people and infecting another 7,711. Across the world, it has been reported in 21 countries, including India. The Indian case was announced as experts at the World Health Organization prepared to meet late on Thursday night (IST) to decide whether to declare the outbreak a global epidemic. The **Indian Council of Medical Research**-National Institute of Virology (ICMR-NIV), Pune has so far tested 49 samples. "The only positive sample so far belongs to a student from Kerala, who was studying in Wuhan, China. Now a next-gen sequencing test will be done on her sample and the final result will be declared by tomorrow evening. Per day a total of 9-10 samples are received at NIV for testing. All facilities and capacity are available for testing of samples at NIV and it takes a day to test a sample for coronavirus," said ICMR-NIV director Priya Abraham. With the virus having entered India, monitoring and surveillance will have to be stepped up to prevent its further spread, public health experts said. "As there is no vaccine or drug available against the virus, the cases are managed according to their symptoms. N-CoV is fatal but exact fatality is not estimated and how the virus will behave in the new population is also not known. Therefore, prevention and strict surveillance is very important in India," said Jugal Kishore, director professor and head of department-community medicine at Vardhman Mahavir Medical College and Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi.

[Novel coronavirus: 2 new suspected cases in Hyderabad](#)

January 31, 2020/The New Indian Express

Two new suspected cases of Coronavirus have been admitted to isolation wards at Fever Hospital and Gandhi Hospital. The swab samples of both these suspected patients have been collected and been sent to NIV, Pune. The State is expecting the testing kits from the Centre for the **ICMR** lab at Gandhi Hospital by Friday. The five previous patients have been discharged as they did not have any visible symptoms, however, the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme continues to monitor them at their residences. Dr G Srinivas Rao, director, Public Health, told Express, "Once the test kits are received, we will have to run a standardization cycle. After that, we can officially start the testing here." Recent patient is a software engineer in Shanghai Speaking to Express, the lone 29-year-old patient at Fever Hospital said, "I am a software engineer in Shanghai. I returned from Shanghai via Malaysia to Hyderabad on Wednesday. I was thermal screened at both the airports." He added, "However, I developed a sore throat on Thursday and therefore, came to Fever Hospital myself." The isolation ward at the hospital carries a sombre look, as many of the exhausted attendants choose to sit outside the ward with their masks and protective gear off. The dimly lit ward, carries a sterile smell. One of the attendants at the isolation ward in Fever Hospital said, "Due to the fear of contracting the virus, we visit the patient during treatment times only, or when required. However, we do not sit inside the ward, because constantly wearing a mask is exhausting.

With regards,



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