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States/UTs to send samples of COVID-19 positive cases to INSACOG labs to track new variants

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Highly transmissible BF.7 strain of Omicron variant found to be behind a wider surge of COVID-19 infections in China



Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare chaired a high-level meeting to review the COVID-19 situation in India and preparedness of public health system for surveillance, containment and management of COVID-19 in view of the recent spike in cases of COVID-19 in some countries along with Dr Bharati Pravin Pawar, Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare.

Dr Mansukh Mandaviya directed for strengthening the surveillance system for whole genome sequencing of positive case samples to track the variants through Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) network to ensure timely detection of newer variants, if any, circulating in the country.

This would facilitate undertaking of appropriate public health measures. States/UTs have been requested to send samples of all COVID-19 positive cases to INSACOG Genome Sequencing Laboratories (IGSLs) on a daily basis, for sequencing, to track new variants, if any.

A new and highly transmissible BF.7 strain of the Omicron variant has been found to be behind a wider surge of COVID-19 infections in China.

Union Health Ministry has already issued “Operational Guidelines for Revised Surveillance Strategy in context of COVID-19” in June 2022 which calls for early detection, isolation, testing and timely management of suspected and confirmed cases to detect and contain outbreaks of new SARS-CoV-2 variants. Union Health Minister directed officials for ensuring effective implementation of the same.