

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1556
TO BE ANSWERED ON 14.03.2023**

PEOPLE INFECTED BY NEW COVID-19 VARIANTS

**1556 DR. L. HANUMANTHAI AH:
SHRI DIGVIJAYA SINGH:
SMT. RANJEET RANJAN:**

Will the **MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- (a) details about all new COVID-19 variants that have been found in the country during the last four months;
- (b) the number of people infected by each new variant, and the number of patients died due to new COVID-19 variants, State-wise in the last four months; and
- (c) the reasons for not imposing a travel ban on China despite the spread of the new variants of COVID-19?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE
(DR. BHARATI PRAVIN PAWAR)**

(a) to (c): Given the emergence of variants of COVID-19 virus with variable transmissibility and their possible health implications, Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) network laboratories conducts whole genome sequencing of samples for detection of mutant variants of the virus.

Omicron and its sub-lineages is the dominant SARS-CoV-2 variants in India. During the last four months, more than 1900 Omicron sub-variants have been detected amongst the samples analysed by the INSACOG across the country.

In light of increasing trajectory of COVID-19 cases noted in China, Singapore, Hong Kong, Republic of Korea, Thailand and Japan, an additional requirement of pre-departure testing and uploading of negative COVID-19 RT-PCR test reports and self-health declaration form on Air Suvidha portal was made mandatory in the past for travellers coming from/transiting via these countries. However, based on declining COVID-19 trajectory in these countries, an updated guideline issued on 10th February, 2023, wherein the additional requirements were dropped.

2% of the total passengers in all incoming international flights are required to undergo post arrival COVID-19 testing, irrespective of port of departure to monitor positive cases and their variants.
