

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

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1381  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10.02.2023**

**NEW VARIANTS OF COVID-19**

**1381. SHRI KUMBAKUDI SUDHAKARAN:  
SHRI BENNY BEHANAN:  
PROF. SOUGATA RAY:  
DR. MOHAMMAD JAWED:**

Will the **Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- a) the details of all new COVID-19 variants that have been detected in the country during the last 60 days;
- b) the number of people infected by each new variant, during the last 60 days, State/UT-wise; and
- c) the reasons for not imposing a travel ban on people from various high risk countries including 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, Union Ministry of Health is following COVID-19 trajectory globally and in the country along with various expert committees. In addition, Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) network laboratories conducts whole genome sequencing of samples for detection of mutant variants of the virus.

During the last 60 days, more than 90 new variants have been detected amongst the samples analysed by the INSACOG across the country. Omicron and its sub-lineages continue to be the dominant variants in India. Of these, XBB, BQ are the most prevalent lineages circulating in the country.

In light of increasing trajectory of COVID-19 cases noted in some countries across the world, the 'Guidelines for International Arrivals' was last updated on 29<sup>th</sup> December, 2022, wherein 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 has been made mandatory for travellers coming from/transiting via China, Singapore, Hong Kong, Republic of Korea, Thailand and Japan. Besides this, a sub-section (2% of the total passengers in all incoming international

flights) shall undergo random post arrival testing at the airport on arrival, irrespective of port of departure.

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