

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 219
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.02.2024**

NEW VARIANT OF COVID-19

219. SHRI RAVNEET SINGH BITTU:

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

- a) whether the cases of new Covid-19 variant J.N.1 have been increasing in the country during the last six months and in recent times especially in the State of Punjab;
- b) if so, the details thereof, month-wise and State/UT-wise;
- c) whether the Government has taken/proposes to take any measures/steps to check the spread of the new Covid variant and also to provide better medical facilities to the covid patients in the country; and
- d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE
(PROF. S. P. SINGH BAGHEL)**

(a) and (b): Cases of JN.1 variant of SARS-CoV-2 virus were first reported in the country in the month of November, 2023. Since then a gradual increase in Covid-19 cases due to the variant has been reported from various States/UTs. State/UT wise details of Covid-19 cases due to JN.1 variant as on 28th January, 2024 is at **Annexure**.

(c) and (d): Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare continues to monitor the Covid-19 trajectory in the country as well as globally. Overall, the trajectory of Covid-19 cases in the country witnessed a slight upsurge last week of November, 2023 which peaked around late December, 2023 and is currently on the decline. As on 29th January, 2024, as reported by States/UTs, a total of 1460 cases of Covid-19 are active in the country, of which almost 85% are reported to be mild and under home isolation.

To strengthen disease surveillance and monitor disease trends including Covid-19 and its variants, Government of India has strengthened Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) which monitors outbreak prone diseases and institutes requisite public health measures. Similarly, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has established a network of more than 150 Virus Research and Diagnostic Laboratories (VRDLs) for timely laboratory based confirmation of pathogens.

Funding support has been provided to States/UTs for health system strengthening to meet any exigency due to public health emergencies like pandemics through National Health Mission.

With the long-term goal to better prepare our country against public health emergencies, Pradhan Mantri – Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM) has been launched with the intent to enhance the capacity of primary, secondary and tertiary health care facilities/systems and institutes for identifying and managing any new and emerging diseases.

Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare through series of formal communications as well as virtual meetings, has advised all States/UTs to:

- Enhance Covid-19 surveillance across as per the 'Operational Guidelines for Revised Surveillance Strategy in context of COVID-19' issued by the Ministry.
- Ensure ramping up of RT-PCR based Covid-19 testing.
- Refer adequate number of positive Covid-19 samples to the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) network of laboratories for Whole Genome Sequencing (WGS) to ensure timely detection of newer variant of virus.
- Monitor emerging evidences of Covid-19 cases, symptoms & case severity as well as to take stock of available health infrastructure including availability of hospitals beds, ventilators, ICU, medical oxygen, drugs, trained human resource etc. to enable timely and appropriate treatment of Covid-19 cases.

State/UT wise details of COVID-19 cases due to JN.1 variant (as on 28th January, 2024)

S. No.	State/UT	Total
1	Maharashtra	451
2	Karnataka	399
3	Andhra Pradesh	207
4	Kerala	155
5	Tamil Nadu	92
6	West Bengal	92
7	Goa	91
8	Gujarat	80
9	Delhi	59
10	Rajasthan	30
11	Telangana	27
12	Chhattisgarh	25
13	Uttar Pradesh	7
14	Haryana	5
15	Odisha	3
16	Madhya Pradesh	1
17	Uttarakhand	1