

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2661
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21ST DECEMBER, 2021**

WEEKLY TESTING RATES OF COVID-19

**2661. SHRI Y.S. CHOWDARY:
SHRI M. SHANMUGAM:
SHRI VAIKO:**

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

- (a) whether there is decline in the weekly testing rates of COVID-19 in various States amid positivity rates;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the efforts made to increase testing and genome sequencing in various States; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

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

(a) & (b) The World Health Organization's document titled "Considerations for implementing and adjusting public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19: Interim Guidance" dated 14th June 2021, states that the number of persons tested per 1000 population per week (averaged over a 2-week period) is a measure of public health response capacity, and 4+ is considered Adequate, 1-<4 is considered Moderate, while <1 is considered Limited. A minimum recommended rate of testing is 1 person tested per 1000 population per week.

The number of persons tested per 1000 population per week in India over the past 4 weeks is as follows:

- i. 7-13 November, 2021:- 6.12 persons/1000 population aged 18 years and above
- ii. 14-20 November, 2021:- 5.86 persons/1000 population aged 18 years and above

- iii. 21-27 November, 2021:- 5.64 persons/1000 population aged 18 years and above
- iv. 28 November-4 December, 2021:- 5.75 persons/1000 population aged 18 years and above

(c) & (d) A total of 3092 molecular based COVID-19 testing laboratories have been approved, as on 15/12/2021, to test viral samples for COVID-19. Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has setup 12 mentor institutes to expedite the approval process for labs applying for COVID-19 testing. The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has sent letters to all states to ramp up testing.

Government of India has also established an Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Surveillance Consortium (INSACOG) for genomic sequencing and tracking the evolution of variant strains of SARS-CoV-2. As of now, INSACOG has a total of thirty-eight (38) INSACOG Genome Sequencing Laboratories (IGSLs) spread across the country which are involved in the genome sequencing of COVID-19 viral (SARS-CoV-2) samples.
