



DAILY NEWS BULLETIN

LEADING HEALTH, POPULATION AND FAMILY WELFARE STORIES OF THE DA

Wednesday

20210217

National Covid cases

National Covid cases fall below 10,000 for fourth time in February (The Tribune: 20210217)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/coronavirus/national-covid-cases-fall-below-10-000-for-fourth-time-in-february-213163>

Fresh fatalities remain below 100 for tenth time this month

The daily new infections fell below 10,000 for the fourth time this month taking India's tally of Covid cases to 1,09,25,710, while fresh fatalities remained below 100 for the tenth time this month, according to Union health ministry data updated on Tuesday.

A total of 9,121 new cases were reported in a day, while the death toll increased to 1,55,813 with 81 new fatalities, the data updated at 8 am showed.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 1,06,33,025 which translates to a national Covid recovery rate of 97.32 per cent, while the Covid case fatality rate stands at 1.43 per cent.

The Covid active caseload remained below 1.5 lakh.

There are 1,36,872 active coronavirus infections in the country which comprise 1.25 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated.

According to ICMR, 20,73,32,298 samples have been tested up to February 15 with 6,15,664 samples being tested on Monday.

The 81 new fatalities include 23 from Maharashtra, 13 from Kerala and 10 from Punjab.

A total of 1,55,813 deaths have been reported so far in the country, including 51,552 from Maharashtra, followed by 12,425 from Tamil Nadu, 12,267 from Karnataka, 10,893 from Delhi, 10,233 from West Bengal, 8,704 from Uttar Pradesh and 7,163 from Andhra Pradesh.

Vaccine dose

4,097 get 2nd vaccine dose (The Tribune: 20210217)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/coronavirus/4-097-get-2nd-vaccine-dose-213058>

With 5,243 beneficiaries of the first dose and 4,097 of the second, the cumulative coverage of Covid vaccine in the Haryana has reached 2.10 lakh.

Chandigarh: With 5,243 beneficiaries of the first dose and 4,097 of the second, the cumulative coverage of Covid vaccine in the state has reached 2.10 lakh. The state recorded 108 fresh cases on Monday. Jhajjar and Mahendragarh remain Covid-free while no fresh case came from four districts. TNS

A 28-year-old advocate, Pulkit of Ambala Cantt, died after his car fell into Gudgudiya drain here on Sunday night. Fog is suspected to be the reason behind the incident. The matter came to light early on Monday morning. The police reached the spot and fished out his car. Meanwhile, the bar association kept the work suspended on Monday. TNS

A 10-year-old boy, Vishal of Shivaji Nagar, strangled himself to death while playing with a scarf at home. The incident took place around 11 am on Sunday. The family rushed the boy to a nearby hospital, but doctors declared him brought dead. The police said the family didn't blame anybody. OC

The police have arrested two persons — Nishant and Vikas, alias Vicky, both of Krishna Colony — and recovered over 52 kg of 'ganja' in two separate incidents. The 'ganja' was worth around Rs5.2 lakh. The accused were remanded in judicial custody on Monday. A hunt has been launched to nab those involved in the racket. TNS

A Swift Dzire caught fire on the NH-44 near Sewah bypass on Monday noon. Mohit of Manana village escaped unhurt. Mohit was on his way to bank when he noticed smoke coming out of the engine. He immediately parked the vehicle on the roadside and came out of it. TNS

173 health workers

173 health workers get 2nd jab in Panchkula (The Tribune: 20210217)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/coronavirus/173-health-workers-get-2nd-jab-in-panchkula-212943>

The process of administering the second dose of the Covid vaccine began at several centres in the district today. A total of 173 healthcare workers turned up for getting the second dose. The number of overall beneficiaries — for both first and second dose — was 543. The district exceeded its target of vaccinating 535 beneficiaries.

The coverage rate stood at 101.49 per cent. The health officers who received the second dose included Suraj Bhan Kamboj, Director General, Health Services; VK Bansal, Director, Maternal and Child Health Programme (Haryana); Parveen Sethi, Director, Dental Department (Haryana); Dr Suvir Saxena, Principal Medical Officer, Civil Hospital; Dr Meenu Sasan, District Immunisation Officer; Dr Sanjeev Goyal, SMO, Community Health Centre, Raipur Rani; and Dr Mankirat, Consultant, Civil Hospital.

As many as 8,705 beneficiaries — 4,328 healthcare workers and 4,377 frontline workers — have been vaccinated in the district so far. — TNS

4 SA variant cases

4 SA variant cases found, 1 with strain from Brazil (The Tribune: 20210217)

<https://epaper.hindustantimes.com/Home/ArticleView>

Four people who flew into India last month were infected with the South African variant of the Sars-CoV-2 virus, and another traveller was found infected with the Brazilian variant, the Union health ministry said on Tuesday, announcing the detection of the two mutations that scientists fear can make coronavirus vaccines less effective and trigger reinfections among people.

Authorities have carried out contact tracing for the five people, and no other person is found to have contracted the new variants till now, Union health secretary Rajesh Bhushan said at the weekly government briefing on Covid-19 in the Capital. People returning from these countries will now be tested more aggressively, he added.

“There are no direct flights from South Africa or Brazil, so the health ministry and the civil aviation ministry are in touch on the steps to be taken on the matter,” Bhushan said, while refusing to give details about which airport the five people arrived at or their location at present in order to protect their privacy.

India now has all three of the coronavirus variants that are a global concern -- B.1.1.7, first discovered in the UK; B.1.351, which is now dominant in South Africa; and P.1, which has spread in Brazil. All three have a unique collection of mutations, two of which -- N501Y and E484K -- seem to make it spread more readily or cheat vaccine-immunity triggered by the virus predominant in the world. The UK variant carries the N501Y mutation, the Brazilian variant has the E484K mutation, and the South African variant has both.

Bhushan indicated that genomic tests of all positive cases among people who arrive from Brazil and South Africa are likely to be carried out. “We got genome sequencing done of all those who were found positive among those tested for the UK variant. This strategy worked significantly well, and most likely the same strategy we will apply for flights coming from South Africa and Brazil,” he said.

But, he added, passengers from South Africa and Brazil do not take direct flights. “The traffic is largely routed from other sectors; for example, the Gulf sector. So, to have measures that can be put in place for passengers coming from these two countries, the Union health and civil aviation ministries are in constant touch and should come up with a solution soon that will be made public,” he said.

The South African strains were found among two people who returned from the country as well as one traveller each from Angola and Tanzania.

“All travellers and contacts have been tested and quarantined, and ICMR-National Institute of Virology is attempting to isolate and culture the South Africa variant strain from the samples of these four individuals,” said Dr Balram Bhargava, director general, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

The South African and Brazil variants are different from the UK variant because the Brazilian and South African variants have the capacity to easily enter the lungs, Bhargava said.

Last year, the Union government created the Indian Sars-Cov-2 Genomic Consortium (INSACOG) of 10 laboratories based at the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), Union ministry of health and family welfare, as part of a surveillance mechanism for early detection of variants of concern.

“For the UK variant, we have found 187 such variants. We were able to isolate the virus and culture the strain and have also tested the efficacy of the Covid-19 vaccine. Neutralising potential with the UK variant is there with the vaccine that is in use in India,” Bhargava added.

Such experiments in South Africa have showed that the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine’s efficacy dropped to an insignificant 22% against the B.1.351 variant. The country dropped its plan last week to use the vaccine, which is also being used in India as Covishield, and has decided to

offer doses to the African Union, where the variant has not reached. Vaccine trials carried out by Johnson & Johnson-Janssen and Novavax too showed a significant drop in efficacy due to the variant.

Similar implications could also hold for people who were previously infected. World Health Organization chief scientist Soumya Swaminathan said on February 14 that WHO had received new reports of reinfection, including some from South Africa where people who had Covid-19 were infected again.

The coronavirus outbreak has waned dramatically in India and over the past week, the country recorded around 93 deaths a day -- a level not seen since early May. The decrease has raised fears that people might become complacent, and that variants such as the three of global concern could take hold, wiping out population immunity and triggering a resurgence.

According to ICMR, experiments to assess vaccine effectiveness against this strain are currently underway. "The significance of a mutation will depend on where the mutation has happened, as mutations in RNA viruses happen all the time. It will be significant if the mutations help the virus to attach to the cell easily as then it will impact the disease spread," said Dr Shobha Broor, former head, microbiology department, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi.

2 Covid

2 Covid clusters emerge in K'taka, new curbs imposed Those arriving from Kerala to the state to mandatorily produce -ve test reports; 150 positive in two areas (Hindustan Times: 20210217)

Covid-19 spike in Bengaluru

After a decline in the number of the coronavirus disease cases in Bengaluru over the last three months, two new clusters have become a cause for concern

NEW CLUSTERS

42 STUDENTS

At Manjushree college of nursing in RT Nagar tested positive on February 13. While some students have been asked to self-isolate inside the hostel, 18 have been admitted to Victoria Hospital for treatment. Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike commissioner N Manjunatha Prasad visited the campus on Sunday and ordered that the premises be sealed.

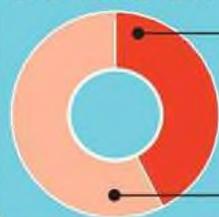
103 RESIDENTS

Of SNN Raj Lake View apartment in Bommanhalli tested positive for Covid-19 on February 16. According to officials, tests were conducted for as many as 1,058 residents after a gathering was held in the apartment's clubhouse. Six BBMP teams have been deployed in the apartment complex to test the remaining residents.

NEW RESTRICTIONS

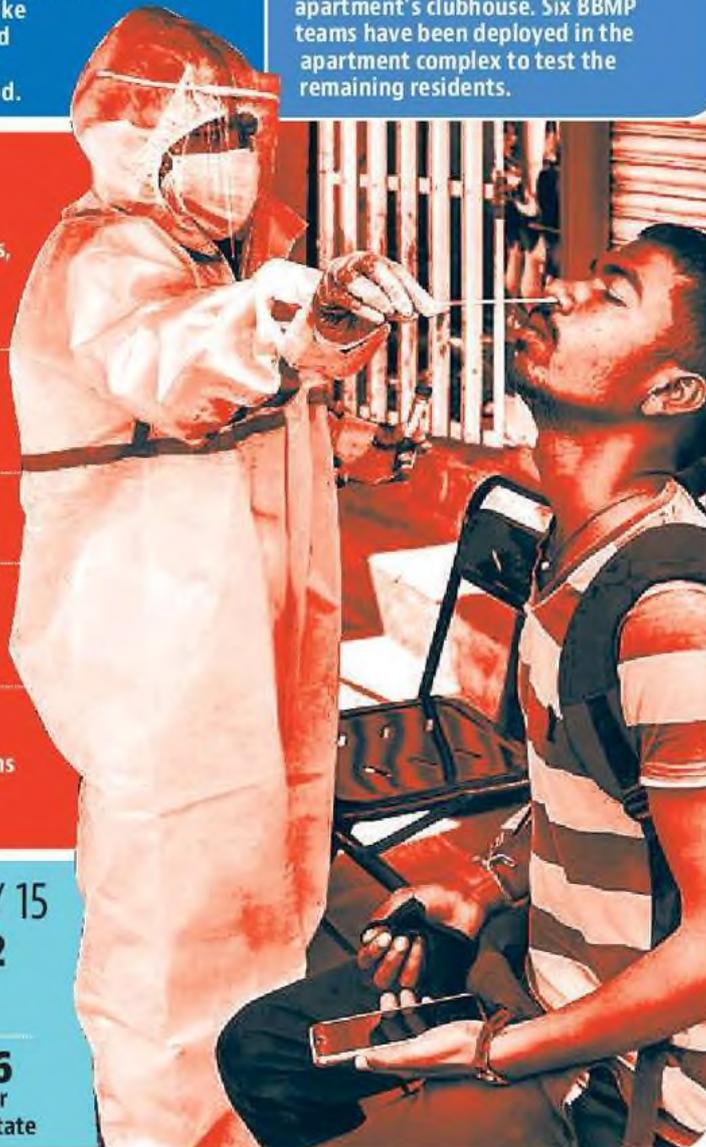
- All those arriving from Kerala and checking into hostels, resorts, hotels, etc have been asked to produce a negative RT-PCR certificate not older than 72 hours.
- Those who have arrived from Kerala in the past two weeks shall compulsorily be subjected to RT-PCR test.
- Students living in hostels here have been asked to avoid travelling to Kerala
- A list of students travelling to and from Kerala to hostels and colleges should be maintained by a competent authority
- The government has decided to declare any hostels, boarding or residential, educational institutions with a cluster of 5 or more cases, a containment zone

CASES AS ON FEBRUARY 15



402,212
cases in
Bengaluru

543,426
cases in other
districts of state



The Karnataka government on Tuesday imposed travel restrictions on those arriving from neighbouring Kerala after two Covid-19 clusters were recently reported in Bengaluru.

Officials of civic body Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) are on their toes after 42 students from a nursing college in RT Nagar, where a large section of students are from Kerala, and 103 residents of an apartment in Bommanhalli recently tested positive for Covid-19.

The development came at a time when Covid cases in the city were steadily declining. On Monday, the civic body called the two clusters “isolated incidents” even as new restrictions came into place on Tuesday.

“All those arriving from Kerala and checking into hotels, resorts, hostels, homestays, dormitories, etc. shall compulsorily produce a negative RT-PCR certificate that is not older than 72 hours. Owners of the above-mentioned places should ensure that the occupants produce negative RT-PCR certificate,” a government circular said.

It added that those who have arrived from Kerala in the past two weeks shall compulsorily be subjected to the gold-standard RT-PCR (reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction) test to detect a possible infection.

“Students from Kerala who reside in hostels shall avoid frequently travelling to their home state unless it is strongly justified. Such students returning from Kerala shall bring a negative RT-PCR test report that is not more than 72 hours old. Employees working in multi-national companies, hotels, resorts, lodges and homestays in Karnataka should get the RT-PCR test done at their own cost,” the circular added.

The government also decided to declare any hostel, boarding house, residence or educational institute with a cluster of five or more cases a containment zone.

The circular came after 42 students of Manjushree College of Nursing tested positive for the Sars-Cov-2 virus on Saturday. Eighteen students from this college have been admitted to Victoria Hospital for treatment, while the rest have been asked to self-isolate in the hostel.

In the second cluster in SNN Raj Lake View apartment, the number of cases shot up to 103 Tuesday with authorities testing 1,058 residents. Officials suspect a function held in the apartment clubhouse led to the spread.

BBMP commissioner Manjunath Prasad on Tuesday spoke with Residents’ Welfare Associations (RWAs) in the city. He said the emergence of the clusters was a wake-up call for Bengaluru. “Bengaluru has come a long way in the fight against Covid by bringing the numbers from 6,000 cases per day to 100-200 cases per day. We want to contain any further spread. He said there is no need for panic,” he said.

New Cases (The Asian Age: 20210217)

<http://onlinepaper.asianage.com/articledetailpage.aspx?id=15414079>

■ Corona numbers continue to fall, active cases now 1,036

Covid: Delhi records 94 new cases, lowest in over 9 mnths

New Delhi, Feb. 16: Delhi recorded 94 fresh Covid cases on Tuesday, the lowest in over nine months, while the positivity rate slipped to 0.17 per cent in the city, authorities said.

One fatality was also registered, taking the death toll due to the viral disease to 10,894 in the national capital, according to the latest health bulletin issued by the Delhi government.

Delhi had recorded 96 coronavirus cases on January 27, which was the lowest then in over nine months and the first time that the daily cases' count was below the 100-mark in that month.

No death due to coronavirus was recorded in the city on Saturday, the second time in February when the single-day fatality count was nil.

On February 9, no fatality from the coronavirus infection was registered in the national capital after a gap of nearly nine months.



Sanitation workers receive the first dose of Covaxin vaccine at Hindu Rao Hospital in New Delhi on Tuesday. — PTI

The fatality count was two on February 2, 5 and 7.

The 94 cases were detected in the 56,944 tests conducted the previous day, according to the bulletin.

The coronavirus case tally has climbed to 6,37,181 in the city, the authorities said, adding that the positivity rate has further declined to 0.17 per cent.

Delhi recorded 141 coro-

navirus cases and two deaths due to the disease on Monday, while the positivity rate stood at 0.36 per cent.

The tally of active cases slightly rose to 1,036 on Tuesday from 1,031 the previous day, according to the bulletin.

The total number of tests conducted the previous day included 34,679 RT-PCR tests and 22,265 rapid antigen tests, the bulletin said. — PTI

Noida: 6 fresh cases recorded

Noida (UP), Feb. 16: Uttar Pradesh's Gautam Buddha Nagar recorded six new cases of coronavirus on Tuesday that pushed the district's infection tally to 25,442, official data showed.

The active cases in the district rose to 43 from 42 the previous day, according to the data released by the UP Health Department for a 24-hour period.

Another five patients were discharged during the period, with the overall recoveries reaching 25,308, the fifth-highest in the state.

Gautam Buddha Nagar has a death toll of 91, with a mortality rate of 0.35 per cent. The recovery rate of patients remained at 99.47 per cent, the statistics showed. — PTI

WHO (The Asian Age: 20210217)

<http://onlinepaper.asianage.com/article/detailpage.aspx?id=15414436>

AstraZeneca vax gets WHO nod

Toronto, Feb. 16: The World Health Organisation has granted an emergency authorisation to AstraZeneca's Coronavirus vaccine, a move that should allow the UN agency's partners to ship millions of doses to countries as part of a UN-backed programme to tame the pandemic.

In a statement Monday, the WHO said it was clearing the AstraZeneca vaccines made by the Serum Institute of India and South Korea's AstraZeneca-SKBio. The WHO's green light for the AstraZeneca vaccine is only the second one the UN health agency has issued after authorizing the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine in December.

Monday's announcement should trigger the delivery of hundreds of millions of doses to countries that have signed up for the UN-backed COVAX effort, which aims to deliver vaccines to the world's most vulnerable people. "Countries with no access to vaccines to date will finally be able to start vaccinating their health workers and populations at risk," said Dr. Mariangela Simao, the WHO's Assistant-Director General for Access to Medicines and Health Products.

The Coronavirus has infected more than 109 million people and killed at least 2.4 million of them. But many countries have not yet started vaccination programmes and even rich nations are facing shortages of vaccine doses as manufacturers struggle to ramp up production. The AstraZeneca vaccine has already been authorised in more than 50 countries, including Britain, India, Argentina and Mexico. It is cheaper and easier to handle than the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, which needs deep-cold storage that is not widespread in many developing nations.

Both vaccines require two shots per person, given weeks apart. Last week, WHO vaccine experts recommended the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine for people over age 18, including in countries that have detected variants of Covid-19.

But that was contrary to the recommendation from the African Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which said countries that had identified a virus variant first seen in South Africa should be "cautious" in their use of the AstraZeneca vaccine, suggesting that other shots be prioritised instead. — AP

Health Cards (Hindustan: 20210217)

https://epaper.livehindustan.com/imageview_644291_86075366_4_1_17-02-2021_3_i_1_sf.html

तैयारी: अगस्त से हेल्थ कार्ड की सुविधा मिलेगी

नई दिल्ली | वरिष्ठ संवाददाता

दिल्ली सरकार अगस्त से राजधानी के लोगों को हेल्थ कार्ड जारी करेगी। इसकी शुरुआत सरकारी अस्पताल से होगी। इसे लेकर सरकार की ओर से निविदा जारी कर दी गई है। इसके तहत दिल्ली वालों का हेल्थ रिकॉर्ड सरकार के पास होगा। सभी अस्पताल भी आपस में लिंक होंगे।

एक वरिष्ठ अधिकारी के मुताबिक, सरकार ने हेल्थ इनफॉर्मेशन मैनेजमेंट के तहत अपने अस्पताल, पॉली क्लिनिक और डिस्पेंसरी को क्लाउड सर्वर के जरिए जोड़ने की योजना पर काम शुरू कर दिया है। इसकी निविदा प्रक्रिया पूरी की जा चुकी है। मुख्यमंत्री केजरीवाल खुद योजना की निगरानी कर रहे हैं। अभी तक योजना के दो से अधिक समीक्षा बैठकें भी कर चुके हैं। सरकार के मुताबिक स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं से जुड़ी सभी जानकारी एक जगह क्लाउड सर्वर पर उपलब्ध होगी, जिससे

ई कार्ड भी जारी होगा

अस्पतालों, पॉली क्लिनिक, डिस्पेंसरी को आपस में लिंक करने के साथ सरकार दिल्लीवालों के लिए ई-हेल्थ कार्ड भी जारी करेगी। इसमें एक व्यक्ति अगर किसी सरकारी अस्पताल में दिखाने जाता है तो उसकी सभी जानकारी भी क्लाउड सर्वर पर उपलब्ध होगी। अगर वह दूसरे सरकारी अस्पताल में जाता है तो उसकी बीमारी के इतिहास को ट्रैक किया जा सकेगा। इससे बेहतर इलाज देने में आसानी होगी। सरकार अस्पतालों को लिंक करने के साथ इसपर भी काम कर रही है।

पता चलेगा कि किस अस्पताल में क्या सुविधा है। पहले चरण में इससे सिर्फ दिल्ली सरकार के अंतर्गत आने वाले स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं की जानकारी उपलब्ध होगी। उसके बाद निजी अस्पतालों को जोड़ने पर काम होगा।

Infection ((Hindustan: 20210217)

https://epaper.livehindustan.com/imageview_644294_85849874_4_1_17-02-2021_5_i_1_sf.html

पिछले साल एक अप्रैल को मिले थे 32 मामले

एक अप्रैल के बाद सबसे कम संक्रमित मिले



नई दिल्ली | वरिष्ठ संवाददाता

दिल्ली में मंगलवार को 94 नए संक्रमितों की पुष्टि हुई है। एक अप्रैल 2020 के बाद मंगलवार को सबसे कम कोरोना संक्रमित मिले हैं। इससे पहले एक अप्रैल को दिल्ली में 32 कोरोना संक्रमित मिले थे। इस साल दूसरी बार कोरोना के मामले एक दिन में 100 से कम आए हैं।

इससे पहले 27 जनवरी को 96 नए संक्रमितों की पुष्टि हुई थी। स्वास्थ्य

100 से कम कोरोना संक्रमित इस साल दूसरी बार मिले दिल्ली में

24 घंटे में आए 94 मामले, एक व्यक्ति की कोरोना के चलते मौत हुई

विभाग के अनुसार मंगलवार को 94 नए मामले सामने आए। सोमवार को दिल्ली में 56944 टेस्ट हुए जिसमें 0.17 फीसदी मरीज संक्रमित पाए गए। दिल्ली में मंगलवार को 110 मरीजों को छुट्टी दी गई, जबकि एक मरीज ने कोरोना के कारण दम तोड़ दिया। दिल्ली में कोरोना के संक्रमित मरीज 637181 हो गए हैं। इनमें से 625268 मरीज कोरोना से ठीक हो चुके हैं। इनमें से 10894 ने कोरोना के कारण दम तोड़ दिया है।

Single Covax dose

Single Covax dose may strengthen immune system of patients (New Kerala: 20210217)

<https://www.newkerala.com/news/2021/28439.htm>

People previously infected with the novel coronavirus responded very strongly to one dose of the Pfizer vaccine, regardless of when they were infected and whether or not they had detectable antibodies against Covid-19 prior to receiving the vaccine, a new study suggests.

According to the researchers, the strong response to one dose of the vaccine among those previously infected regardless of the duration between infection and vaccination is good news

"This finding can help countries make informed decisions regarding vaccine policy -- for instance, whether those previously infected should be vaccinated on priority and, if so, with how many doses," said researcher Michael Edelstein from the Bar-Ilan University.

"It also offers reassurance that not having detectable antibodies after being infected does not necessarily mean that protection following infection is lost," Edelstein added.

For the study, published in the journal Eurosurveillance, the research team included 514 participants. Seventeen of them were infected with Covid-19 anytime between one and ten months before receiving the first dose of the vaccine.

Antibody levels of the entire cohort were measured prior to vaccination and thereafter to determine response to the vaccine.

The response among those previously infected was so effective that it opens the debate as to whether one dose of the vaccine may suffice, the team said.

However, the researchers emphasise that their findings should be confirmed in a larger cohort before reaching definitive conclusions.

The researchers are continuing to follow healthcare workers after their second dose to better understand how long the vaccine will protect against Covid-19 in different groups of people. (IANS/18 hours ago) <https://www.newkerala.com/health-news.php>

Dementia

Mid-life CVD prevention may protect against later dementia New Kerala: 20210217)

<https://www.newkerala.com/news/2021/28407.htm>

Employing cardiovascular disease prevention strategies in mid-life may delay or stop the brain alterations that can lead to dementia in later life, a new study suggests.

The study, published in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology, found that atherosclerosis in mid-life can impact areas of the brain impacted by dementia.

Atherosclerosis, or buildup of fats, cholesterol and other substances in and on artery walls, is the underlying cause of most cardiovascular diseases, which is the leading cause of death around the world.

Dementia is also among the top causes of death and disability around the world, with 50 million people currently living with dementia, according to the researchers from the American College of Cardiology.

The presence of atherosclerosis has been linked to cognitive impairment in advanced stages of the disease, but little is known about how they influence each other, especially since both can be asymptomatic for long periods of time earlier in life, the team said.

For the study, the researchers included 547 participants from an atherosclerosis-based study and scanned them using 18F-fluorodeoxyglucose (FDG)-positron emission tomography (PET) scans.

The team sought to determine the association between brain metabolism, subclinical atherosclerosis and cardiovascular risk factors in asymptomatic, middle-aged adults.

They found that cardiovascular risk is associated with brain hypometabolism, including the cerebral areas known to be affected in dementia. Hypertension was the modifiable cardiovascular disease risk factor with the strongest association.

According to the researchers, these results underscore the need to control cardiovascular disease risk factors early in life to potentially reduce the brain's later vulnerability to cognitive dysfunction. (IANS/19 hours ago) <https://www.newkerala.com/health-news.php>