



DAILY NEWS BULLETIN

LEADING HEALTH, POPULATION AND FAMILY WELFARE STORIES OF THE DAY

Friday

2021101

WHO

Decision on Bharat Biotech's Covaxin EUL in October: WHO (The Tribune: 2021101)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/coronavirus/decision-on-bharat-biotechs-covaxin-eul-in-october-who-318263>

Bharat Biotech's Covaxin and AstraZeneca and Oxford University's Covishield are the two widely used vaccines in India

A decision on Bharat Biotech's submission seeking emergency use listing (EUL) for its Covaxin COVID-19 vaccine will be made in October, the World Health Organisation has said.

The status of assessment for Covaxin is "ongoing". Bharat Biotech had submitted EOI (Expression of Interest) on April 19 for its vaccine.

The latest 'Status of COVID-19 vaccines within WHO EUL/PQ evaluation process' guidance document dated September 29 on the WHO website said that the decision date for Bharat Biotech's Covaxin is "October 2021".

The WHO said it began rolling data of the vaccine on July 6. Rolling data allows the WHO to start its review right away, as information continues to come in, to accelerate the overall review process.

According to the WHO, submissions to WHO for prequalification or listing under the emergency use procedure are confidential.

If a product submitted for assessment is found to meet the criteria for listing, the WHO will publish the results widely.

Duration of the emergency use listing process depends on the quality of the data submitted by the vaccine manufacturer and on those data meeting WHO criteria, according to the agency.

Bharat Biotech's Covaxin and AstraZeneca and Oxford University's Covishield are the two widely used vaccines in India.

Bharat Biotech recently said it submitted all data pertaining to Covaxin to the WHO for EUL and is awaiting feedback from the global health watchdog.

"#COVAXIN clinical trial data was fully compiled & available in June 2021.

All Data submitted for Emergency Use Listing (EUL) Application to World Health Organization in early July. We have responded to any clarifications sought by #WHO and are awaiting further feedback," Bharat Biotech had tweeted earlier this month.

"We are diligently working with the WHO to obtain EUL at the earliest," the company had said on Tuesday. PTI

New Cases

India records 23,529 new Covid cases, 311 more deaths (The Tribune: 2021101)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/coronavirus/india-records-23-529-new-covid-cases-311-more-deaths-318249>

The national Covid recovery rate recorded at 97.85 per cent, the highest since March 2020

India recorded a single-day rise of 23,529 Covid cases on Thursday, taking its infection tally to 3,37,39,980, while the count of active cases dipped to 2,77,020, the lowest in 195 days, according to Union Health Ministry data.

The death toll due to the disease has climbed to 4,48,062 with 311 daily fatalities being recorded, according to the data updated at 8 am.

The number of active cases has declined to 2,77,020, comprising 0.82 per cent of the total infections—the lowest since March 2020, the ministry said.

The national Covid recovery rate was recorded at 97.85 per cent, the highest since March 2020, it added.

A decrease of 5,500 cases has been recorded in the active Covid caseload in a span of 24 hours.

Also, 15,06,254 Covid tests were conducted in the country on Wednesday, taking the total number of such examinations done so far to 56,89,56,439, the data showed.

The daily positivity rate was recorded at 1.56 per cent. It has been below three per cent for 31 days.

The weekly positivity rate was recorded at 1.74 per cent. This figure has been below three per cent for 97 days, according to the health ministry.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease has surged to 3,30,14,898, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.33 per cent.

The cumulative number of coronavirus vaccine doses administered in the country so far under the nationwide inoculation drive has exceeded 88.34 crore.

The 311 new fatalities include 155 from Kerala and 49 from Maharashtra.

A total of 4,48,062 deaths have been reported so far in the country, including 1,39,011 from Maharashtra, 37,780 from Karnataka, 35,550 from Tamil Nadu, 25,087 from Delhi, 24,965 from Kerala, 22,892 from Uttar Pradesh, and 18,778 from West Bengal. PTI

Vaccine (The Asian Age: 2021101)

<http://onlinepaper.asianage.com/article/detailpage.aspx?id=15870621>

Centre: ZyCoV-D to be introduced in vaccine drive soon

New Delhi, Sept. 30: The government on Thursday said Zydus Cadila's indigenously-developed needle-free Covid-19 vaccine ZyCoV-D will be introduced in the nationwide anti-coronavirus vaccination drive very shortly and would have a differential pricing than the jabs being used currently.

As far as the price at which it will be procured is concerned, Union health secretary Rajesh Bhushan told a press conference that the government is in talks with the manufacturer.

"As far as the price of the vaccine at which it will be procured is concerned, we are in conversations with the manufacturer. Since it is a three-dose vaccine and comes with a needleless deliv-

ery system, it would have a differential pricing than the existing vaccines that are being used in the Covid vaccination programme," he said.

"It will be introduced in the Covid-19 vaccination drive very shortly," Mr Bhushan added.

As regards the WHO (World Health Organisation) clearance for Covaxin, Indian Council of Medical Research director general Balram Bhargava said, "We know that scientific data, public health considerations and international health requirements are all considered on which the clearance is given by the WHO. All these have been provided and are being looked at. It will be decided by the World Health Organisation accordingly." — *PTI*

Pollution (The Asian Age: 2021101)

<http://onlinepaper.asianage.com/articledetailpage.aspx?id=15870443>



Three-wheelers ride past the mural with message on girl child education near ISBT in New Delhi on Monday. — G.N.JHA

'Delhi to be free of air, water and noise pollution in 3 yrs'

New Delhi, Sept. 30: The government will make the national capital free of air, water and noise pollution in the next three years, Union minister Nitin Gadkari said on Thursday, observing that pollution is the biggest concern for the country. Addressing the annual session of industry body PHDCCI, the road transport minister said that his ministry has spent ₹60,000 crore on road infrastructure development — an effort that also helped in reducing air pollution in Delhi.

"Air pollution, water pollution and noise pollution are major concerns for the country. We will make Delhi free of air, water and sound pollution in the next three years," he said.

Mr Gadkari said the road ministry is working on a proposal to shift all container depots and 1,700 godowns out of Delhi.

"In the next 15 days, we will be discussing that proposal with Delhi chief



Union minister for road transport & highways Nitin Gadkari addresses the 116th Annual Session of PHDCCI in New Delhi on Thursday. — PTI

minister Arvind Kejriwal and Delhi Development Authority (DDA)," he said.

Gadkari also said that the road ministry is also building logistics park of worth ₹1 lakh crore.

The minister said he has put forth his suggestion to Kejriwal to run only electric buses for the public transport purpose in Delhi. — PTI

Reduce number of vehicle trips to bring down pollution: Rai

New Delhi, Sept. 30: Delhi environment minister Gopal Rai on Thursday appealed to residents of the city to reduce the number of vehicle trips to help bring down vehicular pollution. The minister held a meeting with resident welfare associations, NGOs and eco clubs on pollution control measures being taken by the Delhi government. Senior officials from the Delhi Pollution Control Committee and the environment department attended it.

"We wanted to collect the feedback from these organisations on our efforts and seek their suggestions. Most of the people said that the 'Red light on Gaadi off' campaign should be continued," he told reporters. — PTI

New Cases (The Asian Age: 2021101)

<http://onlinepaper.asianage.com/articledetailpage.aspx?id=15870272>

India logs 23,529 Covid cases, 24% higher than Wed.

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 30

India recorded a single-day rise of 23,529 Covid-19 cases on Thursday, taking its infection tally to 3,37,39,980, while the count of active cases dipped to 2,77,020, the lowest in 195 days.

The death toll due to the disease has gone up to 4,48,062 with 311 new fatalities being recorded in the last 24 hours. The new fatalities include 155 from Kerala, and 49 from Maharashtra.

A total of 4,48,062 deaths have been reported so far in the country. Of these, 1,39,011 fatalities are from Maharashtra, 37,780 from Karnataka, 35,550 from Tamil Nadu, 25,087 from Delhi, 24,965 from Kerala, 22,892 from UP, and 18,778 from West Bengal.

The health ministry said that the number of people who have recuperated from the disease has surged to 3,30,14,898, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.33 per cent. The number of active cases has declined to 2,77,020, comprising 0.82 per cent of the total infections, the lowest since March 2020. The national Covid-19 recov-

29 medics test +ve at Mumbai hospital

Mumbai: As Mumbai is bracing for reopening of schools, as many as 29 MBBS students from Mumbai's King Edward Memorial Medical College have tested positive for Covid-19. Of them, 27 students had received at least one dose of vaccine. Two of the MBBS students, who have mild symptoms of the infection, have been admitted to Seven Hills Hospital, while others who are asymptomatic have been quarantined at their homes.

ery rate was recorded at 97.85 per cent, the highest since March 2020. A decrease of 5,500 cases has been recorded in the active Covid-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours.

The ministry said that 15,06,254 Covid-19 tests were conducted in the country on Wednesday, taking the total number of such examinations done so far to 56,89,56,439.

The daily positivity rate was recorded at 1.56 per cent, which has been below three per cent for 31 days.

Vitamin A

Can vitamin A nasal drops help restore Covid loss of smell? Know what experts say (The Indian Express: 2021101)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/vitamin-a-nasal-drops-covid-loss-of-smell-study-trial-benefits-7543955/>

While vitamin A drops are available in India, Dr Shuchin Bajaj said the "wait is on for the final result of the research to make use of it in our patients"

smellVitamin A nasal drops is being studied for its potential to restore Covid loss of smell. (Source: Getty Images/Thinkstock)

A new medical trial in the UK is researching whether vitamin A nasal drops can be given to Covid patients to recover their loss of smell, a common symptom of the infection, which is sometimes even experienced by post-Covid patients. The 12-week trial by University of East Anglia (UEA) aims to compare a group of volunteers receiving vitamin A nasal drops with those receiving a placebo of inactive drops.

It is considered that the complaints of loss of smell and taste can last much longer than the virus itself, staying in place even when patients are testing negatively.

As per the research team's press statement, previous research from Germany has "shown the potential benefit" of vitamin A in treating smell loss, and the trial is designed to "explore how this treatment works to help repair tissues in the nose damaged by viruses".

The volunteers will be made to smell odours like rotten eggs and roses for "special brain scans" to gauge whether smelling can repair and detect brain activity, said UEA medical professor Carl Philpott.

Vitamin A, or retinol, experts say, has a range of benefits including for the skin, bone health, and even improving vision. A February 1962 JAMA network study also mentioned how vitamin A can help restore olfactory sense.

Vitamin A plays a vital role in metabolism and plays a vital role in regulating immune responses and reducing susceptibility to infections, said Sakina Diwan, dietician, Bhatia Hospital. "The mechanism adopted by vitamin A to reduce infection is often through modifying epithelial cell integrity and function," she said.

Common sources of vitamin A include cheese, eggs, oily fish, milk, yoghurt, and liver products. "Your body will also convert beta-carotene into vitamin A when consumed. Sources of beta-carotene include yellow, red, and green leafy vegetables, such as spinach, carrots, sweet

potatoes, and red peppers, and yellow fruit, like mango, papaya, and apricots,” mentioned Diwan.

vitamin A Can Vitamin A nasal drops help? (Representative image)(Photo: Getty Images/Thinkstock)

As per Harvard Medical School, temporary loss of smell, or anosmia, is the main neurological symptom and one of the earliest and most commonly reported indicators of Covid. Notably, it is considered a better indicator of the infection than common symptoms like fever and cough. But the underlying mechanisms for loss of smell in patients with Covid-19 have been unclear.

ALSO READ | ‘Super taster’ who lost sense of smell is helping Italians regain it

According to experts, vitamin therapies have been used to cure many diseases for quite some time. Many physicians are now recognising the beneficial uses of antioxidants and other vitamins for a wide variety of conditions, often as a complementary therapy to accompany medication or other treatments, they say.

“When it comes to vitamin A, we have been using it to reduce complications of diseases such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, and measles, and for fertility, diarrhea, vision, child development, skin disorders, infections, and any other condition,” explained Dr Shuchin Bajaj, founder-director, Ujala Cygnus Group of Hospitals.

ALSO READ | Loss of smell may point to dementia risk among elderly

While vitamin A drops are available in India, Dr Bajaj said the “wait is on for the final result of the research to make use of it in our patients”.

However, Dr Manoj Sharma, senior consultant, internal medicine, Fortis Hospital, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi said the view that a few drops of vitamin A can fix the activity of damaged smell pathways in the brains of patients is not correct and has not been corroborated yet.

“In all honesty, I would not like to comment on the same as I do not think it will prove to be effective or helpful for patients with Covid. I think the only thing that can help are precautionary measures,” said Dr Sharma.

Stress

Seven effective strategies to cope with stress (The Indian Express: 2021101)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/dr-shriram-nene-seven-effective-strategies-stress-relief-breathing-sleep-7524440/>

"Mindfulness, meditation, and Tai Chi have been shown to decrease heart rate, improve focus and reduce stress," said Dr Shiram Nene

stressTackle stress with these tips from Dr Shiram Nene. (Source: Getty Images/Thinkstock)

Hectic lifestyle is one of the major contributors to stress. While many think it to be a part and parcel of life, it is important to manage stress to keep chronic ailments away.

Cardiothoracic surgeon Dr Shiram Nene recently shared an informative video on how to manage stress in today's testing times.

ALSO READ |Simple yoga asanas and lifestyle practices to relieve stress and anxiety

"Stress can lead to inflammatory changes and chronic diseases," he said in a YouTube video.

Get enough sleep

7-9 hours of sleep for adults, while for children it must be 10 hours or more

Exercise regularly

Even 30 minutes of brisk walking or exercising can improve your mood as it releases endorphins and dopamine.

Build a social network

Build a social support network and talk to people regularly. You can also help them in retrospect.

Set priorities

Say no to tasks which overstretch you. "Rome wasn't built in a day. Do not worry about low-priority pending tasks. You will get to them eventually," he said.

ALSO READ |'Time to practise what we preach': Therapists on taking care of their mental health amid pandemic

Think positive

Focus on the positive elements of what you have achieved in a day. Do not dwell on what you were not able to. This helps you to get past much more quickly, he said.

Just breathe

Taking a good deep breath for five seconds, holding it, and breathing out for five more seconds will help. “Mindfulness, meditation, and Tai Chi have been shown to decrease heart rate, improve focus and reduce stress,” he remarked.

Child malnutrition

Failing on food: on child malnutrition and mid-day meals(The Indian Express: 2021101)

<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/failing-on-food-the-hindu-editorial-on-child-malnutrition-and-the-value-of-good-school-meals/article36765026.ece>

Recent data on child malnutrition underscore the value of good school meals

The approval of the PM POSHAN scheme by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs until 2025-26 comes at a critical time when real income declines and the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic have affected the ability of families to ensure good nutrition. The findings in Phase I of the NFHS-5 for 22 States and Union Territories in December 2020 were shocking: childhood stunting rose in 13 States, there was high prevalence of anaemia among children and women, and wasting was a serious concern in 12 States. The slippage over the previous survey period exposes the worsening scourge of malnutrition, threatening to deprive millions of children of a fully productive adult life. It will take a serious effort to address this hidden crisis, backed by strong budgetary commitment. The centrally supported hot meal programme in Government and Government-aided schools, covering 11.8 crore children, will be supplemented with nutritional elements in identified aspirational districts and areas with high anaemia. The scheme, which is proposed to be extended to pre-primary children, provides for social audit, creation of school nutritional gardens to source fresh produce, involvement of farmer-producer organisations as providers, and lays emphasis on local food traditions. While these are positive features, momentum towards eradicating malnutrition hinges crucially on annual budgetary outlays and proof of POSHAN’s working will lie in measurable outcomes.

Support for the PM POSHAN, which the Government says has been approved over the five-year period at ₹1,30,794 crore, including ₹31,733 crore from States and UTs, must remain elastic. While some child growth metrics such as stunting require a longer window to measure, problems such as anaemia and low weight lend themselves to speedy amelioration. The Government must demonstrate that Saksham Anganwadi-Mission POSHAN 2.0, which amalgamates the POSHAN Abhiyan and schemes covering anganwadis, crèches and adolescent girls, is fiscally stronger than its erstwhile component parts. There must be a meaningful increase in the current Budget estimate over the combined past outlay for the

subsumed individual schemes. On nutritional planning, the renewed plan should introduce a greater diversity of diets that compensates for micronutrient and protein deficiency. Strong supplementation of nutrition at school, in the community, and at childcare centres is critical at a time when criticism of food inflation has met with a tone-deaf response, and pandemic-induced income declines have depressed essential consumption. The lower offtake of foodgrains for the noon meal scheme during the pandemic over the previous year and patchy food distribution mechanisms in many States should set alarm bells ringing. The future of a generation of Indians is at stake.