

# Covid Surge-Centre asks state to maintain vigil, ramp up pace of vaccination

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- **Rajesh Bhushan, union health secretary, has written to the health secretaries of Delhi, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Telangana, to step up vigil as mass gatherings are expected during various upcoming festivals.**

New Delhi: The Union government has directed seven states that are reporting a spike in covid-19 cases to continue to monitor the spread of infection and increase the pace of vaccination, especially the administration of free precaution doses.

Rajesh Bhushan, union health secretary, has written to the health secretaries of Delhi, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Telangana, to step up vigil as mass gatherings are expected during various upcoming festivals.

The Centre has directed states to ensure adequate testing is undertaken in all the districts and maintain the recommended share of RT-PCR and antigen tests. The state must also closely monitor districts reporting higher cases, positivity rates and clusters to prevent further spread of infection and effective case management.

In view of some changes in symptoms and clinical manifestation of the disease, states have been asked to monitor and report district wise Influenza-like illness (ILI) & SARI cases in all health facilities as per the guidelines, on a regular basis for detecting early warning signals of the spread of infection.

“Genome Sequencing of prescribed samples of international passengers as well as collection of samples from-sentinel Sites (identified health facilities) and local cluster of new Covid-1g cases is equally important. Such samples must be sent promptly by the State/UT to the designated lab of INSACOG network for Genome Sequencing,” stated the government.

The union government said that Tamil Nadu has been reporting high average daily new cases of 2,044 since the past one month. The state reported 1,211 new cases reported on 5 August contributing to 7.7% of India’s weekly new cases. Telangana has been reporting high average daily new cases since the past month (678 average cases per day).

Odisha has been reporting high average daily new cases of 845 since past one month. Maharashtra reported high average daily new cases of 2,135, while Karnataka has been reporting high average daily new cases of 1,355 over the last one month.

Kerala has been reporting high average daily new cases of 2,347 and Delhi has been reporting high - average daily new cases of 811.