KERALA TO RAMP UP TESTING TO 3,000 PER DAY: CHIEF MINISTER

Thiruvananthapuram, May 28: Chief Minister, Shri Pinarayi Vijayan today announced that with a large number of people coming back to Kerala from other States and Countries, the State has decided to ramp up the testing to 3,000 tests per day. He was responding to allegations that the State was not doing enough tests.

Addressing the media, the Chief Minister said, “Kerala has been following the ICMR guidelines in tackling the Covid pandemic and the much-acclaimed Kerala model is a result of that. The central Health Ministry itself has recognised this and publicly commended Kerala's work. Initially, the swab testing facility was available only at the Virology Institute at Alappuzha but now, due to the consistent efforts of the state government, we have 15 institutions approved by ICMR for conducting the tests. There are five private labs also. Initially, Kerala received very few test kits from ICMR and we have used the available kits carefully. Later, we had decided on conducting antibody tests on a large scale but the test kits from ICMR were of inferior quality and ICMR itself recommended against using them. Now with more people coming from outside the State, we have decided to increase the number of tests being done per day to 3,000.”

The CM also said that sentinel surveillance tests are done to check any community spread and as on today, there is no community spread but the situation can change any day. As per the recommendations of the ICMR, those with normal viral fever will also be tested now on as the symptoms are very similar to Coronavirus infection. The number of cases due to primary contact or local transmission is still very low in the State. Kerala has the lowest mortality rate due to Covid, 0.5% as compared to the national figure of 2.89%. The recovery rate is also high in the State. “Kerala has never misrepresented the figures, it has always presented actual figures and has even got appreciation from the central Health Ministry”, he added.

Community Volunteer Corps to help in disaster management in Kerala

Chief Minister, Shri Pinarayi Vijayan today informed that the Saamuhya Sannadha Sena or the Community Volunteer Corps are doing a fabulous job in fighting the pandemic outbreak. The Chief Minister had earlier announced the formation of a Saamuhya Sannadha Sena which would help the State in assisting the administration during this pandemic and also, in times of any disaster or natural calamity.

At the local level, the Community Volunteers are now assisting the Police in patrolling and related activities. They are also working with health workers to provide essential services to the public, such as delivering essential medicines and monitoring those quarantined at homes. The volunteers are also involved with the Vyomimuthram Project to help the elderly people.
With one volunteer per 100 people, the target was to form a 3.4 lakhs strong Community Volunteer force which the LSG bodies would be able to deploy on short notice. So far, 3.37 lakh people have already registered as Community Volunteers. They have a presence in almost all local bodies and they are working with the Ward Level Committees for Covid preventive activities. The Community Volunteer Corps will work with the Fire and Rescue Forces and Police for disaster response. They will be given practical training in this area.

“Because of the restrictions due to the lockdown, online training will be first used to train the volunteers. In the first phase, 20,000 volunteers will be trained before June 15, 80,000 in July and one lakh in August. The volunteer services will also be used to deal with rainy season issues. They will also join for the pre-monsoon cleaning campaign being planned for the next two weekends. The contribution of our youths was greatly appreciated during the floods of 2018 and 2019. It is from this experience that Kerala embarked on the concept of community volunteerism. Community Volunteer Corps will be a role model in community service”, the CM added. Youths in the age group of 22-40 can enrol in this Volunteer Force through a web portal.

Minister of Health & Social Justice, Smt K K Shailaja Teacher; Revenue Minister, Shri E Chandrasekharan, and Chief Secretary, Shri Tom Jose IAS were also present during the media briefing.

Kerala Covid-19 Tracker

84 new cases & three recoveries today, total 526 patients under treatment

Six new hotspots, total 82

Thiruvananthapuram, May 28: Kerala today reported the highest number of Covid-19 cases in a single day as 84 persons tested positive. The total number of confirmed cases in the State is 1,088 now. 18 people in Kasargod district, 16 in Palakkad district, 10 in Kannur district, eight in Malappuram district, seven each in Thiruvananthapuram and Thrissur districts, six each from Kozhikode and Pathanamthitta districts, three in Kottayam district, and one each from Kollam, Idukki and Alappuzha districts are those confirmed with the virus infection.

Giving details, Chief Minister, Shri Pinarayi Vijayan said that 31 among the new cases are returnees from foreign countries and 48 are those who came back from other states. There are only five cases of local transmission. He also announced the death of a Telangana native who had reached Thiruvananthapuram on May 22 along with this family after boarding the wrong train from Rajasthan to go back home.

31 persons from Maharashtra, nine from Tamil Nadu, three from Karnataka, two each from Gujarat and Delhi, and one from Andhra Pradesh make up the 48 who came back from other States and tested positive. 15 people from UAE, five each from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, three from Oman, two from Qatar and one from the Maldives add up to make the 31 who returned from foreign countries and tested positive.
Meanwhile, three patients under treatment for Coronavirus have tested negative today. One patient each in Malappuram, Kozhikode and Kannur districts are those who recovered from the infection. 526 patients are currently under treatment in different hospitals in the State. Palakkad district accounts for the maximum number of 105 patients followed by 93 in Kannur district, 63 in Kasargod district and 52 in Malappuram district.

Across the State, a total of 1,15,297 people are under observation. 1,14,305 are under home or institutional quarantine and 992 are in isolation wards at hospitals. 210 persons were admitted to hospitals today.

Till now, 60,685 samples have been sent for testing and the results of 58,460 samples have confirmed no infection. As part of sentinel surveillance of people with higher public exposure, 9,937 were tested and of these 9,217 have tested negative.

There are 82 hotspots in the State now with the addition of six new places in the list - three places in Kasargod district, two in Palakkad district and one in Kottayam district.

So far 1,12,469 persons have reached back Kerala from other States and countries - 91,966 came back by road, 12,388 by flights, 6,494 by trains and 1,621 by ships.

End

date

28-05-2020