India achieves milestone of 50 crores COVID-19 Sample Testing

- Last 10 crores sample testing conducted in 55 days
- Enhanced production of diagnostic kits has resulted in reduction of costs and improved availability of testing kits.
- Number of COVID-19 testing laboratories at more than 2800

Indian Council of Medical Research [ICMR], the apex body at the forefront of formulating COVID-19 testing protocols in India has achieved the milestone of conducting 50 crores tests on 18th August, 2021. With average daily testing of more than 17 lakhs in the month of August, India has tested 50 crore samples across the country till date.

India has achieved the milestone of the last ten crore tests in only 55 days. On 21st July 2021, India had tested 45 Crores COVID-19 samples, which reached 50 crores mark on 18th August, 2021. This has been enabled by rapidly increasing testing infrastructure and capacity across the country. ICMR has been enhancing COVID-19 testing capability across the country by expanding and diversifying testing capacity by leveraging technology and facilitating innovation in affordable diagnostic kits. The testing strategy has been carefully calibrated to increase access and availability of testing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COVID-19 Samples Testing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Testing in Crores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 crores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 crores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Crores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Crores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Crores</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prof (Dr.) Balram Bhargava, Director General, ICMR said, “We have seen that exponential increase in testing led to early identification, prompt isolation & effective treatment of COVID-19 cases. This testing milestone is testimony to the fact that India has been successful in implementing strategy of 5T approach “Test, Track, Trace, Treat and use of Technology” efficiently, which will enable us to contain the spread of the pandemic. Further, enhanced production of diagnostic kits has made India Atma Nirbhar, which has resulted in reduction of costs and improved availability of testing kits.”

ICMR’s concerted efforts towards augmenting and diversifying testing prepared the
infrastructure which made it possible to deliver on India’s increased testing requirements in
the wake of the second wave of COVID-19. Even now, mass testing is on in areas showing a high
positivity rate. Several advancements have been made towards reducing turnaround time of
tests. ICMR has been further enhancing COVID-19 testing capability across the country by
leveraging technology and facilitating innovation in affordable diagnostic kits. Easy-at-home
self-diagnostic kits have been developed and approved to empower the citizen of India for
COVID-19 testing.

Through our ardent efforts, it was ensured that a specific testing platform is made available
addressing general testing (RT-PCR), High-throughput testing (COBAS), testing at remotest
places and PHCs (TrueNAT, CBNAAT), in containment areas (rapid antigen testing) and for
large number of migrant population (pooled sample testing). The total number of diagnostic
laboratories has reached 2876. Of which dedicated government laboratories are 1322 and
private laboratories number stands at 1554.

About ICMR
The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), New Delhi, the apex body in India for the formulation, coordination and
promotion of biomedical research, is one of the oldest medical research bodies in the world. The ICMR has always
attempted to address itself to the growing demands of scientific advances in biomedical research on the one hand, and
to the need of finding practical solutions to the health problems of the country, on the other. The ICMR has come a long
way from the days when it was known as the IRFA, but the Council is conscious of the fact that it still has miles to go in
pursuit of scientific achievements as well as health targets. The Council’s research priorities coincide with the National
health priorities such as control and management of communicable diseases, fertility control, maternal and child health,
control of nutritional disorders, developing alternative strategies for health care delivery, containment within safety
limits of environmental and occupational health problems; research on major non-communicable diseases like cancer,
cardi ovascular diseases, blindness, diabetes and other metabolic and haematological disorders; mental health research
and drug research (including traditional remedies). All these efforts are undertaken with a view to reduce the total
burden of disease and to promote health and well-being of the population. For more information, please visit
https://www.icmr.gov.in

Contact details for subject specific queries:

Dr Nivedita Gupta
Scientist F & In-Charge (Virology Unit)
Division of Epidemiology and Communicable Disease
Indian Council of Medical Research
New Delhi – 110029
Email: guptanivedita.hq@icmr.gov.in
Ph. +91-11-26589397

Media coordinator:

Dr Lokesh Sharma
Scientist E & Media Coordinator
Division of Biomedical Informatics
Indian Council of Medical Research
New Delhi – 110029
Email: sharma.lk@icmr.gov.in
Mob: 7567311014