

Press Release

Subject : India Administers One Billion Doses Of COVID-19 Vaccines

India accomplished administering one billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines on 21 October 2021 under a nationwide free vaccination drive, marking an important milestone in India's fight against Covid-19 pandemic and moving towards the post-COVID '*new normal*'. Unfailing resolve of the Indian leadership, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi ensured that the figure is reached in record time - vaccination drive started on 16 January this year.

The speedy and efficient vaccination drive, combined with active public health awareness campaigns, use of technology, resilient medical system, effective dissemination of real-time information, and tireless efforts by health-care and front-line workers, have facilitated marked improvement in COVID-19 situation in India. As of 20 October 2021 (*Source: MHFW, India*), the daily cases in India were lowest in 229 days, and active cases stood at 0.52% of the total cases (*lowest figure since March 2020*). Recovery rate at 98.15% stood highest since March 2020. With one billion doses administered, while 52% of all Indians have been vaccinated with one dose, 22% have received both doses and therefore are fully vaccinated. Among all the 14 countries having a population of more than 100 million - China, India, USA, Indonesia, Pakistan, Brazil, Nigeria, Bangladesh, Russia, Mexico, Japan, Ethiopia, Philippines and Egypt, India has done better than 11 countries in total number of COVID-19 tests conducted per million population, 5 countries in cumulative number of cases per million population, and 6 countries in cumulative number of deaths per million population. (*Source : <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>*).

Due to encouraging numbers of vaccine doses administered, daily infections and impressive recovery rates, government restored all scheduled domestic air operations with effect from 18 October 2021 without any capacity constraints. It is one of the recent developments that signals return to normalcy. India's initiatives to enter into arrangements for mutual recognition of vaccine certificate with various countries, and visa relaxation for incoming tourists, are important steps to resurrect international travel.

In achieving this momentous feat, India leveraged the strong foundation of domestic vaccine manufacturing capacity. Even prior to the pandemic, India manufactured over 60% of vaccines manufactured globally. Of the seven (7) vaccines approved and administered in India, two (2) were ingeniously developed, a testament to its research and development (R&D) capabilities, and four (4) are being manufactured in India, on license (*Source: CDSCO, MHFW, India*). Vaccines manufactured in India have not been used for domestic propose only, but have also been exported to countries around the world, reinforcing India's reputation as the '*pharmacy of the world*'. Under the "Vaccine Maitri (*Vaccine Friendship*)" initiative, India has contributed to enhancing global access to affordable vaccines by exporting nearly 66 million doses of vaccines to 95 countries. After a brief pause in export of COVID-19 vaccines, India is once again ready to resume the export of vaccines. In addition to vaccines, India has also supplied medicines, masks, PPEs, diagnostic kits, oxygen concentrators, ventilators, and strengthened cold storage and storage facilities in countries in need. In these efforts, India has stayed true to the philosophy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (*world is one family*)".

India's proactive steps in strengthening global fight against the COVID-19 pandemic is emblematic of India's commitment to multilateralism and international community. India is working with partner countries in the neighborhood and like-minded countries in the region, both bilaterally and through plurilateral platforms such as Quad, to achieve our vision for a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific.