Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare held a meeting through video conferencing to review COVID-19 preparedness and measures for ensuring COVID Appropriate Behaviour with Dr C. Vijayabaskar, Health and Medical Education Minister, Tamil Nadu and other senior officials of the State Government, here today.

Reiterating Prime Minister's clarion call of building a Jan-Andolan against COVID, Dr Vardhan said, “The State needs to enhance the awareness amongst the citizen regarding the need and virtues of using masks/face covers, physical distancing and regular hand hygiene.” “The coming long festive season pose a significant risk that may threaten the improvements made against COVID-19 so far. We should all be vigilant for the next three months. Following simple Covid appropriate behaviour will be effective in cutting transmission of Corona. Prime Minister’s message of wearing a mask/face cover, maintaining a physical distance and frequent handwashing should reach the last citizen”, he stated.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan said, “The country has seen significant improvement in the COVID parameters. The number of cases and deaths are in a declining phase. The cases have been substantially reduced. The active cases stand at 6,10,803. The Recovery Rate of India is highest in the world at 90.85%. The Case Fatality Rate is also declining and stands at 1.50%. The country has more than 2000 labs today.”

Comparing the COVID parameters of Tamil Nadu with that of the country, Dr. Harsh Vardhan said, “Tamil Nadu has a Recovery Rate of 94.6% which is more than the national recovery rate. The case fatality rate is 1.54% which is at par with the national average.”

Dr Vardhan lauded the proactive usage of ArogyaSetu App and ITIHAS by Tamil Nadu to identify the hotspots in the State. Appreciating the efforts of the State in reducing its active case contribution, Dr. Harsh Vardhan expressed concern over the COVID trajectory in Chennai, Chengalpattu, Coimbatore, Thiruvallur, Salem, Kanchipuram and Cuddalore districts where the disease burden is the highest. Dr Vardhan also spoke with officials of the districts where the active cases are increasing or the fatality rate is rising.

The health authorities of the State apprised the Union Minister that they have done more than 2 lakh teleconsultations till date which is highest by any State. The total tests conducted in the state are 96,60,430 out of which 98.99% of the tests are RT-PCR. Special screening centres and testing
Camps have been established to increase testing. The death audit is done thrice a week. Dedicated COVID ambulances along with improved oxygen facilities, State specific surveillance reporting platform (STOP Corona Portal) and fever clinics are some of the best practices followed by the State. They also updated the Union Minister on the steps being taken to spread the message of Jan Andolan.

Sh. Rajesh Bhushan, Union Health Secretary underscored the importance of focussing on the population in the 41-60 year age group that are exhibiting high levels of infection and almost 30% of the mortality in the State. He also stated that those with co-morbidities need attention and the COVID treatment protocol needs to include this high risk category too.

Smt. Arti Ahuja, Addl. Secretary (Health) and Dr. Sujeet K Singh, Director, National Centre for Disease Control were also present in the meeting. Other senior officials from the State joined virtually.

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