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नविन मंत्रालय, मुंबई- ४०० ००१
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Dear Colleagues,

Subject : Third wave of Covid-Omicron variant mild or not - effect of vaccination.

You are all aware of the rising number of covid positive cases in the State. The way new cases are increasing, based on current trend it is expected that we will have about 2 lakh active covid cases by 3rd week of January, 2022. Separate instructions have been issued today about managing these numbers, in case some of them need hospitalization.

I request you not to be complacent based on Social Media/print/electronic media reports suggesting that omicron variant causes mild disease. We need to think rationally & scientifically. Whole genomic sequencing results show that still we have Delta variant in more than 70% cases. This figure will vary from District to District. USA, Europe & South Africa are experiencing lesser hospitalization rates compared to rapid increase in covid cases. Scientific opinion is divided as to whether this is due to inherent nature of omicron variant or it is due to vaccination coverage which was not available in first & second waves. There are studies to show that covid disease even in present wave has been severe in unvaccinated persons. Remember hospitalization of pediatric patients is at peak in USA, a subgroup which never had Covid vaccine cover. Please remember unvaccinated persons in present wave are at as much risk (or rather more) as in second wave of March to May, 2021.

Number of covid infections in third wave is going to be very huge. Even if 1% case fatality is presumed, we can still land up with 80,000 deaths, if there are 80 lakh covid cases in third wave. So do not be lulled by narrative that third covid wave / omicron wave is mild & not fatal. It is equally fatal for those who are not vaccinated & have comorbidities. So please improve vaccination coverage & save lives.

Yours sincerely,

Pradeep Vyas
(Dr. Pradeep Vyas)
Additional Chief Secretary

To,
Divisional Commissioner (All)
District Collector (All)
Municipal Commissioners (All)
Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad (ALL)