



Focused COVID-19 Media Monitoring, Nepal



Focused COVID-19 Media Monitoring Nepal¹

-Sharpening the COVID-19 Response through Communications Intelligence

Date: October 28, 2021

Kathmandu, Nepal

EMERGING THEME(S)

- Nepal reported 582 new COVID-19 cases, 8 deaths on October 27; Taplejung reports zero new cases of COVID-19
- COVID-19 cases has been on the decline for past 2 months, according to Health Ministry data; health experts opine there might not be another wave of the pandemic immediately as new infections being caused by same variant
- 1,020,000 doses of Vero Cell vaccine procured under COVAX cost-sharing scheme has arrived from China on October 27; immunocompromised children aged 12 and above to get Pfizer vaccine from November 14

¹ This intelligence is tracked through manually monitoring national print, digital and online media through a representative sample selection, and consultations with media persons and media influencers.

ISSUE(S) IN FOCUS

Nepal recorded 582 new coronavirus infections in the last 24 hours, pushing the nationwide tally to 810,880, while the death toll climbed to 11,380 with eight fatalities on October 27. Nepal's COVID-19 recovery rate stands at 97.3 per cent, the fatality rate at 1.4 per cent, while the country's active COVID-19 case count currently is 10,375.²

The number of active cases of COVID-19 infection has come down to zero in Taplejung. The district is said to be free of COVID-19 infection from October 25.³

The data of the Ministry of Health and Population shows that the COVID-19 infection has been declining in Nepal in the past two months. Health experts argue that there will not be another wave of the pandemic immediately as the infection is being caused by the same variant of the coronavirus here. Though the cases of infection might increase, there is less chance of the infection reaching its peak and becoming another wave, they argue. However, the COVID-19 infection might stay here for a long time as a seasonal flu, as per Dr Sher Bahadur Pun, infectious disease expert.⁴

The 1,020,000 doses of Vero Cell vaccine that the Nepal government procured from China via COVAX cost-sharing scheme arrived in Nepal on October 27. This is the first lot of vaccines that has come under the COVAX cost-sharing scheme.⁵

Out of the 5,900,000 doses of vaccine said to be procured from China, 1,020,000 doses are the first lot of that vaccine arrived on October 27.⁶

All immunocompromised people including children above 12 years old will be administered Pfizer-BioNtech vaccine. The Ministry of Health and Population said the vaccine will be provided from 24 hospitals throughout the country from November 14.⁷

² THT Online

³ Onlinekhabar

⁴ Baarhakhari

⁵ Onlinekhabar

⁶ Setopati

The government is set to give the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to children from November 14. However, not all the children will get the vaccine. The Ministry of Health and Population has decided to give the vaccine to children aged 12 to 18 years with underlying health conditions. The 100,620 doses of vaccine received via COVAX facility from the US will be administered to nearly 45,000/46,000 such children. However, there is no certainty on when 4,854,000 children will get the COVID-19 vaccine.⁸

OTHER(S)

National News

Nepali laborers were able to go to South Korea after 20 months on October 27. A total of 48 laborers flew to South Korea in the first lot on October 27. They had not been able to go South Korea even after completing the needed process due to the COVID-19 pandemic.⁹

Malaysia has partially reopened the intake of new laborers from Nepal and Indonesia, which had been halted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, from October 26. The employers hiring the laborers need to bear the cost of PCR test, treatment if one gets infected with COVID-19, quarantine and other expenses.¹⁰

Tourist activity has increased in the major tourist destination of Kathmandu — Thamel — that had been affected by the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic for nearly seven months.¹¹

The Nepal Bangladesh Bank Ltd handed over 90 vials of Remdesivir medicine to the Sukraraj Tropical and Infectious

⁷ The Kathmandu Post

⁸ Ratopati

⁹ Ratopati

¹⁰ Kantipur

¹¹ Setopati

Disease Hospital, Teku.¹²

International News

China placed a city of 4 million people under lockdown on October 26, ordering them not to leave home except in emergencies in a bid to eradicate a COVID-19 cluster of just a few dozen confirmed cases. The fresh restrictions came as China reported 29 new domestic infections — including six in Lanzhou, the capital of Gansu province in the country's northwest.¹³

COVID-19 infections and deaths are on the rise again in Europe, with Russia, Ukraine and Romania registering the highest fatalities on the continent, an AFP tally showed on October 26. About 1,672,000 new cases have been registered on the continent over the past week, an average of about 239,000 per day. The worst-affected countries in terms of total new cases are Ukraine, Hungary and Poland.¹⁴

Millions of Indians who have taken the Indian COVID-19 shot Covaxin have complained of travel struggles as the vaccine has not been recognized for international travel by several countries. The World Health Organization (WHO) is expected to take a final call on an emergency-use listing for Covaxin on October 26. It has deliberated on data supplied by the manufacturer Bharat Biotech since early July but has said it could not 'cut corners' in making a decision. Without a WHO nod, two-dose Covaxin is unlikely to be accepted as valid vaccine globally and would complicate travel plans for Indians who have taken it.¹⁵

Cuba will open its borders and ease entry requirements next month after vaccinating most of its people with home-grown COVID-19 drugs, allowing it to welcome back overseas visitors and giving a shot in the arm to its ailing tourist industry. As of November 15, Cuba will only require visitors to carry proof of vaccination or a recent PCR to enter the country.¹⁶

¹² Ratopati

¹³ Agence France Presse (in The Kathmandu Post)

¹⁴ Agence France Presse (in The Kathmandu Post)

¹⁵ Reuters (in The Himalayan Times)

¹⁶ Reuters (in The Himalayan Times)

Contacts for further details

Ms Tsering Dolkar Gurung

NPO (Communication, Media and Public Information)
World Health Organization, Country Office for Nepal
gurungt@who.int

WHO's COVID-19 response in Nepal is made possible through the generous support of the Government of Azerbaijan, the Government of Canada, UK Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO), Government of Germany, and USAID.

Reference Code: 21OCT28MM_058