



Focused COVID-19 Media Monitoring, Nepal



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-Sharpening the COVID-19 Response through Communications Intelligence

Date: September 28, 2021

Kathmandu, Nepal

EMERGING THEME(S)

- Nepal reported 975 new COVID-19 infections, 7 deaths on September 27; Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children confirmed in 74 children at Kanti Children's Hospital till September 24, 17 have died
- Dhulikhel Hospital begins Nepal's first-ever human trials of COVID-19 vaccine

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's coronavirus caseload reached 792,367 on September 27 with 975 more people testing positive for the infection in the past 24 hours, while the countrywide COVID-19 mortality toll increased to 11,103 with seven more fatalities. The country's active COVID-19 case count currently is 18,848 against 19,142 a day before. Nepal's COVID-19 recovery rate stands at 96.2 per cent, while the fatality rate stands at 1.4 per cent.²

The Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) was confirmed in 74 children till September 24 at the Kanti Children's Hospital. Likewise, 17 children have lost their lives to this disease, that is seen in children and their family members infected with COVID-19 between three to five weeks of infection, by September 24 in the same hospital. Most of them lost their lives as they were taken to the hospital very late and had already been suffering from serious problems in the brain, heart, kidneys and lungs, as per the hospital.³

Dhulikhel Hospital in Banepa has started the country's first-ever trial of a COVID-19 vaccine developed by Sanofi Pasteur, a French multinational company in partnership with GlaxoSmithKline, a British pharma company. "Starting Friday (September 24), we have started the trial by giving jabs to around 20-30 people," Dr Rajeev Shrestha, Spokesperson for Dhulikhel Hospital said. "We have received no complaints about any side effects from those who took the jabs." He said the initial jabs were given to the people who were willing to take them and were in contact with the hospital. "We will now visit communities to enroll volunteers with informed consent," he added.⁴

² THT Online

³ Onlinekhabar

⁴ The Kathmandu Post

OTHER(S)

National News

The Kathmandu Metropolitan City is giving the first dose of AstraZeneca vaccine to its residents from September 27 — all those above the age of 18 are eligible to get the vaccine. The vaccine is being given from all 32 wards and seven hospitals.⁵

The vaccination campaign against COVID-19 will start in Bajura from September 27. Chief of Bajura Health Office Daya Krishna Panta said people above 18 years could receive the Vero Cell vaccine from September 27 onwards from 70 vaccination centers.⁶

On September 26, the Kathmandu Metropolitan City decided to allow schools to resume physical classes by following health protocols. “Why did they need to reopen the schools when there are just 11 days to Dashain?” said Ishwar Marasini, 40, who runs a stationery shop at Ranibari. “Everyone knows the children are not vaccinated. Who will be responsible if they get infected?” Lalitpur Metropolitan City reopened its schools last week. Many have called KMC’s decision to resumed physical classes “impractical and irresponsible” as there is less than two weeks until Ghatasthapana. Neighboring Madhyapur-Thimi Municipality had announced to resume schools only after the Chhath festival in mid-November.⁷

Nearly 10,000 Nepali students are facing problems going abroad to pursue higher education after travelling has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Those who have got the visas to Japan and Australia have not been able to go there. It is also not sure when those who had returned from China mid-studies can go back to complete their studies.⁸

The ambassadors of 12 countries have gathered at Pokhara to convey the message to the world that it is safe for tourists.⁹

⁵ Baarhakhari

⁶ The Himalayan Times

⁷ The Kathmandu Post

⁸ Kantipur

Tourism entrepreneurs in Nepal are observing the 42nd International Tourism Day amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. A recent report has shown that the pandemic has affected the tourism sector the most — the hotel sector has been hit the hardest amongst all in this sector too. However, the regular decline in the rate of COVID-19 infection has been good news for this sector. The government has encouraged the entrepreneurs by allowing on-arrival visas to foreigners. It has also introduced packages to attract investment in the tourism sector.¹⁰

The hotel industry in the country has expressed pleasure at the government's decision to issue on-arrival visa for international tourists. The Hotel Association of Nepal said this would reinvigorate the country's paralyzed tourism industry.¹¹

International News

Police in Norway on September 26 reported dozens of disturbances and violent clashes including mass brawls in the Nordic country's big cities after streets, bars, restaurants and nightclubs were filled with people celebrating the end of COVID-19 restrictions that lasted for more than a year.¹²

⁹ Kantipur

¹⁰ Onlinekhabar

¹¹ Rastriya Samachar Samiti (in The Himalayan Times)

¹² The Associated Press (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

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