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CORONA VIRUS: ADVISORY II
World Immunization Week (24-30 April 2020)

As you are aware that globally 27,18,699 active cases of COVID-19 have been reported to WHO, and 1,90,654 cases (20%) have deceased, of which 23,039 confirmed cases and 721 have deceased in India as on 23 April 2020.

Different trends in different regions and even within the regions have been observed. Although the number is low, we see worrying trends upward. Stay-at-home orders and other social distancing measures have successfully suppressed transmission of the virus, but still, this virus remains extremely dangerous.

Most of the population remains susceptible. Epidemics can quickly reignite. The greatest danger faced now is complacency. People are understandably frustrated with stay-at-home orders with being confined to their homes for weeks on end. People naturally want to get on with their lives because their lives and livelihoods are at stake. But, we can't go back to the way things were. There must be a "New Normal," i.e., healthier, safer, and better prepared.

Please make no mistake. We remain in very turbulent water and will do so for some time. The same public health measures we have been advocating since the beginning of the Pandemic must remain the backbone of the response. **Six central strategies to halt the virus are to be done consistently, (i) identify every case, (ii) isolate every case, (iii) test every case, (iv) care for every case, (v) trace the contacts, and (vi) quarantine every contact-whilest constantly monitoring the effectiveness of the measures in place.**

Educate, engage, and empower the people by seeking their full participation. WHO's advice is to find and test every suspected case, not every person. Scientists are collecting, analyzing, synthesizing the best Science and turn into guidance and guidance into action and that they give back to the people. Surveillance is being strengthened. Text messages about COVID-19 are being sent on the cell phones. Normal cross border flow of vital medical supplies and to resolve unnecessary disruptions to the supply chain is ensured so that these products reach those in need quickly.

We are all in this together; we will only get through it together. We stand in solidarity with COVID-19 patients and will stand with all.

Efforts for research and development of safe and effective vaccine for COVID-19 are being accelerated and ensure equitable access to the people who need it. WHO urges in the lead up to **World Immunization Week (24-30 April 2020)** to prioritize the continuation of routine immunization of children in essential service delivery as well as adult vaccines such as Influenza for groups most at risk to protect everyone, everywhere against **Vaccine-Preventable Diseases (VPD)**. If Immunization services are suspended, urgent catch-up Vaccination should be re-scheduled as soon as possible, prioritizing those most at risk. There are increasing concerns about the resurgence of Measles and Poliomyelitis, especially if Vaccination rates fall due to delay or suspension of scheduled Immunization activities as a result of COVID-19.

We must not risk losing the fight to protect everyone everywhere against VPDs.

Sd/-

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