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ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Parliament - [Health]

ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: The Hindu

ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE: 30/8/2021

Protocols for Parliament soon

Health Ministry is developing SOPs for Parliament, Assembly sessions: Minister

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NEW DELHI

The Health Ministry is developing SOPs (standard operating protocol) for Parliament and the Legislative Assembly sessions comprising COVID-19 protocols and preventive measures, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said while chairing the 20th meeting of the high-level Group of Ministers (GoM) on COVID-19, here on Saturday.

The GoM also expressed concern about the forthcoming festival seasons and advised everyone to adopt safe and COVID-19 appropriate behaviour.

Vaccine preparations

Participating in the meeting, Vinod K. Paul, chairperson of the Empowered Group-1 on medical emergency management plan apprised the GoM of the process of COVID-19 vaccine development in India and around the world.

He said the 29 candidates,



In session: Dr. Harsh Vardhan and other Ministers during a Group of Ministers meeting in New Delhi. -ANI

including two Indian ones, are in clinical trials, of which six are in Phase III.

According to a release issued by the Ministry, Dr. Paul said in India, Bharat Biotech's vaccine candidate based on inactivated virus procured by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) is in Phase II trial along with Zydus Cadila's candidate which is based on viral DNA. The Oxford vaccine candidate developed by

Serum Institute of India (SII) is already in Phase III trial in Maharashtra and some other States.

Meanwhile, the Health Minister said that in the month since the last meeting of the GoM on July 31, the country has made tremendous strides in containing the disease.

Fatality rate falls

"As many as 26.4 lakh have already recovered. The

country's case fatality rate is at its lowest 1.81% and consecutively the recovery rate has increased to 76.47%. Also, only 0.29% of cases are on ventilators, 1.93% on ICU and only 2.88% of cases are on oxygen. A total of 1,576 labs at present have led to an upsurge in testing and the goal of 10 lakh tests per day has been fulfilled. More than 9 lakh samples were tested in the last 24 hours and this has led to the cumulative total number of tests crossing the 4 crore mark," said Dr. Vardhan.

The GoM was informed that more than 338 lakhs of N-95 masks, nearly 135 lakh of PPE and about 27,000 ventilators have been provided by the Centre to the States/UTs. The GoM was also informed that within the country, eight States (Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Odisha and Telangana) contribute to around 73% of the active caseload currently.