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# Over 60% of active COVID-19 cases recorded in Maharashtra

Eight States are displaying an upward trajectory

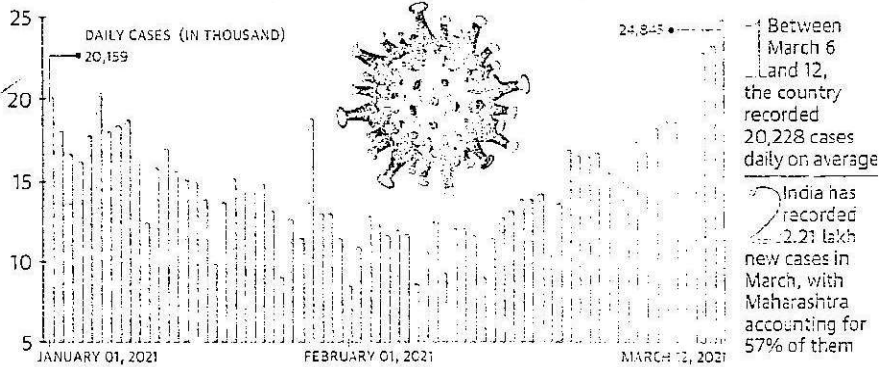
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

India on Saturday recorded 24,882 fresh COVID-19 infections, the highest so far this year. This is also the highest daily rise in the last 83 days. As many as 26,624 new infections were recorded on December 20 last year.

Maharashtra continues to account for over 60% (63.57%) of the active COVID-19 cases with Kerala, Punjab, Karnataka, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh constituting 87.72% of the new cases in the 24 hours till 8 a.m. on Saturday, according to the Health Ministry. The active caseload stands at 2.02 lakh (2,02,022) on Saturday, which is 1.78% of the positive cases, while the country registered 24,882 new cases in the last 24 hours.

"Eight States - Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Gujarat, Karnataka and Haryana - are displaying an upward trajectory in daily new cases. On the other hand, 20 States/UTs, including Goa, Bihar, Sikkim and Tripura, have less than 1,000 active cases," the Health Ministry

**Rising again** | More than 20,000 new COVID-19 cases were recorded in India every day between March 10 and 12. Daily case load in the country has steadily increased since mid-February



said. It said 140 deaths had been reported, with five States accounting for 81.43% of them. Maharashtra saw the highest casualties (56), followed by Punjab (34) and Kerala (14).

The cumulative recoveries stand at 1,09,73,260 and the national recovery rate is 96.82%. The gap between recovered and active cases is constantly rising and stands at 1,07,71,238. In the last 24 hours, India registered 19,957 recoveries, 86.43% of them concentrated in six States, with Maharashtra reporting the highest number of single day recoveries at 11,344.

(With inputs from PTI)

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## "No mask, no flight," say tough, new DGCA rules

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Passengers refusing to wear masks properly or follow social distancing norms during a flight despite repeated warnings could be put on a no-fly list for a period of three months to two years or more, according to an order issued by aviation safety regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

The DGCA also said if a passenger refuses to comply with instructions before a flight takes off, he or she should be deboarded. The strict instructions follow a

Delhi High Court order after a judge noticed blatant disregard for COVID-19 safety protocols during a flight.

"In case any passenger on board refuses to wear a mask or violates the COVID-19 protocol even after repeated warnings, such passenger may be treated as 'unruly passenger' and the procedure in respect of handling such unruly passenger as provided in CAR (civil aviation requirements) shall be followed by the concerned airline," the DGCA said.

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## Over 60% of active cases in Maharashtra

The Ministry stressed that more than 70% of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities. Eighteen States/UTs including Rajasthan, Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Puducherry and Assam have not reported any death in the last 24 hours.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research, 22,58,39,273 samples had been tested until March 12 including 8,40,635 on Friday. "Our figures are being reconciled with the Indian Council of Medical Research," the Ministry said on its website, adding that State-wise distribution of figures is subject to further verification and reconciliation.

The cumulative number of COVID-19 vaccine doses administered in the country crossed 2.91 crore on Satur-

day according to a release issued by the Health Ministry. It added that a total of 2,91,92,547 vaccine doses have been given, as per the provisional report till 7 p.m.

These include 73,31,498 Health Care Workers (HCWs) who have taken the first dose and 42,58,297 HCWs who have taken the second dose, 72,96,474 Frontline Workers (FLWs) (first dose), 10,53,732 FLWs (second dose), 78,66,241 beneficiaries aged above 60 and 13,86,305 beneficiaries aged 45 and above with specific comorbidities. A total of 9,74,090 shots were given on Saturday, the 57th day of the vaccination drive. Of these, 8,05,014 beneficiaries were given the first dose and 1,69,076 HCWs and FLWs received the second dose of vaccine as per the provisional report.

## "No mask, no flight," say new DGCA rules

The March 13 circular emphasised that passengers should not wear their mask below their nose at all times of the journey, from the time of entering the airport for departures to exiting the airport for arrivals.

The CAR on unruly passengers provides for an offender to be put on a no-fly list for varying periods – three months for verbal abuse, six months for physical assault and two years or more for life threatening behaviour. "The internal committee constituted by an airline to look into the incident

will decide which category the offence falls," a senior official of the DGCA said.

If a passenger is found violating the protocols before boarding a flight, then the DGCA order requires that airport staff hand them over to security personnel after sufficient warnings.

The move follows a Delhi High Court order that passengers without a mask be put on a no-fly list after the judge observed the callous attitude of passengers while he was on an Air India flight from Kolkata to Delhi earlier this month.