CORONA METER

Close to 47% adults fully vaccinated

CASES ON SUNDAY 7,612#

ACTIVE CASES 104,325 (-1,476)°

Recovered 34.01M (+8,867)

Deaths 468,773 (+221)^

TOTAL CASES 34.58M

Source: State bulletins, PTI; #10 states/UTs as of 7:50 PM, °net of recoveries/deaths (Change since 12am, 28 Nov) ^includes Kerala's 140 fatalities after reclassification

VACCINE DOSES ADMINISTERED IN INDIA

1223.34M (+3.87M)

1st dose 785.06 m | 2nd dose 439.08 m

DOSES ADMINISTERED

Top 10 States/UTs	SUN	Total, Day 317
Tamil Nadu	1,237,731	69.79 m
UP	712,172	159.45 m
Bihar	314,674	80.24 m
Maharashtra	280,607	112.00 m
Karnataka	227,272	73.28 m
West Bengal	197,081	91.53 m
MP	174,635	85.56 m
AP	128,682	59.13 m
Gujarat	109,886	80.03 m
Jharkhand	94,426	24.13 m

Source: dashboard.cowin.gov.in, 07.47 PM

VACCINE DOSES ADMINISTERED GLOBALLY

(204 countries/areas)

7902.66 M

Top 5^	DOSES	% pop given 1+ dose
Mainland China	2472.85 m	87.5
U.S.	454.45 m	69.7
Brazil	297.96 m	77.3
Indonesia	232.87 m	51.5
Japan	196.58 m	79.0

Source: Bloomberg; ^Excl. India

Samples Tested so Far*

639.43 MILLION

1.09 M in last 24 hours*

POSITIVE TESTS^ 5.41%

Source: ICMR, 27 Nov*, ^Cumulative, 3-day average

Daily Infections

5 worst-hit states	CASES ON SUN	DEATHS
Kerala	4,350	19#
Maharashtra	832	33
Tamil Nadu	736	9
West Bengal	715	12
Mizoram	359	2

SHARE IN DAILY CASES: 91.85%

Source: State bulletins, PTI, 07.49 PM; #excl. 140 prior deaths reclassified

5 Main Metros*	CASES ON SUN	ACTIVE CASES
Mumbai	210	2192
Kolkata	198	2184
B'luru Urban	152	5287
Chennai	107	1194
Delhi	32	288

*districts/metro

SHARE IN DAILY CASES: 9.18%

Source: State bulletins, PTI

GLOBAL COUNT

Total Cases 261.51 M

Recovered 236.24 M

Deaths 5,215,675

Source: worldometers.info, 07.50 PM

'NEED TO RAMP UP VACCINATION ACROSS COUNTRY'

India Inc on High Alert, to Keep Close Watch on the New Strain

Next 2-4 weeks to be crucial and Covid-appropriate behaviour key, say corporates

Kala Vijayraghavan & Lijee Philip

Mumbai: India Inc is carefully evaluating the impact of the new Covid-19 variant Omicron and has advised caution in travel and Covid-appropriate behaviour as countries issue restrictions in the wake of its rapid spread. Increasing the pace of vaccination across states will keep Indian economy on track, industry officials said.

The next two-four weeks will be crucial in terms of how the new variant impacts health, said Naresh Trehan, chairman of industry body CII's Healthcare Council. "It's clearly a wait-and-watch and we have to be extremely cautious to travel to/from the restricted countries," Trehan, the chairman, Medanta, The MediCity, said.

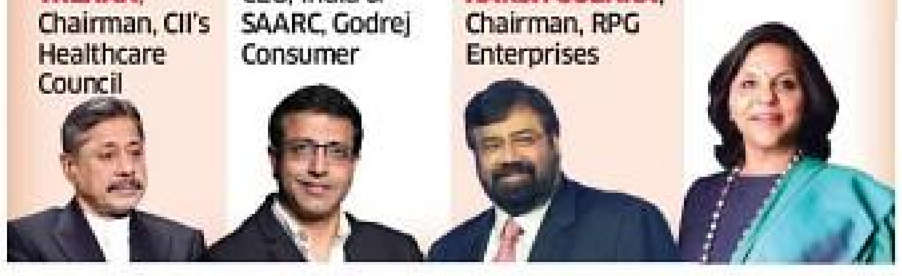
India will also need to ensure medical preparedness to deal with any emergencies, corporates have said. Sunil Kataria, CEO, India and Saarc, Godrej Consumer, said complacency has set in around vaccinations in India and there is a need to ramp it up from the current 40% to 90%.

● Medically this variant is proving to be multiplying faster
NARESH TREHAN, Chairman, CII's Healthcare Council

● There is a need to take vaccinations up from 40% levels to 90%
SUNIL KATARIA, CEO, India & SAARC, Godrej Consumer

● ...Omicron's discovery is very concerning. It is a warning that we cannot let our guard down
HARSH GOENKA, Chairman, RPG Enterprises

● We need to stay vigilant
SANGITA REDDY, JMD, Apollo Hospitals



"We all are following Covid-appropriate behaviour and advised employees to travel abroad only if necessary and follow respective country's travel advisories. I think vaccinations and preparedness will ensure that India continues the growth trajectory with confidence," Kataria said.

While the economy's key indicators showing healthy growth, commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal said there were concerns around "what is happening in Europe, and also particularly in South Africa and the resultant fresh lockdowns in parts of Europe." Goyal's travel to Geneva for the WTO ministerial council meeting has been cancelled due to travel restrictions triggered by the latest variant.

"Just as the global economy seems to be getting back on track to some degree of normalcy, Omicron's discovery is very concerning," said Harsh Goenka, chairman, RPG Enterprises. "It is a warning that we cannot let our guard down. In a perpetually connected world, safety can be achieved only through a high degree of vaccinations. Until then, we have to learn to adapt and function within this uncertainty. At this juncture, business enterprises remain cautiously optimistic that this variant can be dealt with," he added.

Sangita Reddy, joint MD, Apollo Hospitals, said that while it was too early to understand the implications of Omicron, "we should not let our guards down and need to stay vigilant." Top conglomerates such as Reliance Industries, M&M, Godrej and Tata group have urged employees to follow travel advisories to countries where the new strain has spread. "We are all watching trends for the next two weeks and hoping that this variant, though contagious, should be milder. Consistency in vaccinations is key to protecting lives and economy," said a senior Tata group executive.

Naushad Forbes, co-chairman of Forbes Marshall and past president of CII, said it was unclear yet whether the variant would spread like the Delta one earlier, or whether it could be contained.

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Travel and Hospitality Sector Hop

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This isn't the Start of Another Setback

Industry seeks more clarity from govt; travellers haven't cancelled bookings; situtuion is dynamic

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New Delhi: Faced with a rapidly spreading new global Covid-19 variant, the travel and hospitality sector is hoping that the prime minister's directive to review international travel curbs, rising Covid-19 cases in some European countries and subsequent lockdowns will not slam the brakes on a promising recovery the sector has made so far after a harrowing 2020.

While travellers are not panicking or cancelling bookings just yet, the situation is fluid, industry insiders say. "The world is in a state of flux, and nobody knows what's going to happen. Nothing indicates bookings will fall for now, but no one knows what this is going to do. We will probably get more clarity in a week. We are also awaiting more details from the government," the chief executive of a leading Indian hotel chain which had borne the brunt of the market panic on Friday over the Omicron variant of concern, said. The Travel Agents Association of India had been appealing to the government to resume scheduled commercial international flights. "I think the government is still deliberating on the decision (on international flights) and we have not heard anything officially on the matter. We are hearing that people from certain countries might need to follow more stringent rules and protocols," said Jyoti Mayal, president of TAAI. "I don't think countries are going to shut borders indiscriminately. People are not cancelling plans just yet. We are all waiting and watching."

Following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's directions to review plans to ease international travel curbs on Saturday, the home ministry tweeted on Sunday that a decision on the effective date of resumption of scheduled commercial international passenger services will be reviewed as per the 'evolving global scenario'. "Closer watch on emerging pandemic situation in the country will be maintained," it said. India had announced a resumption of regular international flights starting December 15 for 'not at risk' countries.

A Pause

What industry says...

Countries might not shut borders indiscriminately

Thrust should be on increasing screening at airports

We should raise the vaccination percentage

Emergence of a new variant can pose a serious threat to sector

Full-fledged recovery of sector dependent on international travel resuming

Warburg Pincus-owned Parksons Buys Mumbai-based Manohar Packaging

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Mumbai: Warburg Pincus owned Parksons Packaging Limited has acquired Manohar Packaging, the Mumbai based specialist in alcobev packaging. Manohar Packaging, founded in 1994, is one of India's top producers of carton packaging and the industry leader in the alcoholic beverages segment.

The deal was signed in the range of Rs200-250 crore, said people in the know. Post transaction, Aditya Patwardhan, CEO, Manohar Packaging, will continue to be part of the management team, said the company statement. Through two state of the art manufacturing facilities across India, Manohar Packaging has the capacity to convert more than 100 million sheets annually. Parksons with a pan-India footprint through its 6 manufacturing plants located across Daman, Chakan, Pantnagar, Guwahati and Sricity will expand presence in Goa and Punjab through the latest buyout. Through its 6 state of the art manufacturing facilities across India, Parksons has the capacity to convert more than 1,25,000 MT of paper board annually. "Manohar's depth of services and domain expertise strengthens our offerings in the Food & Beverage segment and increases our footprint in North and West India," said Siddharth Kejriwal, Managing Director, Parksons Packaging.

Scindia to Look into Congestion at Airports

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New Delhi: As airports across the country report congestion and long queues amid a surge in passenger traffic, aviation minister Jyotiraditya Scindia has asked the government and private airport operators to work on decongesting these airports to mitigate passenger inconvenience.

"The airports have been asked to look at three main issues — infrastructure, workforce and flight timings — to ensure that flights are not bunched together, causing a delay at security and other areas inside the terminal. Airports need to come up with solutions for these," said a senior government official, who did not wish to be identified.

The official said the matter is being monitored by Scindia, who has formed a team of senior officers to solve the congestion issue. The government has prepared a list of 15 airports, including those in Delhi, Mumbai, Pune and regional airports under the UDAN scheme like the one in Darbhanga, said government officials.

Suggestions that are being discussed include a change in flight timings to avoid bunching of flights and keeping airports, which do not operate round the clock, open for a longer duration.

"There are certain airports that have watch hours — operate only for a certain duration of time during the day — and suggestions are to keep the airport open for a longer duration if required," said one of the officials, who did not wish to be identified.

Passengers at airports in India have been consistently increasing since the start of the festive season and got a boost after the current minister Scindia waived the restriction on the number of domestic flights that was imposed after the Covid-19 outbreak.