



Focused COVID-19 and Health Media Monitoring, Nepal

Focused COVID-19 and Health Media Monitoring Nepal¹

- Sharpening health response through Communications Intelligence

Date: 20 January 2023

RECURRING THEME(S)

- 5 new coronavirus cases have been confirmed in the last 24 hours with 1 recovery. Currently, there are 36 active cases in the country.
- Koshi Hospital of Biratnagar has suspended 3 doctors who declared a living baby as dead; a committee has been formed to investigate the incident.
- So far, 218 children have been confirmed to be infected with measles in Banke district.

¹This intelligence is tracked through manual monitoring of national print and online media through a representative sample selection.

ISSUE(S) IN FOCUS

Nepal on 19th January reported 5 new confirmed coronavirus cases in the last 24 hours. The country has not reported any COVID-19 related death in the last 24 hours. According to the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), among 464 PCR tests and 695 antigen tests, 5 samples have tested positive to COVID-19. Currently, there are 36 active cases and 1 people have recovered in last 24 hours.^{3,4}

Nepal's COVID-19 recovery rate stands at 98.8%, while the fatality rate stands at 1.2%.⁴

The article is about poor access of Dalit communities to healthcare services. According to the author, the Dalit community is suffering the most due to lack of access to health care. The problem is increasing as Dalit settlements have not been prioritized by the government. According to the Nepal Demographic and Health Survey-2016, only 45 percent of Madhesi Dalit women have access to regular pregnancy tests. Dalit women are stunting, while Dalit children are equally suffering from malnutrition. 65 percent of the Dalit community cannot afford healthcare expenses from their income.¹

NEWS RELATED TO PROVINCE NO. 1

Koshi Hospital of Biratnagar has suspended 3 doctors who declared a living baby as dead, a three-member committee has been formed to investigate the incident. Dr. Akash Yadav, Medical Officer at Koshi Hospital has declared the death of a 19-day-old baby, who was admitted to the emergency ward due to respiratory problems on Wednesday morning.^{1,2,6,7,8,9}

After the temporary COVID-19 hospital established in Rawa Besi Rural Municipality, Khotang was transferred to a five-bed hospital, the patients have benefited. Dr. Manoj Kumar Sah, head of the hospital, said that around 20 patients have been visiting the hospital every day. According to the Rural Municipality, maximum medicines are provided free of charge from the pharmacy of the hospital.³

NEWS RELATED TO MADHESH PROVINCE

Bardibas Hospital in Mahottari has announced the operation of 26 different health services with expert doctors and state-of-the-art equipment on Wednesday. With the announcement, trust of the general public towards the hospital has increased. According to the hospital, facilities including senior citizens care center, integrated violence management, social security services, family planning services, safe abortion services, adolescent services, autopsy services, tuberculosis treatment services, counseling services, and whole-body examination services will be performed regularly.^{2,3,9}

NEWS RELATED TO BAGMATI PROVINCE

The employees of Singhdurbar Vaidyakhana Vikash Samiti (SDVKVS) have not received their salary for three months. The employees complain that they are having trouble paying their rent, paying for the food and school fees of their children. This problem has raised due to the inability of the committee to produce medicine as per its capacity.^{1,3}

A catheterization laboratory (cath lab) has been inaugurated in the cardiology department of the Bir Hospital. Speaking at the inauguration program, Health and Population Minister Padam Giri said that they should work together to make the healthcare services accessible to all people. The Minister of State for Health and Population, Dr. Toshima Karki, said that she would provide necessary support to the hospital.^{2,3,9}

NEWS RELATED TO GANDAKI PROVINCE

Madhuri Nepali, Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM) of Malma Health Center at Galkot Municipality-7, Baglung said that she delivered three babies under the light of her mobile phone. According to Anita Karki, the chief public health inspector of the health post, there is no electricity backup system in the health post and health workers are compelled to use the light of their phones during power cuts at night.^{1,3}

The health insurance program started by Nepal government has not been accessible to the public. One-third of the population has not been able to experience the service in Myagdi. About 28,343 people from 5,516 families have been receiving services from the health insurance program that started in Myagdi from 2016. According to Upendra Baral, Chief Officer of the Health Insurance Board of Myagdi, 4,938 senior citizens have been accessing insurance services with full discounts in the district.⁹

NEWS RELATED TO LUMBINI PROVINCE

Around 200 people have been diagnosed with measles in Banke district including Nepalgunj with up to 30 new patients a day. Vaccination program has been intensified. Even though Minister and State Minister of Health and Population have repeatedly claimed to implement the fundamental rights contained in the constitution, they have not addressed the situation and talked about the control of measles outbreak.³

The measles outbreak, which was first seen in Nepalganj-7 two weeks ago, is now spreading to different wards and municipalities of the district. With the increase in the spread of measles, the control campaign has also been intensified. As part of the campaign, more than 53 thousand children have been vaccinated against measles in the four affected municipalities. Naresh Shrestha, Vaccine Focal Person of Banke, informed that 218 children have been confirmed to be infected with measles in the district.⁹

NEWS RELATED TO KARNALI PROVINCE

Jajarkot district in Karnali Province is facing an acute shortage of essential medicines for the past one month. Service-seekers complain that dispensaries of the health posts and private pharmacies do not have medicines prescribed by the physicians in stock. People often walk for hours or days to reach the nearest health post, and when they have to return empty-handed without medicine, it causes anguish.⁴

MENTIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND POPULATION

Nepal on 19th January reported 5 new confirmed coronavirus cases in the last 24 hours. The country has not reported any COVID-19 related death in the last 24 hours. According to the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), among 464 PCR tests and 695 antigen tests, 5 samples have tested positive to COVID-19. Currently, there are 36 active cases and 1 people have recovered in last 24 hours.^{3,4}

Nepal's COVID-19 recovery rate stands at 98.8%, while the fatality rate stands at 1.2%.⁴

A catheterization laboratory (cath lab) has been inaugurated in the cardiology department of the Bir Hospital. Speaking at the inauguration program, Health and Population Minister Padam Giri said that they should work together to make the healthcare services accessible to all people. The Minister of State for Health and Population, Dr. Toshima Karki, said that she would provide necessary support to the hospital.^{2,3}

Around 200 people have been diagnosed with measles in Banke district including Nepalgunj with up to 30 new patients a day. Vaccination program has been intensified. Even though Minister and State Minister of Health and Population have repeatedly claimed to implement the fundamental rights contained in the constitution, they have not addressed the situation and talked about the control of measles outbreak.³

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

China today accused "some Western media" of bias, smears and political manipulation in their coverage of China's abrupt ending of its strict "zero-COVID" policy, as it issued a vigorous defense of actions taken to prepare for the change of strategy. The move in December to end mass testing and quarantines led to a sharp rise in cases, with some hospitals and crematoriums overwhelmed with victims. Since the initial wave of new cases, life in much of China has largely returned to normal, although officials have expressed concern about a further spread of the virus into the countryside during the Lunar New Year travel rush now under way.⁴

¹Onlinekhabar

² Nepalkhabar

³ Swasthyakhabar

⁴ The Himalayan Times

⁵ Kantipur

⁶ Nayapatrika

⁷ Annapurna Post

⁸ Nagarik

⁹ Gorkhapatra

Contact for further details

Ms Tsering Dolkar Gurung

NPO (Communication, Media, and Public Information)
World Health Organization, Country Office for Nepal
gurungt@who.int

This media monitoring is made possible through the generous support of the United States Department of State.

Reference Code: 20JANMM_139

