



Media Scanning & Verification Cell



Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.

Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name	News Source/Publication Language
6723	23.05.2022	23.05.2022	Hyderabad Telangana	www.indianexpress.com/English https://indianexpress.com/article/india/insacog-first-case-ba-5-sub-variant-omicron-telangana-7931275/
Title:	INSACOG confirms first case of BA.5 sub-variant of Omicron in Hyderabad, Telangana			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU – Hyderabad, SSU- Telangana			

India's Covid-19 genomic sequencing consortium INSACOG has confirmed the first case of the BA.5 sub-variant of Omicron in the country in an 80-year-old man from Telangana who had no history of international travel. The person was fully vaccinated against Covid-19 and had only mild clinical symptoms, according to the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Consortium on Genomics (INSACOG).

The consortium has also officially confirmed two cases of BA.4 – one from Hyderabad and one from Tamil Nadu – as previously reported by The Indian Express. The case from Hyderabad was detected in a South African traveller during sampling at the airport. The case from Tamil Nadu was in a 19-year-old woman with no history of international travel. She was also fully vaccinated and had mild clinical symptoms, INSACOG said.

The BA.4 and BA.5 sub-variants of Omicron had led to the fifth wave of Covid-19 cases in South Africa. It has since been detected in several European countries and the United States. The European Centre for Disease Control and Prevention has declared the BA.4 and BA.5 sub-variants of Omicron as 'variants of concern'. Being a

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Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
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sub-variant of Omicron, the World Health Organization (WHO) already considers both to be 'variants of concern'.

Although the variants led to a surge in South Africa, it did not increase hospitalisations or deaths. India too is unlikely to see an increase in mortality with the current variant, say experts, because of the hybrid immunity conferred by vaccination and previous infection, including with the BA.1 and BA.2 sub-variants of Omicron during the third wave of Covid-19 cases.

“We already have a four-month experience from other countries on the two sub-variants. However, so far, there has been no co-relation of these with an increase in the severity of disease, hospitalisations or deaths. And, that is likely to be the case in India as well. A significant proportion of our population has had the infection and has been vaccinated,” Dr Sudhanshu Vрати, head of INSACOG, had previously told The Indian Express.

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