



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
6480	14.12.2021	14.12.2021	Chennai Tamil Nadu	www.timesofindia.com/English https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/covid-19-tamil-nadu-suspects-omicron-variant-in-passenger-from-nigeria-relatives/articleshowprint/88273154.cms
Title:	Tamil Nadu suspects Omicron variant in passenger from Nigeria			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU - Chennai, SSU – Tamil Nadu			

A 47-year-old man who travelled to Chennai from Nigeria via Doha on December 10 tested positive for Covid-19. Although asymptomatic, he was admitted to government Covid-19 hospital on King Institute campus in Guindy.

Scientists also noticed S-gene drop – a possible indicator for the Omicron variant – during the RT-PCR test. Five other relatives and contacts of the patients also tested positive for the infection on Monday.

“All of them are in the hospital and are asymptomatic. There was an S-gene drop in all of them. We have sent the samples for whole genome sequencing. We will be able to tag it as an Omicron variant only if the INSTEM lab in Bengaluru confirms it,” health minister Ma Subramanian said. If it turns positive, this will be the state's first Omicron cluster.

The passenger from Nigeria underwent a random test at the airport after landing.

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Disclaimer:- This is a media alert subject to verification.

Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India

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“While we test all passengers from countries listed as at risk by WHO as per ICMR guidelines, we draw random samples from 2% of passengers travelling from other countries,” he said.

Health officials would now contact other passengers, close contacts and crew members, officials said.

So far India has detected 38 Covid-19 cases with the variant.

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