

15 September 2021 – The response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Islamic Republic of Iran is managed through a ‘whole-of-government’ approach. WHO, with its partners, has been actively working with the Government to support surveillance, develop standards and guidelines, ensure availability of vaccines, provide life-saving equipment and supplies and monitor trends. WHO was able to implement a project to bring diagnostic and therapeutic equipment through a US\$ 50 million World Bank loan facility.

As of yesterday, a total of 5 360 387 confirmed cases have been reported since the onset of the outbreak in Islamic Republic of Iran. The total number of deaths reported since the onset of pandemic stands at 115 619; 4 654 558 positive individuals have completely recovered from COVID-19. The trend is showing a decrease in the last few days. Yesterday, the number of positive cases was 19 731 – a decrease of 2598 cases as compared to the day before. The number of deaths is also showing a gradual decline. Yesterday 452 individuals lost their lives.

Islamic Republic of Iran has witnessed a sustained increase in the number of cases and deaths in the Eastern Mediterranean Region. While the Ministry of Health and Medical Education is doing its best to provide optimum care to the people affected by COVID-19, the circulation of virus in the community is a cause for concern. Through its effective primary health care system and robust hospital care, Islamic Republic of Iran has been able to contain the number of deaths to a greater extent. As far as the number of cases and sustained virus circulation, the commitment of the people to subscribe to essential public health measures is critical. The consecutive waves of increases in the number of cases and deaths has coincided with festivities, elections or religious gatherings, which increase the possibility of people not adhering to essential public health measures. The Government has put various restrictions to mitigate exposure, such as closure of educational institutions, closing businesses earlier, making mask wearing mandatory in public places; however, for social and economic reasons people need to go out and hence are more susceptible to getting infected.

Despite all of the odds, the Government has been able to secure a reasonable number of vaccine doses to vaccinate the most vulnerable among the population. As the main source of vaccine doses for Islamic Republic of Iran is the COVAX Facility, the global supply chain interruption caused delays in receiving vaccines from COVAX. The Ministry has worked hard with WHO, UNICEF and other partners to secure more vaccines bilaterally from different countries and also to procure more vaccines outside the COVAX Facility. Active bilateral engagement with countries manufacturing vaccines by the Government also enabled it to receive donations bilaterally. This has enabled the receipt of more vaccines. Noting that Islamic Republic of Iran is actively pursuing indigenous vaccine production and 2 versions of the vaccines have been approved by the Iranian Food and Drug Administration and rolled out.

So far, the country has received 9 699 200 doses of AstraZeneca and Sinopharm through the COVAX Facility, which includes a donation of 2.9 million doses from Japan specified for Islamic Republic of Iran. In addition, half a million doses have been made available by the Government from the indigenous vaccine produced by Islamic Republic of Iran. This increased vaccine coverage exponentially and as of 13 September, more than 20% of over 18 year olds of the Iranian population has been vaccinated. If the current flow of vaccine from COVAX and other sources is maintained, Islamic Republic of Iran will be able to meet the WHO Director-General's proposed target by the end of the year, and in fact, will be able to cover more of the population than the proposed target. The vaccination centres I personally visited present a state-of-the-art arrangement where from registration to observing the side-effects are well structured and professionally arranged. Islamic Republic of Iran crossed the one million mark yesterday when more than 1.2 million people were vaccinated across the country. This results in a vote of confidence in the health system of Islamic Republic of Iran.

Number of vaccinated people so far:

First dose: 26 139 133

Second dose: 13 075 601

Total: 39 214 734

Past 24 hours: 1 348 183

[Statement on COVID-19 by WHO's Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean](#)

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