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Editorial

COVID- 19: When to expect its end?

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The World has never been in a better position to thwart the COVID-19 pandemic, and it's overwhelming news for us all. But are we indeed at the endgame of the pandemic? Should we lower our guard and put the masks away? These are some questions that strike our minds every day. Yet, on the other hand, the number of weekly reported COVID-19 fatalities fell to its lowest level since March 2020 in the second week of September 2022. This is something great to digest long after the pandemic's beginning.

In the second week of September 2022, World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus stated that the end of the epidemic was near. In his statement, He said, "We have never been in a stronger position to end the pandemic," However, he offered a word of caution, saying that the World is still "not there yet."

According to WHO statistics, India has had 44,539,046 confirmed cases of COVID-19, resulting in 528,355 deaths as on September 2022. Throughout the pandemic, India's economy was effectively shut down due to varying degrees of strictness in lockdowns. Except for a few necessary services and activities, stores, cafés, industries, transportation services, and commercial enterprises all came to a halt for extended periods of time, wreaking havoc on the economy. The Reserve Bank of India's report on currency and finance for FY22, released in April 2022 this year, stated that it would take roughly 15 years for the Indian economy to recover from the losses caused by the

coronavirus pandemic. This estimate is based on the actual growth rates of -6.6 percent for FY21 and 8.9 percent for FY22, as well as a growth rate of 7.2 percent for FY23 and 7.5 percent after that. The research estimates output losses of 19.1 trillion rupees for FY21, 17.1 trillion rupees for FY22, and Rs 16.4 trillion for FY23. The report does not represent the opinions of the RBI. Instead, it represents the viewpoints of its authors, all of whom are members of the RBI's Department of Economic and Policy Research.

In this context, whether or not the COVID-19 epidemic is over becomes the most important predictor of how the Indian economy will do in the future. Recent data also indicate that the situation is improving. In India, the seven-day moving average of daily new infections has remained stable in the 5,000 to 6,000 range for the previous ten days. This is a significant decrease from the previous peak of 19,658 on July 24th, when India had only approximately 1,000 cases per day in the first week of April. So, is India no longer in danger? Experts believe serious COVID infections are decreasing, but the virus will persist. We must watch for new variations from the northern hemisphere in the coming winter. The virus appears to be here to stay with us but seems not to be so seriously endangering.

Businesses hope the country has moved on from the COVID-induced lockdowns, with health experts predicting reduced mortality and a more regulated scenario. However, given the potential of novel variations arising and the likelihood of a surge in some places, we may expect a halt of activities in a planned manner as and when deem necessary

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from the authorities. Till then practicing COVID appropriate behavior at-least in crowded setting, and by those with symptoms is expected. Vaccination and modification in genetic algorithms of COVID-19 virus by natural selection and evolution can be game changers in this sphere. Lets keep our fingers crossed and be a responsible national and work in support for the people and organisations dealing with COVID-19 pandemic.

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