Ramping Up Vaccine supply

What is the issue?

- It is less than a month after the Centre revised its vaccination policy and took over the responsibility of vaccine procurement from the States.
- But, old worries of vaccine supply constraint appear to have resurfaced.

What is the current vaccination pace?

- The Centre's CoWIN database shows that the weekly pace of vaccination has declined to nearly 60% of what was seen in the week after June 21.
- This has caused several States, particularly in South India, to complain of a shortage.
- On June 21, 2021 the first day of the new policy, 91 lakh doses were administered.
- Until June 27, it was about 4 crore.
- The peak of June 21-27 saw 60 lakh vaccines a day becoming the norm.
- However, the last time India crossed that daily figure was July 3.
- So, the period July 5-11 saw only 2.3 crore vaccine doses dispensed.
- The daily doses have again slipped to 30-40 lakh.

What is the vaccination coverage so far?

- India still has managed to inoculate only 33% of its adult population with at least one dose.
- And just about 8% have been fully vaccinated (two doses).
- At this rate, it is impossible for the Centre to deliver on its stated goal of inoculating all Indian adults by the end of 2021.
- Also, there are clear signs of increasing number of cases.
- The nature of rise in cases and deaths in countries such as the U.S. and U.K suggests that India is not totally out of danger.

What does this call for?

- The concerns over a third wave have been voiced.
- But meaningful preparedness entails having enough vaccines.
- At least 86 lakh doses have to be administered every day.
- This target has to be met if all Indian adults are to be fully vaccinated by the

end of 2021.

- Centre continues to put the onus on States for planning but does not address the concern of inadequate Covaxin supplies.
- It has ordered at least 8 crore doses since January 2021 but only 4.7 crore have been administered.
- While daily vaccination rates will see spikes and dips, aggressive publicity measures and campaigns are necessary to boost vaccination.
- The Centre and States must work together towards this.

Source: The Hindu

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