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March 26th, 2020

Topic: - Coronavirus | Why 21-day Lockdown period?

- *There are scientific basis and epidemiological significance for the 21-day lockdown period announced by PM Modi.*
- *Is there any public health/epidemiological significance to the 21-day lockdown period announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi?*

Let's understand this:-

- It seems that rich scientific data has fed this decision to announce a 21-day lockdown period.
- In fact, 21-day quarantines have been discussed elaborately in the context of Ebola and the calculations

are based on the estimated incubation period of the virus in a human host. The 21-day quarantine value is derived from interpretations of outbreak data, past and present, public health experts said.

What is the Incubation period?

- ***The period between exposure to an infection and the appearance of the first symptoms.***

Median incubation period:-

- “In epidemiological terms, the logic is that we have arrived at an incubation period of 14 days. Give another week for the residual infection to die out, for the tail end, to be entirely safe, and you arrive at 21 days,” says Tamil Nadu’s Director of Public Health K. Kolandasamy. This being a new coronavirus, they have estimated that the median incubation period (the time between the entry of the virus to the onset of symptoms/ disease) falls within this period.

Arun Shah is also known for his seminal study on Acute Encephalitis Syndrome with T Jacob John, the epidemiologist at the Christian Medical College in Vellore, Tamil Nadu.

- “All viruses can sustain or exist only by replicating. A virus cannot reproduce outside a cell, as it is completely dependent on a host cell to survive. This can be achieved by social distancing,” Arun Shah said.

- “It is imperative to slow down and break the virus chain. We know that the first one lakh people [globally] were infected by Covid-19 in over 67 days. The next one lakh were infected in more than 11 days while the next one lakh added on to the lot in just four days. That is why social distancing is a must,”

(Source:- The Hindu & India today)

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