



India Resists Community Transmission Tag

Why in News

As per a latest report by the [World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](#), India continues to label itself as a country with no Community Transmission (CT) since the beginning of the [Covid-19 pandemic](#).

- Countries such as the **United States, Brazil, United Kingdom, France** have all labelled themselves as being in the '**community transmission**' stage whereas **Italy and Russia do not label** themselves as being in 'community transmission'.

Key Points

▪ Community Transmission (CT):

- It is **one of the stages of the Pandemic**.
- Broadly, CT is **when new cases in the last 14 days can't be traced to those who have an international travel history**, when cases can't be linked to specific clusters.
- CT classification is now **divided into four levels**, from low incidence (CT1) to very high incidence (CT4).

Four Stages of a Pandemic

▪ Stage 1-Imported Transmission:

- It is reported among the travellers entering the country via the borders and airports. This can be controlled through thermal screening and quarantine.

▪ Stage 2-Local Transmission:

- It is defined as the transmission through direct contact with an infected person within the country.

▪ Stage 3-Community Transmission:

- It signifies that a virus is circulating in the community and can affect people with no history of travel to affected areas or of contact with an infected person.

▪ Stage 4- Epidemic:

- Stage 4 is when the disease actually becomes an epidemic in a country, such as it (Covid-19) was in China, with large numbers of infections and a growing number of deaths with no end in sight. It is then considered to be endemic or now prevalent in the region.

▪ India's Current Classification:

- India **opts for the lower, less serious classification called 'cluster of cases'**.
- It says '**Cases detected in the past 14 days are predominantly limited to well-defined clusters** that are not directly linked to imported cases'.
- It is assumed that there are a number of unidentified cases in the area. This **implies a low**

risk of infection to others in the wider community if exposure to these clusters is avoided.

▪ **Implications for India for not classifying itself as being in CT:**

- India's refusal to describe itself as being in community transmission shows an **“ostrich in the sand” approach** since being in CT — far from being stigmatic or an indicator of failure **shows how authorities addressed a pandemic**.
- If **cases were still a cluster**, it would mean that the government ought to be **prioritising testing, contact tracing and isolating** to prevent further infection spread. While on the other hand **being in CT, it meant prioritising treatment and observing advisories** to stay protected.
- **Community transmission means that the health system has now lost track of the trajectory of the virus** and infections are happening without the source of the infection being known.
- Once the government accepts community transmission, **pandemic control strategy will move on to the next phase**, which is the mitigation phase, when the focus will be to ensure that only those people get to the hospital who really need medical care. This would ensure lives are saved. **Keeping track of infections or containing them would then no longer be the primary strategy.**

[Source:TH](#)

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