

SINGAPORE SHUTS DOWN SCHOOLS



Issue

The B.1.167 variant of the Wuhan virus has been affecting children in Singapore that has made the government think about shutting schools.

Background

Singapore has been at the forefront of containing Covid-19 infection but the rates have increased in recent times. Also, children are yet to be inoculated.

Details

- Government officials have said that the variant was more visible among young children but only showed mild symptoms in them.
- Singapore recently witnessed highest single day spike of Covid-19 cases that were linked locally. The numbers have not yet disclosed.
- The cluster of cases was observed in a tuition centre that has made the government to restrict its movements and interactions.

The B.1.167 variant and children

- The B.1.167 variant is the major reason for surge in cases in India. It is termed to be more infectious than other strains. WHO has considered it as a variant of concern.
- The strain has further mutated into E484Q and L452R but no evidence has been still found to term it as severe form of infection.
- There is a reason for greater infection rates in children. The new variant is said to have a mutation that allows it to easily latch onto human cells and cause an infection.

- The SARS-CoV-2 virus attaches itself to ACE-2 receptors. Since children have low number of ACE-2 receptors, it was said that they were less likely to be affected.
- However, the new variant holds on to ACE-2 receptors more strongly. This allows it to have less attachment sites and still infect people.

NOTES

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