

# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY EFFORTS IN INDIA ON **COVID-19**



**VIGYAN PRASAR**

COMPILED BY:  
**VIGYAN PRASAR**  
(AN AUTONOMOUS INSTITUTE OF  
DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY)  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

**UPDATED REGULARLY**  
DATE: APRIL 13, 2020



डॉ हर्ष वर्धन  
Dr Harsh Vardhan

स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण, विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी  
व पृथ्वी विज्ञान मंत्री, भारत सरकार

Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare,  
Science & Technology and Earth Sciences  
Government of India

सबका साथ, सबका विकास, सबका विश्वास  
Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas

## FOREWORD

The Novel Coronavirus has spread rapidly throughout the world and assumed the proportion of a Pandemic. Given the lack of an efficacious vaccine as well as non-availability of suitable chemotherapeutic interventions, mankind is experiencing an unprecedented existential crisis.

The Ministry of Science and Technology, with its various departments, is contributing towards the national R&D efforts for a new antiviral, vaccines as well as affordable diagnostics. The Department of Science and Technology has launched a nationwide exercise to map and boost COVID 19 solutions with R&D, seed and scale-up support. DST has encouraged academic and research institutions to focus on the development of diagnostics, vaccines, antivirals, disease models and other R&D to enable a cure for this dreadful disease.

Vigyan Prasar, a national level organization of DST engaged in large-scale science communication and popularization activities, has brought out this compilation of initiatives that have been undertaken by the Ministry.

The compiled document "Science & Technology Efforts on COVID 19 in India" will serve as a ready-reckoner to scientists, researchers and scholars as well as other stakeholders who might be interested in providing technical solutions to combat COVID19.

  
(Dr. Harsh Vardhan)

कार्यालय: 348, ए-स्कंध, निर्माण भवन, नई दिल्ली-110011 • Office: 348, A-Wing, Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi - 110011

Tele: (O) : +91-11-23061661, 23063513 • Telefax: 23062358 • E-mail: hfwminister@gov.in

निवास: 8, तीस जनवरी मार्ग, नई दिल्ली-110011 • Residence: 8, Tees January Marg, New Delhi - 110011

Tele: (R) : +91-11-23794649 • Telefax: 23794640



# PREFACE

---

**A**t the fag end of 2019, China informed the World Health Organization (WHO) regarding the occurrence of cases of pneumonia of an unknown cause in Wuhan City in Hubei province. On January 9, 2020, the WHO issued a statement saying Chinese researchers have made the preliminary determination of the virus as a novel coronavirus. Since then, more than 1.7 million positive cases and around 110,000 deaths have been reported due to COVID-19 across the world till April 13, 2020. Till the same time, in India, more than 9,000 COVID-19 positive cases, and more than 320 deaths have been reported across the nation. Lockdowns, curfews, sealing of hotspots of outbreak area, massive airport screenings, quarantines, and social distancing have become the norm across the globe.

In these critical times, access to authentic information is of paramount importance. Vigyan Prasar (VP) has been covering the pandemic since the early days with the science communication perspective and journalistic flavour, ensuring that science and safety are the primary focus. VP is a national level organization of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, engaged in science communication and popularization. The principal objective of VP is to serve India's science popularization agenda. This is achieved through several strategically important two-way stakeholder specific approaches to communicate about principles and practice of science and technology and implications for development and quality of life. Science popularization therefore serves as a robust knowledge led tool to fulfill various mutually reinforcing public policy objectives.

For the benefit of our stakeholders, we have prepared a compilation of the most relevant parts of the initiatives and efforts taken by the Government of India through its various Science Ministries, Departments, and Funding organizations. These organizations are geared up and working tirelessly, since its outbreak, to combat the epidemic of COVID-19. These research-driven and technology-based interventions have been initiated on war footing to fight out the outburst of the pandemic. Government of India, through its various wings, like Science Ministries, Departments, and Funding organizations, has invited Calls for Proposals (CFPs) and Expression of Interest (EoIs) to enhance research and development related activities to battle the pandemic out.

We hope this initiative of Vigyan Prasar shall be a handy guide to scientists, researchers and scholars, especially who are interested in knowing various aspects of COVID-19 and contributing to the coronavirus warfare in whatever minuscule way, and people at large.

Vigyan Prasar  
New Delhi

- The e-newsletter shall be published on regular basis by collating all the inputs received till 1200 hrs of the preceding day of the release.
- From 14 April 2020, the older issues shall be available in Archival Section. The link will be provided.





# INDEX



|     | TOPICS  | PAGE NO.     |
|-----|---|--------------|
| 01. | S&T Efforts by The Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) | <b>7-9</b>   |
| 02. | S&T Efforts by Department of Science & Technology (DST)             | <b>10-17</b> |
| 03. | S&T Efforts by Department of Biotechnology (DBT)                    | <b>18-22</b> |
| 04. | S&T Efforts by Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR)   | <b>23-29</b> |
| 05. | S&T Efforts by Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO)     | <b>30-31</b> |
| 06. | S&T Efforts by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), MoHFW     | <b>32-33</b> |
| 07. | S&T Efforts by other Scientific and Academic Institutions           | <b>34-39</b> |
| 08. | S&T Efforts by Private Sector Enterprises                           | <b>40</b>    |
| 09. | COVID-19 in Digital Media   | <b>41-42</b> |

---

# DR. HARSH VARDHAN EXHORTS CSIR SCIENTISTS TO DEVELOP COVID-19 MITIGATION SOLUTIONS TO EFFECTIVELY COMBAT THE DISEASE

---

**12th April 2020, New Delhi**

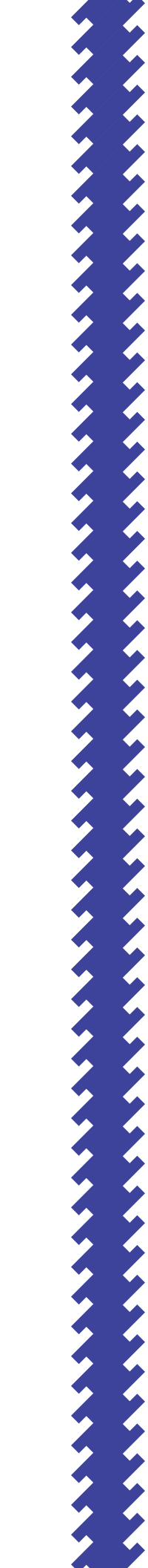
- Genetic sequencing was crucial in eradicating Polio; it will help in COVID-19 mitigation also, said Dr. Harsh Vardhan
- These are times of war, deliver solutions before war ends, not a routine research project, states Dr. Harsh Vardhan
- COVID-19 will give boost to country's resilience and self-reliance and enhance indigenous capacity in developing critical health care equipment

Today Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Science & Technology held a review with DG CSIR, Dr. Shekhar C. Mande and all the CSIR lab directors through video conference of the steps undertaken by CSIR and its constituent 38 labs towards mitigation of Corona Virus outbreak in the country.

DG CSIR Dr. Shekhar C. Mande informed that Core Strategy Group (CSG) has been set up in CSIR and the five verticals have been identified under which the COVID-19 related activities are being carried out. These include: Digital and Molecular Surveillance; Rapid and Economical Diagnostics; New Drugs /



Dr Harsh Vardhan during video conferencing on research and developments initiatives on Covid-19 with the directors of CSIR labs



Repurposing of Drugs and associated production processes; Hospital Assistive Devices and PPEs; and, Supply Chain and Logistics Support Systems. Dr. Mande also mentioned that 15 CSIR labs are working in close partnership with major Industries, PSUs, MSMEs and other departments and ministries at the time of the crisis in the country.

After briefing of all the efforts being made by the CSIR labs in finding a solution for COVID-19, Dr. Harsh Vardhan informed them about the steps being taken by the Government of India in combating COVID-19.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan exhorted CSIR scientists and said, “India has high expectations from its scientific community and I am sure that the community will rise to the occasion and deliver in this time of need”. He appreciated that CSIR Labs were also participating in testing of swab samples of COVID patients and some of them have started doing genetic sequencing of virus with a target of doing 500 sequencing in coming weeks. Dr. Harsh Vardhan said, “Genetic sequencing is very crucial in identifying the host response as well as identifying population vulnerability to the disease.” He said, “These genetic sequencing efforts remind me of Polio eradication movement 26 years back. Towards the fag end of the Polio movement, active surveillance of the country was done to find out the cases of acute flaccid paralysis. That time also, genetic sequencing was used to establish the travel history of polio virus which eventually helped in the eradication of polio.”

He also appreciated CSIR for partnering with MSMEs, Major industries, PSUs working on RT-PCR machines. He said, “Plasma based therapy is very much needed at this hour. For this, we need to

motivate the patients who have recovered from the COVID-19 to donate blood.”

He also appreciated the work done by CSIR-NAL with BHEL and BEL on Ventilators, Oxygen Enrichment Devices and are also developing 3-D printed face shields, face masks, gowns and other protective equipment. “All these things will help us in next few weeks.”, He said.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan, however, cautioned, CSIR scientists to develop COVID-19 mitigation solutions keeping fixed timeframe in mind. “These are times of war, CSIR scientists should work to deliver solutions before war ends, they should not treat it as a routine research project”. He said, “COVID-19 has also come as a blessing in disguise as it will give boost to country’s resilience and self-reliance and enhance indigenous capacity in developing critical health care equipment.” He also appreciated the collaboration being done by the CSIR scientists using Video Conferencing tools and reiterated the scientists that while doing research they should continue observing social distancing and lockdown because till such time vaccine is developed by scientists to combat COVID-19, these two remain the most potent form of social vaccine.

Dr. Shekhar C. Mande, DG, CSIR, Dr. Anurag Agrawal, Director, Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (CSIR-IGIB) and Dr. Nakul Parashar, Director, Vigyan Prasara were present in the review meeting with the Union Minister. Directors of remaining 38 CSIR labs attended the meeting through Video Conference.

---

<https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=202188>

---

---

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY EFFORTS TO DEAL WITH COVID-19 BY

# Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA)

---

---

### **Mobilising Scientific Community**

The office of the PSA has played a coordinating role for government ministries/departments, scientific institutions, academia and enterprises to accelerate decisions on dealing with research and innovation based actions to meet the COVID-19 challenges. Support has been provided to enable national, state and local bodies towards evidence-based action and to mobilise the scientific community for providing targeted solutions.

To this end, the O/o PSA constituted the Science & Technology Empowered Committee for COVID-19 on 19 March 2020. The committee was chaired by Prof Vinod Paul, Member, NITI Aayog and Prof K VijayRaghavan, Principal Scientific Adviser, and is responsible for coordination amongst science agencies, scientists, industries and regulatory bodies, and to take speedy decisions on research and development related issues to tackle the Sars-Cov-2 virus and the COVID-19 disease.

The committee has worked towards implementation of scientific solutions to meet COVID-19 related challenges. It has enabled ICMR to issue the required notification allowing institutes under DST, DBT, CSIR, DAE, DRDO and Indian Institute of Science (IISc) to self-assess and prepare their BSL labs for research and testing of coronavirus through the standard and rigorous protocols as stipulated by ICMR.

A mechanism has been evolved between various STI funding ministries/ departments/agencies to ensure a rapid and coordinated mechanism to support various research and innovation projects for:

- (i) a Task Force on Repurposing of Drugs (TFORD-COVID19) has been constituted to look into the status of scientific evidence, technology readiness levels, the status of IP, manufacturability in India etc. In depth information on various drug candidates will help to allow informed decision making. The regulatory/legal processes are also being addressed.
- (ii) mathematical models to track the disease spread and models to predict the medical equipment and auxiliary requirements of the COVID-19.
- (iii) manufacturing of test kits, ventilators, PPE in India.

The Government of India on 29 Mar 2020 constituted 11 Empowered Groups of Officers, under DM Act 2005, to engineer a well-planned & coordinated emergency response to ensure health & economic security of millions of Indians from COVID19 outbreak. These Groups are empowered to identify problem effective solutions therefor; delineate policy; formulate plans; and take necessary steps for effective and time-bound implementation for these. PSA is a member of the Group responsible for coordinating with the private sector, NGO, International bodies for response-related activities.

## **Aarogya Setu- Links contact tracing and testing**

The O/o PSA has been instrumental in the launch and outreach of the AarogyaSetu App. The app built through public-private-partnership will help people assess themselves the risk for their catching the Corona Virus infection by tracking infected cases in the vicinity. This is a data protected App using cutting edge Bluetooth technology, algorithms and artificial intelligence tools.

The App will help the administration to take necessary, timely steps for assessing the risk of spread of COVID-19 infection and ensuring isolation where required. The PSA also serves on a committee constituted by the Cabinet Secretariat to evaluate and ensure development and launch of Citizen App technology platform to help citizens and government in combating COVID-19 issues arising out of this pandemic.

## **Advisory on Homemade Mask Manual**

The O/o PSA has issued a detailed manual on homemade masks for curbing the spread of Coronavirus. The guide provides a simple outline of best practices to make, use and reuse masks to enable NGOs and individuals to self-create such masks and accelerate the widespread adoption of masks across India. This has now become a part of the national advisory for citizenry issued by the MoH&FW.

The manual has been released in several regional languages.

## **COVID-19 Critical Medical Supplies Digital Platform**

COVID-19 critical medical supplies advisory cell is enabled by a digital platform to facilitate States with managing supply and demand of critical medical equipment, and enable efficient decision making with regards to procurement of the same.

The platform has been developed by Invest India (of DPIIT) in partnership with the O/o PSA and will be provided to the States through the MHA Empowered Committee. The portal will help:

- national Demand aggregation of critical medical equipment
- provide access to Supplier information at one place – GeM, Invest India, Industry Association (FICCI, PhD Chamber of Commerce, CII, etc.)
- enable states to estimate numbers of critical medical equipment based on the number of patients and health care workers
- centralized query mechanism and online facilitation for States seeking advice on managing medical equipment demand/supply/usage single source of information for people, and infrastructure resources prepared by NSDS geotagging of crises management infrastructure (health care centers, isolation centers, etc.) along with the district-wise patient load.

## **Convergence on the COVID Innovation challenges**

The Office of the PSA has converged efforts across various government departments and programme to identify innovations that can tackle COVID-19 challenges. The effort has:

- (i) brought together DST, AIM, StartUp India and AGNIi to evolve standard criteria for evaluation and shortlisting of best solutions
- (ii) sensitise R&D and academic institutions and City Clusters to submit solutions for COVID-19 challenges
- (iii) enable new potential technologies for testing at government labs/academic institutions
- (iv) connecting with industry partners through CII for ensuring rapid manufacturing
- (v) channelling financial resources and other enabling mechanisms for their implementation
- (vi) so far 22 Start-ups have been





shortlisted for support by AGNI team from more than 400 applications

### **Industry coordination and Participation through CSR**

The O/o PSA worked with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs for issuing an enabling OM for the use of CSR funds for research and innovation projects for providing solutions to meet the COVID-19 challenges.

This has ensured the speedy engagement of industries to support the COVID crisis with resources through available CSR in support of the O/o PSA is coordinating with R&D labs for accessing these funds as Healthcare, and preventive healthcare are covered under Schedule VII of Companies Act as Specified CSR activity.

### **Medical Equipment Regulation The Office of the Principal Scientific**

Advisor has provided specific support to help understand and formulate regulatory requirements in the Indian context for ventilators and other medical equipment.

### **S&T Core Team**

A 'Science & Technology core team' has been set up in the office of the Principal Scientific Advisor to crowdsource ideas and solutions from experts, companies, academia and citizens to tackle the spread of the COVID-19 virus in the country.

### **Access to health care equipment for vulnerable sections**

The O/o PSA is working on specific measures for the elderly and the underprivileged and people without phone access.

### **COVID Gyan- Vigyan Prasar**

The Office has been closely working with science communication agencies such as Vigyan Prasar. COVID Gyan (<https://covid-gyan.in>), a website dedicated to scientifically accurate COVID-19 content and resources, has been launched as a joint initiative of multiple research institutions.

**Website link:** <http://psa.gov.in/>

---

---

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY EFFORTS ON COVID-19

by

# Department of Science and Technology (DST)

---

---

### Rural Women from Assam prepare products like hand sanitizer, a homemade mask to combat COVID19

Rural Women Technology Park (RWTP) under CSIR-North East Institute of Science and Technology, Jorhat, Supported by SEED Division, Department of Science and Technology (DST), have engaged rural women to prepare various products such as hand sanitizer, homemade mask, and liquid disinfectant to be distributed freely among family members and poor people in the nearby village to help combat COVID-19 in the area.

Rural women from the region were trained to produce homemade mask from traditional 'Gamocha' (a traditional Assamese cotton towel) by RWTP, Jorhat. Design of the homemade mask has been finalized, around 150 Gamochas purchased and two sewing machines arranged (6 homemade masks can be prepared from one Gamocha).



Homemade made masks  
from Gamocha



**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/rural-women-assam-prepare-products-hand-sanitizer-homemade-mask-combat-covid19>

### India To Deploy COVID-recovered Patients' Antibodies In Plasma Therapy Trial

India will soon start clinical trials of a plasma treatment for critical COVID-19 patients, according to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). Convalescent plasma therapy is a process in which blood plasma from a patient who has recovered from COVID-19 is infused into a critically ill patient so that the specific antibodies present in the blood of the recovered person can help fight the infection.

Researchers called convalescent plasma therapy a "promising rescue option" for severe COVID-19 patients, but added

that large randomised control trials are needed. The study appeared on Tuesday in the American journal, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS). The trails become important as there is no tried and tested anti-viral drug or vaccine against the novel Coronavirus yet.

**Website link:** <https://www.republicworld.com/india-news/general-news/india-to-start-clinical-trial-of-plasma-therapy-for-covid-19-treatment.html>

### **DST funded company to scale up device to enrich oxygen supply in air for the treatment of COVID-19 patients**

Department of Science and Technology (DST) has taken the initiative to scale up membrane oxygenator equipment (MOE) that it has developed to treat COVID-19 patients. For the purpose, the Department provided funds to Genrich Membranes, a spin-off company, based on proprietary technology licensed from CSIR-National Chemical Laboratory (NCL), Pune. Based on innovative, indigenous hollow-fibre membrane technology, the MOE enriches oxygen in the air up to 35% under pressure (4-7 bar, using oil-free compressor).

The equipment consists of membrane cartridge, oil-free compressor, output flowmeter, humidifier bottle, nasal-cannula, and tubing & fittings. The compressed, filtered air from the compressor is fed to the membrane cartridge, which selectively permeates oxygen over nitrogen offering oxygen-enriched air as the product at the ambient pressure. The membrane cartridge capable of distinguishing oxygen and nitrogen restricts the passage of viruses, bacteria, and particulate matter. The product air is of medical grade.

The device is safe, does not require

trained human resources for its operation, needs minimum maintenance, is portable, compact, and with plug-and-play facility provides on-site, quick-start oxygen-enriched air.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/dst-funded-company-scale-device-enrich-oxygen-supply-air-treatment-covid-19-patients>

### **Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute**

develops three new medical equipment Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute of Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST), Trivandrum had developed three new equipment for the treatment of COVID-19 patients. Acrylosorb, equipment to collect body fluids and dispose of it safely, is the first equipment developed. Another one is isolation pod that restricts COVID-19 patients from having contact with others. Bubble helmet is the third equipment which an alternative option for the traditional oxygen masks.

**Website link:** <https://www.sctimst.ac.in/>

### **SCTIMST scientists develop disinfected barrier-examination booth for examining COVID-19 patients**

Scientists at Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST), Trivandrum an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Govt. of India, have designed and developed a disinfected barrier-examination booth for examining COVID-19 patients. The innovative disinfected examination booth is closed like a telephone booth for examining and reviewing the patient without direct contact with the doctor to prevent transmission of infection. It is equipped with a lamp, table fan, rack, and Ultraviolet (UV) light.

**Website link:** <https://www.sctimst.ac.in/>



### **DST approves funding for developing a gel for nasal passage as prevention for COVID 19**

Department of Science and Technology (DST) has taken the initiative to develop a gel that can be applied to the nasal passage, which is a significant entry point of the coronavirus. For the purpose, the Department of Biosciences and Bioengineering, IIT Bombay, has been selected to develop the solution. This solution is not only expected to protect the safety of healthcare professionals but also can lead to a reduction in community transmission of COVID-19, thereby helping disease management.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/dst-approves-funding-developing-gel-nasal-passage-prevention-covid-19>

### **DST invites short-term proposals for developing antiviral Nano-coating and Nano based material for scale-up by industry and startups to combat COVID-19**

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) using the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) portal invites ideas in the form of short-term proposals for developing antiviral Nanocoating and new nano-based material for use in Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). The technology then can be transferred to a partnering industry or start-up for scale-up. Such Nanocoatings could contribute immensely in the emerging health care requirements in India's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. This call is for bringing the Academic groups and relevant Industrial Groups together for submitting proposals to DST's Nano Mission. It encourages multidisciplinary efforts and collaboration with industrial partners for scaling up production within a year.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/dst->

invites-short-term-proposals-developing-antiviral-nano-coating-and-nano-based-material-scale

### **DST sets up Task Force for mapping of technologies by Start-Ups on COVID-19**

DST has set up a COVID-19 Task Force for mapping of technologies from R&D labs, academic institutions, start-ups, and MSMEs to fund nearly market-ready solutions in the area of diagnostics, testing, health care delivery solutions, equipment supplies. Some of these solutions include masks and other protective gear, sanitizers, affordable kits for screening, ventilators and oxygenators, data analytics for tracking, monitoring, and controlling the spread of outbreak through AI and IOT based solutions, to name a few.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/dst-sets-task-force-mapping-technologies-start-ups-covid-19>

### **DST launches nationwide exercise to map & boost COVID-19 solutions with R&D, SEED & scale-up support**

DST has set up a "COVID-19 Task Force" for mapping of technologies from R&D labs, academic institutions, start-ups and MSMEs. The capacity mapping group has representatives from DST, DBT, ICMR, MeitY, CSIR, AIM, MSME, Start-up India and AICTE. The aim is to identify the most promising start-ups that are close to scaleup, who may need financial or other help or connects based on its projected demand to rapidly scaleup.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/dst-launches-nationwide-exercise-map-boost-covid19-solutions-rd-seed-scale-support>

### **Coating developed by JNCASR may prevent transmission of infection**

Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bengaluru an autonomous institution under the



Department of Science and Technology, has developed a one-step curable anti-microbial coating which, when coated on different surfaces such as textile, plastic and so on could kill a range of virus types including COVID 19. The molecules developed can chemically cross-link with different surfaces upon UV irradiation. Upon the formation of the coating, it has been shown to permeabilize the membranes of pathogens (i.e. bacteria) leading to their inactivation.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/coating-developed-jncasr-may-prevent-transmission-infection>

### **SCTIMST ties up with Wipro 3D to manufacture automated ventilators to meet COVID-19 related crisis**

Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST), an institute of National Importance of the Department of Science and Technology, has tied up with Wipro 3D, Bengaluru to jointly build up on a prototype of an emergency ventilator system based on Artificial Manual Breathing Unit (AMBU), developed by SCTIMST followed by its clinical trial and manufacture. The ventilators can help meet urgent requirements arising out of the COVID-19 related crisis that the country is facing. AMBU bag or a bag-valve-mask (BVM) is a hand-held device used to provide positive pressure ventilation to a patient who is either not breathing or who is breathing inadequately.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/sctimst-ties-wipro-3d-manufacture-automated-ventilators-meet-covid-19-related-crisis>

### **DST-SERB announces first set of approved projects to combat COVID-19 & related respiratory infections**

Department of Science and Technology- Science and Engineering Research Board

(DST-SERB) announced several special research project calls to ramp up national R&D efforts against the epidemic.

The first set of 5 projects has been selected by DST-SERB, which will be supported for further development into implementable technologies.

Three of these projects concern the highly important issue of antiviral and virustatic surface coating of inanimate surfaces, such as personal protection equipment (PPE).

One project deals with the identification of metabolite biomarkers in COVID-19 infected patients enabling therapeutic target identification.

The last one project concerns with the development of antibodies against the receptor-binding domain of the spike glycoprotein of coronavirus.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/dst-serb-announces-first-set-approved-projects-combat-covid-19-related-respiratory-infections>

### **DST sets up rapid response centre at SINE, IIT Bombay to combat COVID-19**

Department of Science & Technology, Government of India in a quick response to combat COVID-19 global pandemic approved setting up of a Centre for Augmenting WAR with COVID-19 Health Crisis (CAWACH) at a total cost of Rs 56 Cr to scout, evaluate and support the innovations and start-ups that address COVID-19 challenges. The Society for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (SINE), a technology business incubator at IIT Bombay supported by DST has been identified as the Implementing Agency of the CAWACH. CAWACH will identify up to 50 innovations and startups that are in the area of a novel, low cost, safe and effective ventilators, respiratory aids, protective gears, novel solutions for sanitizers, disinfectants, diagnostics, therapeutics, informatics

and any effective interventions to control COVID-19.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/dst-sets-rapid-response-centre-sine-iit-bombay-combat-covid-19>

### **Hand sanitizer prepared by ARCI provided to police personnel on duty during COVID-19 crisis**

Considering the scarcity of hand sanitizers in the market, International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy & New Materials (ARCI), Hyderabad, an autonomous R&D Centre of Department of Science and Technology (DST), Govt of India, has produced hand sanitizer as per the WHO standards and distributed it among police personnel in Hyderabad, students, and staff of the institution. A team of scientists, students, and staff voluntarily came forward and produced about 40 litres of sanitizer.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/hand-sanitizer-prepared-arci-provided-police-personnel-duty-during-covid-19-crisis>

### **Challenge COVID-19 Competition (C3)**

National Innovation Foundation – India (NIF), an autonomous institute under the Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India has come up with a call inviting innovative citizens to participate in its Challenge COVID-19 Competition (C3). All interested innovators are welcome to participate with their creative ideas and innovations for problems or issues like reducing transmission of Coronavirus through original creative ideas, innovations, which can supplement the efforts of the government in slowing or eliminating the spread further, innovative ideas which can make activities like sanitizing one's hands, body, and home items etc.

Ideas are also invited for gainful

engagement of people at home, healthy food for nutrition and boosting immunity especially at the time of lockdown when raw materials are limited, (Personal Protective Equipment) PPE's and rapid diagnostic testing facilities for capacity building of healthcare and other areas.

**Website link:** <http://nif.org.in/upload/challenge-covid19-competition-c3.pdf>

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS AND  
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

### **Special Call under SATYAM to fight against COVID-19**

Department of Science and Technology invites concept note under 'Science and Technology of Yoga and Meditation (SATYAM)' for the appropriate intervention of yoga and meditation to fight against COVID-19 and other similar kinds of viruses. This special call aims to provide assistance to our society in today's critical condition arises due to pandemic COVID-19. The project may address on Improving immunity, Improving respiratory system, Stress, anxiety, depression and others. The concept note may be submitted at e-PMS (onlinedst.gov.in) till 30 April 2020.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/callforproposals/special-call-under-satyam-fight-against-covid-19>

### **Call for Expression of Interest - 2nd Set of Products**

Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Science and Technology (SCTIMST), Trivandrum an Institute of National Importance under Department of Science & Technology, Government of India, has developed designs and know-how for several products to combat the COVID 19 pandemic crisis. Sree Chitra is interested in transferring these designs and know-

how to entities that can manufacture and make it available to users. Expression of Interest (EOI) is invited from interested entities for this purpose.

**Website link:** <https://www.sctimst.ac.in/resources/Rev-EOI%20COVID%2019%20-%2008.04.2020.pdf>

### **Expression of Interest for Developing and manufacturing Devices for the fast track Programme for COVID-19 Pandemic**

Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Science and Technology (SCTIMST), Trivandrum invites manufacturers/startups/social groups who are interested in working with Institute to co-develop and manufacture medical devices on a fast track mode to support the distressing situation the epidemic COVID 19 has created for the development of Ambu bag based Ventilator, Ventilator Sharing Kit, Battery Operated Assistive Breathing Unit, Isolation Pods, Disposable Safety Face Shield and Deployable Field Units. Website link: <https://www.sctimst.ac.in/RESOURCES/EOI%20COVID%2019%20-%2029.03.2020.pdf>

### **Proposals invited on COVID-19 & related respiratory viral infections**

Science & Engineering Research Board (SERB), a statutory body of the Department of Science & Technology, invites proposals as part of special call under IRHPA (Intensification of Research in High Priority Area) scheme designed explicitly for COVID-19 and related respiratory viral infections to ramp up national R&D efforts for new antivirals, vaccines, and affordable diagnostics.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/pressrelease/proposals-invited-covid-19-related-respiratory-viral-infections>

### **TDB invites technology proposals for fighting COVID 19**

The Technology Development Board (TDB), a statutory body of Department of Science & Technology invites proposal applications from Indian companies and enterprises to address protection and home-based respiratory intervention for COVID-19 patients. The proposal may include technologically innovative solutions like low-cost masks, cost-effective scanning devices, technologies for sanitization of large areas as well as for contactless entry, rapid diagnostic kits and oxygenators, and ventilators.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/pressrelease/tdb-invites-technology-proposals-fighting-covid-19>

## **DST'S FUNDING TO START-UPS**

### **DST funds Pune healthcare startup for rapid detection of COVID-19**

The Department of Science & Technology (DST) has funded Module Innovations, a Pune-based healthcare startup working on the point-of-care diagnostics to develop its platform technology for rapid diagnosis of diseases to develop a test kit for detecting COVID-19 within 10 to 15 minutes. Using the proven concept from its flagship product 'USense', The startup is now developing nCoVSENSEs (TM) which is a rapid test device for detection of antibodies that have been generated against the COVID-19 in the human body. Website link: <http://moduleinnovations.com/>

### **Tech by Pune based Startup incubatee of Scitech Park to disinfect Maharashtra hospitals in COVID-19 fight**

A technology developed under the NIDHI PRAYAS program initiated by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Govt. of India by an incubatee company of Scitech Park, Pune

has emerged as an effective solution for India's fight against COVID 19 by reducing the viral load of infected areas within a room significantly within an hour. Various globally renowned labs have scientifically tested its usefulness in killing disease-causing viruses and bacteria in different types of closed environments like houses, hospitals, schools, farms, industries, and so on. One hour of operation of Ion generator machine reduces viral load within a room by 99.7% depending on room size.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/tech-pune-based-startup-incubatee-scitech-park-disinfect-maharashtra-hospitals-covid-19-fight>

### **DST and DBT funded startup develops silver-based disinfectant to fight COVID-19 pandemic**

Weinnovate Biosolutions, a Pune based startup supported jointly by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Department of Biotechnology (DBT), has developed a non-alcoholic aqueous-based colloidal silver solution uniquely made from its NanoAgCide technology for disinfecting hands and environmental surfaces.

The newly developed disinfectant is non-inflammable and free of hazardous chemicals. It can pose as an effective sanitizer to prevent the spread of the infection through contact, the prime method of transmission of the pandemic, thereby protecting health professionals and infected people.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/dst-funded-startup-develops-chemical-free-silver-based-disinfectant-fight-covid-19-pandemic>

### **Rapid diagnostic kit being developed by Pune based startup for COVID 19 screening**

Department of Science and Technology (DST) has funded FastSense Diagnostics, a start-up to develop a rapid diagnostic

kit for the screening of COVID-19. The company plans to roll out two products - a modified Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) based detection kit for confirmatory analysis in lesser time compared to existing detection methods (approximately 50 samples can be tested in an hour) and a portable chip-based module for rapid screening of target population based on the on-chip sensing technology that would provide on the spot results in less than 15 min per sample. The sample size for confirmatory tests can also be increased in the future to 100 samples/ hour.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/rapid-diagnostic-kit-being-developed-pune-based-startup-covid-19-screening>

## **INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS**

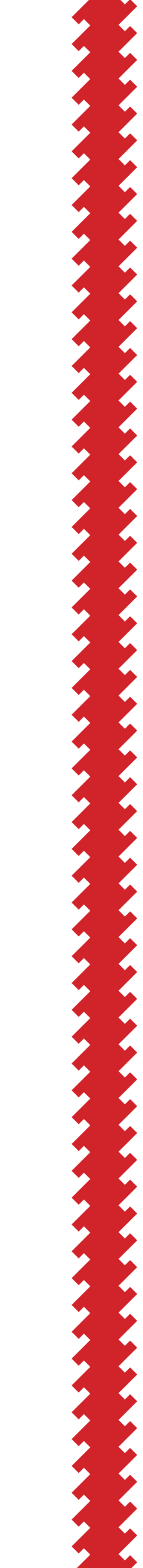
### **Call for Proposals: Indo-U.S. Virtual Networks for COVID-19**

The Indo-U.S. Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF) announces a Call for Proposals for COVID-19 Indo-U.S. Virtual Networks. IUSSTF encourages proposals that convincingly demonstrate the benefits and value of the Indo-U.S. partnership to advance research and address critical challenges related to COVID-19. Virtual Networks would allow Indian and U.S. scientists and engineers currently engaged in COVID-related research to carry out joint research activities through a virtual mechanism, leveraging existing infrastructure and funding. These network projects could be of two types: Knowledge R&D Networks and Public-Private Virtual Networks. Last date of submission: 15 May 2020

**Website link:** <https://iusstf.org/announcements-and-events>

### **United States - India Science and Technology Endowment Fund COVID-19 Ignition Grants**





IUSSTEF would select and support promising joint U.S.-India S&T based entrepreneurial initiatives that address the “development and implementation of new technologies, tools, and systems to address COVID-19 related challenges including monitoring, diagnosis, health and safety, public outreach, information and communication”. These initiatives can originate from government, academic, non-governmental or commercial entities and any combination thereof provided they focus on applied R&D, and have commercial potential. USISTEF would also consider proposals related to technologies/products that can be repurposed to address COVID-19 in the current scenario. USISTEF encourages projects that demonstrate a high degree of innovation leveraging advances in science and technology.

Last date of submission: 15 May 2020

**Website link:** <https://iusstf.org/announcements-and-events>

---

---

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY EFFORTS ON COVID-19

*by*

# Department of Biotechnology (DBT)

---

---

### **BIRAC supported Twenty In-Market Startup Products**

India Fights Corona: 20 In-Market products from BIRAC supported Startups as potential COVID solutions. AyuSync: Smart Stethoscope.

**Website link:** [http://birac.nic.in/birac\\_covid\\_solution.php](http://birac.nic.in/birac_covid_solution.php)

### **Startups breathe life into the battle**

A group of Bengaluru-based startups selected by the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms (C-CAMP) to push forward Covid-19 innovations has come up with more technologies to fight the pandemic. Among them is Respiraid by Biodesign Innovation Labs, Bengaluru, which is a portable, emergency and transport ventilation system that is based on automated respiratory assist device. Cardiac Design Labs has come up with wearable devices capable of real-time remote monitoring of vital statistics. "With India set to enter community transmission in multiple hot spots, the likelihood of hospitals and ICUs becoming severely congested is very high. Another city-based innovator, Leafbox Technologies, has developed a UVC-based air purifier that is also High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) and activated carbon filter functionalised with a coverage area of 900 sq ft. Their other product is a UVC steriliser box to be used for dry sanitisation of gadgets and medical instruments like phones, masks etc. Biomoneta, which is yet another

startup, has come up with a standalone plug-and-play decontamination technology best suited for hospitals.

**Website link:** <https://bangaloremirror.indiatimes.com/bangalore/others/startups-breathe-life-into-the-battle/articleshow/75089129.cms>

### **Development of Rapid IgM IgG detection kit for SARS COVID-19**

Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology (RGCB), Thiruvananthapuram is in the final stages of developing a rapid combined IgM, IgG lateral flow device, which is capable of detecting SARS CoVID-19 infection as short as four days post-infection of the virus. The kit is also capable of detecting IgG antibodies against the virus, which will reveal the status of the infected person's ability to fight the virus. On detecting IgG and being asymptomatic, the person can be declared immune to new infection at least for six months, as the IgG will provide immunity against the virus. It is believed that the antibodies will stay for a minimum period of 6 months according to previous data from other similar virus infection. Only time will tell whether the antibodies will last longer. IgM detection can be deployed in check-points, where asymptomatic patients can be identified, and measures are taken to isolate them, preventing further spread. This kit is jointly refined and mass produced by uBIO technologies a company incubated at RGCB-BioNest facility at Kochi,

now operating out of the same campus manufacturing similar devices for DRDO and with kits being exported to over 25 countries.

**Website link:** [https://www.rgcb.res.in/corona\\_alert\\_new.php](https://www.rgcb.res.in/corona_alert_new.php)

### **Development of Rapid IgM IgG detection kit for SARS CoVID-19 by RCB, Faridabad**

COVID-19 is the causative agent for the ongoing pandemic, and this virus belongs to the Coronaviridae family. Like other members of this family, the virus possesses a positive-sense single-stranded RNA genome. The genome encodes for the nsp12 protein, which houses the RNA-dependent-RNA polymerase (RdRP) activity responsible for the replication of the viral genome. A homology model of nsp12 was prepared using the structure of the SARS nsp12 (6NUR) as a model. The model was used to carry out in silico screening to identify molecules among natural products, or FDA approved drugs that can potentially inhibit the activity of nsp12. This exercise showed that vitamin B12 (methylcobalamin) might bind to the active site of the nsp12 protein. A model of the nsp12 in complex with substrate RNA and incoming NTP showed that Vitamin B12 binding site overlaps with that of the incoming nucleotide. A comparison of the calculated energies of binding for RNA plus NTP and methylcobalamin suggested that the vitamin may bind to the active site of nsp12 with significant affinity. It is, therefore, possible that methylcobalamin binding may prevent association with RNA and NTP and thus inhibit the RdRP activity of nsp12. Overall, computational studies suggest that methylcobalamin form of vitamin B12 may serve as an effective inhibitor of the nsp12 protein.

**Website link:** <https://osf.io/kqd6j/>

### **THSTI-ESICMC&H partnership for COVID-19 testing**

THSTI bioassay lab will now function as an extension of the diagnostic facility of ESIC Medical College and Hospital - Faridabad for COVID-19 testing. The first and only COVID-19 testing facility in the Faridabad region. The MoU signed between the two institutes will also enable training of human resources and capacity building at ESI hospital for COVID-19 testing by the bioassay lab team.

**Website link:** <https://thsti.res.in/news.php>


### **ICGEB launches COVID-19/SARS-CoV-2 Resource Platform**

The ICGEB platform, which has been fully integrated into the state-of-the-art Web site at ICGEB, offers Tools with links to Resources and Procedures, including Protocols for Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) in the preparation, isolation and detection of Sars-CoV-2 RNA by Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR), Reagents for positive control, and a Sequencing Service for local isolates of the virus, through our partner lab in the AREA Science Park. The ICGEB is offering Technical Assistance in the form of on-line Video Tutorials in the preparation, isolation and detection of Sars-CoV-2 RNA, as well as Remote, Technical Assistance during the reproduction of SOPs.

**Website link:** <https://www.icgeb.org/icgeb-launches-covid-19-sars-cov-2-resource-platform/>

### **Rajiv Gandhi Centre Biotechnology to develop humanised monoclonal antibodies to treat COVID-19**

The monoclonal antibodies are antibodies that recognise only specific proteins, called antigens, on the surface of specific bacteria or viruses. To deploy them as treatment, scientists take monoclonal antibodies produced by mice and change



their protein sequences to resemble those of humans. These humanised monoclonal antibodies have a lower chance of being rejected by the patient's body as well as can be mass produced in mouse cell lines. According to Dr Pillai, the RGCB had a technology transfer agreement with the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation to develop such humanised monoclonal antibodies.

**Website link:** <https://science.thewire.in/the-sciences/covid-19-research-empowered-committee-dst-dbt-niv-testing-kits-hcq-rt-pcr-gisaid/>

### **NII to develop antibody-based therapy for COVID-19**

DBT's National Institute of Immunology (NII) in Delhi is going to procure coronavirus and blood samples from recovered patients. Dr Amulya Panda, Director, NII, says that the samples from recovered patients will help in analysing the antibody quality in the blood to develop an antibody-based therapy. According to Dr Panda, studies are also underway on the spike protein of the novel coronavirus to develop a vaccine. Scientist at NII will utilize their previous expertise in vaccine development. They have previously developed an immunomodulator for leprosy. They are well equipped, from the laboratory to animal house and to the product development cell, to take a vaccine candidate from the laboratory to industry.

**Website link:** <https://www.natureasia.com/en/nindia/article/10.1038/nindia.2020.56>

### **THSTI efforts to understand the epidemiology of COVID-19**

The Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI), Faridabad, is working on an ELISA test for serological studies across the country which will essentially help understand the extent

of disease spread in India. According to Dr Gagandeep Kang, executive director, THSTI, the epidemiology research should take centre stage at this point in the life of the pandemic in India. Dr Kang said that it would help in understanding where and to what extent the disease has spread in India. According to her, the Indian population is dense, and there are so many poor people. Social distancing, therefore, may be a tricky proposition. The first task should be boosting public health research to help control the spread. The next step should be supplementary research for developing additional diagnostic tools, drugs and vaccines.

**Website link:** <https://www.natureasia.com/en/nindia/article/10.1038/nindia.2020.56>

### **Development of diagnostic kit for COVID-19 by THSTI**

According to Dr Gagandeep Kang, executive director of DBT's Faridabad based autonomous institute, the Translational Health Sciences and Technology (THSTI), institute is developing its own diagnostic kit for COVID-19. At present most of the kits used in India at the current time are developed by the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune. NIV is also validating nine alternative kits from private firms. Such validation involves running clinical samples through the kits and measuring the rates of false-positive and false-negative results. The THSTI's diagnostic kit is still some time away from being ready to use.

According to Dr. Kang, Government of India's memo regarding easing the norms of on COVID-19 research will make it easier to validate the test with human samples at THSTI also. Such efforts will boost the development of diagnostics and conducting clinical trials in this regard.

**Website link:** <https://science.thewire.in>



in/the-sciences/covid-19-research-empowered-committee-dst-dbt-niv-testing-kits-hcq-rt-pcr-gisaid/

### **DBT's Rapid Response Regulatory Framework for COVID-19**

The Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India along with Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has developed and notified a Rapid Response Regulatory Framework to provide expedited regulatory approvals for all diagnostics drugs and vaccines. Vaccine development is being supported by three Indian industries. Research on therapeutic and drug development has started. According to reports from the Union Health Ministry, the ministry is talking to all states and union territories about the action plan being undertaken by the stakeholders.

**Website link:** <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/small-biz/startups/newsbuzz/covid-19-task-force-to-map-of-technologies-to-fund-nearly-market-ready-solutions/articleshow/74839708.cms?from=mdr>

### **C-CAMP propelled technology accelerator partnership with UNHIE & Social Alpha for developing technologies**

The DBT's Bengaluru based bio-incubator, the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms (C-CAMP) has quickly catapulted a technology accelerator in partnership with the United Nations Health Innovation Exchange (UNHIE) and the non-profit firm Social Alpha to help innovators, start-ups and entrepreneurs with breakthrough innovations. According to Dr, Taslimarif Saiyed, CEO C-CAMP, the innovators will be able to take full advantage of an ecosystem of scientists, regulators, investors and industry in closing last-mile gaps in commercialising their technologies.

**Website link:** <https://www.natureasia.com/en/nindia/article/10.1038/nindia.2020.56>

### **DBT as a part of the task force for mapping of technologies on COVID-19**

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) is coordinating an effort to upscale the appropriate technologies and manufacturing available in India for addressing a plethora of issues related to COVID-19, as well as scout for new and developing solutions more relevant to the country to help prepare the nation for exigencies arising out of COVID-19 pandemic. The Department of Biotechnology, along with other stakeholders, has been made a part of such task force. The capacity mapping group will identify the most promising start-ups that are close to scale-up and may need financial or other help or connects or projected demand to scale up rapidly. The nodal officers of concerned Ministries and Departments have been requested to expedite the process of obtaining information on such start-ups and other entities supported by them that have technology solutions for any important aspect of COVID-19.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/dst-sets-task-force-mapping-technologies-start-ups-covid-19>

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS AND EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

**COVID-19 Research Consortium Department of Biotechnology (DBT)** and Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) announce COVID-19 Research Consortium and request for proposal with a focus on Diagnostics, Vaccines, Novel Therapeutics, Repurposing of Drugs or any other



intervention for control of COVID-19.

**Website:** <http://dbtindia.gov.in/latest-announcement/dbt-announce-covid-19-research-consortium>

### **DBT'S FUNDING TO START-UPS**

#### **DST and DBT funded startup develops silver-based disinfectant to fight COVID-19 pandemic**

Weinnovate Biosolutions, a Pune based startup supported jointly by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Department of Biotechnology (DBT), has developed a non-alcoholic aqueous-based colloidal silver solution uniquely made from its NanoAgCide technology for disinfecting hands and environmental surfaces.

The newly developed disinfectant is non-inflammable and free of hazardous chemicals. It can pose as an effective sanitizer to prevent the spread of the infection through contact, the prime method of transmission of the pandemic, thereby protecting health professionals and infected people.

**Website link:** <https://egov.eletsonline.com/2020/04/dst-funded-startup-develops-silver-based-disinfectant-to-fight-covid-19-pandemic/>

---

---

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY EFFORTS ON COVID-19

by

# Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR)

---

---

### Interventions for mitigating Coronavirus

Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) has strategically organized itself to pursue the desired R&D to develop, integrate, scale-up and deploy (in partnership of stakeholders) necessary technological interventions for combating Coronavirus pandemic in the Country. For the purpose, CSIR has set up a Core Strategy Group (CSG) and created challenge focused R&D Networks within the system and is synergistically interfacing them with industry and publicly funded organizations across the Country.

#### CSIR- National Chemical Laboratory (NCL) Pune ties up with Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) for production of medical devices

CSIR's constituent Lab, CSIR-NCL Pune, has been leading the way in promoting innovation and entrepreneurship through its Venture Centre for the past decade and innovations from there are helping in the fight against the Corona outbreak. Two of the recent innovations that can help



Digital Infrared Thermometer



Oxygen Enrichment Unit

in the mitigation of the Corona outbreak are Digital IR Thermometer and Oxygen Enrichment Unit (OEU).

**Website link:** <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1612414#.Xo75h5vTTUw.twitter>

#### Five Technology Verticals in Dynamic Mode

CSIR has set up five technology verticals in dynamic mode for addressing the emerging situation due to coronavirus pandemic, these include Digital and Molecular Surveillance, Rapid and Economical Diagnostics, New Drugs / Repurposing of Drugs and associated production processes, Hospital Assistive Devices and PPEs and Supply Chain and Logistics Support Systems.

**Website link:** <https://www.csir.res.in/>

#### High Powered Strategic Group for Monitoring the Outcome

A High Powered Strategic Group is in place under the Chairmanship of

DG, CSIR to review & monitor the progress and integrate CSIR efforts with the industry and publicly funded organizations across the country, for the necessary deployment of the developed technology. The group conducts its meeting every day through the online platform and takes significant decisions.

Website link: <https://www.csir.res.in/>

### **Digital and Molecular Surveillance**

- Digital Surveillance Platform – A platform for surveillance is being developed in partnership with Intel India. The database will be managed in a dynamic mode for feeding the R&D channels.
- Sample Collection - MoUs have been signed with hospitals and patients samples are being received from them. This has been in many different states, including Uttarakhand, UT of J&K, Delhi, Telangana, etc.
- Sequencing of Coronavirus - About 25 viral samples have been put up for sequencing, which will help in understanding how mutations are taking place in the virus. Further, it will indicate whether one or more viral strains are prevalent in India. It is expected that about 3-500 sequences will be done from clinical samples in the next 2-4 weeks.
- Strategy for Mitigation of Virus – Based on sequencing, strategy for mitigation of virus can be devised. Both host and virus RNA sequencing is being done, which will be linked to digital data.

Website link: <https://www.csir.res.in/>

### **Testing and Validation in Progress for Rapid and Economical Diagnosis**

CSIR is fully geared up to act as Testing and Validation Organization in this trying times. Apart from testing and validation, CSIR laboratories are also engaged in training human resources across all

the states in RT PCR techniques, and in handling the samples. Several of its laboratories are engaged in laboratories testing.

- Laboratories already testing: CSIR-CCMB, CSIR-IGIB, and CSIR-IIIM;
- Laboratories ready for the testing: CSIR-IMT, CSIR-IHBT, CSIR-IICB, CSIR-NEIST, CSIR- CDRI, CSIR-IITR, CSIR-NEERI, and CSIR-CFTRI;
- Laboratories Supporting State Governments with RT-PCR machines: CSIR-CLRI, CSIR-NIIST and CSIR-NIO
- Proposed validation centre: CSIR-CCMB & CSIR-IGIB

Website link: <https://www.csir.res.in/>

### **Paper diagnostic test**

A CRISPR/Cas-based paper diagnostic test has been developed. The test is under validation. It is expected that within 3-4 weeks, the same will be upscaled and validated. Tata Sons has agreed to support this endeavour.

Website link: <https://www.csir.res.in/>

### **Nested PCR based Diagnostic Tests**

Working is in progress on Nested PCR. It will be ready in about a week and will be useful for community testing as it is a sensitive test.

Website link: <https://www.csir.res.in/>

### **Serology based Diagnostic Tests**

The work is in progress on serology based diagnostic tests.

Website link: <https://www.csir.res.in/>

### **Reverse transcriptase PCR based Diagnostic Tests**

Reverse transcriptase needed for RT-PCR based assay is being produced in large quantities. This will help in ensuring supplies of the crucial enzyme for testing if a shortage of this reverse transcriptase



occurs in the country.

**Website link:** <https://www.csir.res.in/>

### **Shipping Container-based Diagnostic Labs**

Along with HP, Shipping Container-based Diagnostic Labs (Self Contained, -ve pressure, TrueNat MicroPCR, etc.) have been developed. They are being deployed in Delhi (2 nos) and Chennai (2 nos).

**Website link:** <https://www.csir.res.in/>

### **Development of New Drugs / Repurposed drugs**

The main focus is on working on the repurposing of existing drugs, synthesis of repurposed drugs in case India goes for compulsory licensing, modeling and testing of natural compounds, biologics and traditional Indian medicines. Following drugs are being attempted:

#### **Small Molecules/ APIs/ Single**

**Natural Products:** Remdesivir, Favipiravir, Arbidol, Baloxavir, Baricitinib, Camostat mesylate, Galidesivir, Ruxolitinib, Teicoplanin, Niclosamide and Rivavirin.

- Technologies will be transferred to industry for manufacturing these products. Companies like Cipla and Mylan are on-board for smooth technology transfer.

- Few Phase-II molecules are being moved on a fast pedestal for clinical trials.

- Clinical trials of *Mycobacterium indicus pranii* (also known as Mw) along with Cadila Pharmaceuticals are being planned under NIMTLI.

- A formulation developed for dengue will be repositioned for coronavirus with help from Sun pharma.

- Zinc Gluconate and Proline as nutraceuticals are being explored and Unilever has agreed to partner with CSIR for Zn-Gluconate and amino acid complex.

- Bharat Biotech has approached CSIR for

inactivated corona vaccine development. Work on this is expected to start in the next few days.

### **Phytopharmaceuticals:**

- *Cocculus hirsutus* based standardized botanical/phytopharmaceutical,
- *Glycyrrhiza glabra* based standardized botanical/phytopharmaceutical,
- *Nigella sativa* based standardized botanical/phytopharmaceutical

### **Natural Products**

Joint efforts between CSIR and Ministry of AYUSH have been planned in Preventive and prophylactic, symptom management and add-on interventions to the modern medical treatments. Four botanicals have been identified for joint development are *Withania somnifera*, *Tinospora cordifolia*, *Glycyrrhiza glabra*, Ayush-64

**Website link:** <https://www.csir.res.in/>

### **Exploring novel therapeutic options:**

CSIR-IICB has received approval from the West Bengal Government for initiating clinical trials for convalescent plasma therapy for COVID-19 patients.

**Website link:** <https://www.csir.res.in/>

### **Hospital Assistive Devices**

- **Ventilators: Following types** of ventilators are under development which will be productionized with BHEL are Bi-Level Positive Airway Pressure (BiPAP) system Respiration assistance intervention device: A Portable Ventilator

- **Disinfection Chamber:** A disinfection chamber for public use is being developed.

- **IR Thermometers:** This has been developed at CSIR-NCL along with a start-up, BMEK, and is being upscaled by BEL which will manufacture it.

- **Oxygen Enrichment Devices:**

These devices are being developed at CSIR- NCL and will be made available for hospital use.

- **PPEs:** Several devices such as Face shield, face mask, gowns and suits and gloves have been developed. Some of these have been submitted to the South India Textile Research Association (SITRA), Coimbatore for certification. Once certified, it will be given to a local manufacturer for producing it at a large scale. The work is in progress with Reliance for PPEs based on polypropylene polymers.
- **Sanitizers:** Many different CSIR laboratories are making sanitizers on a large scale and distributing it in nearby places.
- CSIR-CBRI, Roorkee has made prototype make-shift hospital building. This design of the make-shift hospital is being implemented near Haridwar in Uttarakhand.
- **Supply chain and Logistics:** A supply chain management platform is being developed with the support of TCS. Once ready, PMO and NDRF will be approached for using it.

**Website link:** <https://www.csir.res.in/>

### **Utilising the reverse flow of populace to Rural and Semi-Rural areas - scientists develop Development of Rural / Social Enterprises**

CSIR is planning to support the creation of Rural / Social Enterprises through rural entrepreneurship with support from Tata Sons and Unilever. Training on Disinfectants, Sanitizers, Soaps, Masks, Gloves, Food Products, Water Purification kits, etc. will be provided through social and voluntary organizations.

**Website link:** <https://www.csir.res.in/>

### **Technological Support to NDRF**

CSIR is working with NDRF on the construction of hospitals by providing

desired technological support.

**Website link:** <https://www.csir.res.in/>

### **Leveraging Industry Collaboration**

In a significant way, CSIR is working with Industry for the desired technology development and deployment. There is an overwhelming response from the industry. These include:

- Reliance: PPEs, diagnostics
- TATA Sons: Diagnostics, Hospital assistive devices and rural entrepreneurship
- Unilever: Zinc Gluconate and proline complex and rural entrepreneurship
- Intel: Digital surveillance
- TCS: Digital surveillance and supply chain platform
- Cipla: Repurposed drugs
- Cadila pharmaceuticals: Mw as therapy for coronavirus
- Zydus Cadila: repurposing of Dengue drugs for Covid-19
- Bharat Biotech: inactivated vaccine development
- BHEL: Electrostatic spray and ventilator
- BEL: IR Thermometer and oxygen Enrichment Unit

**Website link:** <https://www.csir.res.in/>

### **Creating National Networks for Technology Development - Support under NMITLI Programme to Industry**

CSIR has invited proposals from Indian industry to undertake projects either in association with government institutions or stand-alone.

More than 150 proposals have been received. These will be processed in 10 days for providing R&D as well as financial support.

**Website link:** <https://www.csir.res.in/>

### **CSIR Ready to Eat nutritious (RTE) products for the COVID-19 outreach programme**

Several RTE products have been developed by CSIR-IHBT and CSIR-CFTRI which are available through licensee/s for scale-up and distribution to the COVID-19 affected persons.

These products include:

- Herbal Khichdi (packed in tin cans or pouches) and 'Dal Chawal Aloo Mix' (425 gm packed in tin cans) developed by CSIR-IHBT and High protein biscuits; high protein rusks fortified mango bar; nutra chikki with added spirulina and cardamom flavoured water, developed by CSIR-CFTRI are the key RTE products available for scale-up

**Website link:** <https://www.csir.res.in/>

### **Communication and Outreach Programs**

CSIR is actively amplifying the critical messages from Government on COVID-19 mitigation through its social media platforms, and few of CSIR labs have designed content in regional languages and disseminated to the larger public. Its scientists and directors are interacting with the media to explain the strategy of CSIR and government. A dedicated site on CSIR website has been created for capturing COVID 19 related activities which will be made into a searchable database.

**Website link:** <https://www.csir.res.in/>

### **Additional initiatives by various CSIR Laboratories:**

#### **IHBT new hand-sanitizer**

The demand for products such as sanitizer is increasing amidst reports of preventive measures against coronavirus and many counterfeit materials being sold in the market. Because of this, a new hand-sanitizer has been developed by the

scientists of CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (CSIR-IHBT) based in Palampur, Himachal Pradesh. The natural flavours, active tea constituents and alcohol content in this hand-sanitizer have been used. One of the unique things is that chemicals like parabens, triclosan, synthetic fragrance and phthalates have not been used in this hand-sanitizer.

**Website link:** <https://www.ihbt.res.in/en/article/255>

### **Indian researchers start working on novel coronavirus genome sequencing**

The novel coronavirus is a new virus and researchers are trying to figure out all the different aspects of it. Two institutes of Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Hyderabad and Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB), New Delhi have started working together on the whole genome sequencing of the novel coronavirus. "This will help us to understand the evolution of the virus, how dynamic is it, and how fast it imitates. This study will help us to know how soon it evolves and what are the future aspects of it.

**Website link:** <https://vignyanprasar.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/Researchers-start-working-on-genome-sequencing-of-COVID-19-7apr20.pdf>

### **IMTECH takes up sample testing for COVID-19**

To boost testing capacity, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-Institute of Microbial Technology (CSIR-IMTECH) has stepped up to take up COVID-19 sample testing. This is in line with the directives issued by the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) to the Government of India and the advisory issued by the Indian Council of Medical

Research (ICMR) to operationalise Covid-19 testing by laboratories under CSIR and other labs affiliated to Department of Science and Technology (DST), Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and Department of Atomic Energy (DAE). The initiative of ICMR to involve all government-accredited labs is a welcome step and will be a game-changer in the testing of COVID-19 samples. This would increase the testing rate among suspected patients. In the initial phase, IMTECH plans to operationalise capabilities to carry out testing of 50 to 100 samples a day.

**Website link:** <https://vigyanprasar.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/IMTECH-takes-up-sample-testing-for-Covid-3apr20.pdf>

### **CSIR-CFTRI to provide testing equipment for COVID-19 detection**

Mysuru-based CSIR Central Food Technological Research Institute (CSIR-CFTRI) has joined hands with the district administration by making available equipment needed for testing of samples. CSIR-CFTRI is providing two PCR machines and one RNA extraction unit along with necessary chemicals to the district administration for coping with the large number of samples to be tested in the district

**Website link:** <https://vigyanprasar.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/CSIR-CFTRI-to-provide-testing-equipment-for-CVOID-19-detection-6apr20.pdf>

### **Low-cost paper-strip test for COVID-19 testing**

The Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB), New Delhi has successfully developed a low-cost, paper strip test which can detect the raging coronavirus within an hour. COVID-19 test uses the cutting-edge, gene-editing tool - Crispr-Cas9 to target and identify the genomic sequences of the novel coronavirus in the

samples of suspected individuals

**Website Link:** <https://yourstory.com/2020/04/coronavirus-indian-scientists-low-cost-paper-strip-test-covid-19>

### **Potential drug targets for COVID-19: Based on life cycle of the virus in the host cell**

Potential drug targets for COVID-19 based on their life cycle in host cells and Catalogue of various targetable proteins are Angiotensin Converting Enzyme<sup>2</sup> (ACE2); Transmembrane protease, serine 2 (TMPRSS2); SARS Spike Glycoprotein - human ACE2 complex; Native Spike Protein (S) and others.

Website Link: <https://iicb.res.in/COVID19/index.html>

### **COVID-19 Location Tracker**

An interactive map built from GIS data of cities in India from where the patients were picked up.

**Website Link:** <https://iicb.res.in/COVID19/index.html>

### **Fatality vs temperature correlation for COVID-19**

The dataset provides a preliminary investigation to understand if any correlation exists between the number of deaths and the average temp (in °C) of Feb and March 2020. The data has been divided into different world regions. March data have been calculated until March 27, 2020.

**Website Link:** <https://iicb.res.in/COVID19/index.html>

### **CCMB is developing test kit for COVID-19**

CCMB is helping incubating companies to come up with the idea of developing test kits. Also, CCMB is testing and validating



the diagnostic kits they offer. Quality and accurate results are of paramount importance in the case of a test kit. If the kits produce 100 per cent results, they will be approved

**Website Link:** <https://vigyanprasar.gov.in/isw/CCMB-may-soon-come-up-with-diagnostic-kits-for-Covid-19-hindi.html>

### **CCMB and AIC-CCMB joined with CCAMP in its COVID-19 Innovations Deployment Accelerator (CIDA) Programme**

C-CAMP has launched C-CAMP COVID-19 Innovations Deployment Accelerator or C-CIDA on 26th March 2020 to help accelerate COVID-19 innovations stuck in last-mile issues. Innovations can be under following categories: screening, diagnostics, therapeutics, vaccines, containment strategies, public health & other categories including but not limited to focused technologies

**Website Link:** <http://www.ccamp.res.in/covid-19-innovations-deployment-accelerator>

### **CSIR scientists engaged in battle level to fight COVID-19**

CSIR is working on a five-point agenda to deal with COVID-19. These include molecular level monitoring, making affordable screening kits, developing medicine, developing hospitals and personal protective equipment and supplying medical equipment to understand the risk and nature of the disease

**Website Link:** <https://vigyanprasar.gov.in/isw/CSIR-scientists-engaged-in-battle-level-fight-Kovid-19-hindi.html>

### **Call for proposals for mobilizing the development of products and technologies to fight coronavirus pandemic**

CSIR-NMITLI is inviting proposal from the academic and commercial organization in areas such as effective containment interventions, assistive devices, innovative diagnostics, novel drugs, new vaccines, etc. for COVID-19.

**Website Link:** [https://www.cecricri.res.in/portals/0/News\\_files/CSIR\\_NMITLI\\_Advt.pdf](https://www.cecricri.res.in/portals/0/News_files/CSIR_NMITLI_Advt.pdf)

### **Breakthrough technological intervention against COVID-19**

Call for R&D proposal from Industry and start-ups for breakthrough technological intervention against COVID-19 on effective containment intervention, assistive devices (like ventilators), diagnostic kit, novel drugs, vaccines and trace technologies.

**Website Link:** [https://www.ccmb.res.in/news/year-2020/nmitli\\_2020.pdf](https://www.ccmb.res.in/news/year-2020/nmitli_2020.pdf)

### **Expression of Interest for Collaboration, Research and Testing for COVID-19**

The Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB) is inviting Expression of Interest (EoI) from the academic and commercial organization with specialized know-how, IP, indigenous infrastructure and production capacity for sharing of expertise, knowledge and resources for the development of assays, testing, capacity building and reagents supply etc. for COVID-19. The aim of the collaboration/partnership would be towards expediting the R&D and accelerating solutions that could be useful for the public

**Website Link:** [https://www.igib.res.in/sites/default/files/COVID19\\_EOI.pdf](https://www.igib.res.in/sites/default/files/COVID19_EOI.pdf)

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS AND  
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

---

---

# Efforts made by Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO), Ministry of Defence, in the nation's fight against COVID-19

---

---

## Personnel Sanitization Enclosure

DRDO Laboratory has designed full-body disinfection chamber called a Personnel Sanitization Enclosure. The walkthrough enclosure is designed for personnel decontamination, one person at a time. This is a portable system equipped with sanitizer and soap dispenser. The decontamination is started using a foot pedal at the entry. On entering the chamber, an electrically operated pump creates a disinfectant mist of hypo sodium chloride for disinfecting. The mist spray is calibrated for the operation of 25 secs and stops automatically indicating completion of the operation. As per procedure, personnel undergoing disinfection will need to keep their eyes closed while inside the chamber.

**Website link:** [https://www.drdo.gov.in/sites/default/files/inline-files/Press\\_Release.pdf](https://www.drdo.gov.in/sites/default/files/inline-files/Press_Release.pdf)

## Full Face Mask

Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad and Terminal Ballistics Research Laboratory (TBRL), Chandigarh, have developed face protection mask for health care professionals handling COVID-19 patients. Its lightweight construction makes it convenient for comfortable wear for a long duration. This design uses commonly available A4 size Over Head Projection (OHP) film for face protection. The holding frame is manufactured using Fused Deposition Modeling (3D printing).

The polylactic Acid filament is used for 3D printing of the frame. This thermoplastic is derived from renewable resources such as corn starch or sugarcane and is biodegradable. The face mask will be mass produced using injection moulding technique for volume production.

**Website link:** [https://www.drdo.gov.in/sites/default/files/inline-files/Press\\_Release.pdf](https://www.drdo.gov.in/sites/default/files/inline-files/Press_Release.pdf)

## Intubation Protective Enclosure

Terminal Ballistics Research Laboratory (TBRL), Chandigarh has developed the intubation protective enclosures using Poly Methyl Meth Acrylate (PMMA) Sheets available in-house, which act as the first level of protection for doctors and medical staff during the intubation of COVID-19 patients.

**Website link:** [https://www.drdo.gov.in/sites/default/files/inline-files/COVID\\_Products\\_TBRL.pdf](https://www.drdo.gov.in/sites/default/files/inline-files/COVID_Products_TBRL.pdf)

## DRDO has developed many products for combating COVID-19

DRDO has developed many products for combating COVID-19, such as Enclosure For Intubation Procedure/ Aerosol Containment Box, Full Face Shield, Isolation Shelter, Mobile Area Sanitization System, Advanced Masks (N99 Equivalent), Personnel Sanitization Equipment, Portable Backpack Area Sanitization Equipment, PPE Mk2, PPE

Seam Sealant, Sanitizer, Trolley Mounted Large Area Sanitization Equipment and Ventilator.

**Website link:** <https://drdo.gov.in/counter-covid-19-technologies>

### **Hand Sanitizer**

Hand Sanitizer being the primary weapon used to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The DRDO has successfully developed in-house sanitizers. By the 3rd week of March, it was produced in sizable quantities and distributed to major offices and establishment within the capital. Approximately 4,000 litres of hand sanitizer has been provided to Indian Armed forces, Armed Forces Medical Corps, Defence Security Corps, 1,500 litres to Ministry of Defence, 300 litres to Parliament of India, and 500 litres to various security establishments and high offices to address sanitization issue at first to keep administration work without fear of contamination.

**Website link:** <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1608649>

### **Body Suits**

Body Suits is a critical requirement for doctors, medical staff, sanitation workers, etc. so that COVID-19 does not contract them during their work. Earlier, DRDO had developed this bodysuit for medical & paramedical staff to manage & evacuate the casualties in the event of radiological emergencies, which right now is converted as a full-body suit to stop contamination. The suit is washable and has passed the ASTM International standards. The suit is widely tested by DRDO and other agencies and found suitable for the cause. M/s Frontier Protective Wear Pvt Ltd Kolkata, transfer of technology holder that is already working with Ministry of Textiles, and M/s Medikit Pvt Ltd Mumbai are producing 10,000 suits per day with some works continuity problems. Each suit costs Rs 7,000.

**Website link:** <https://pib.gov.in/>

[PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1608649](https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1608649)

### **Efforts made by DRDO in the nation's fight against COVID-19: N99 masks**

Five layer N99 masks with two layers of nanomesh are very advanced. These are one of the critical times to stop the spread of Corona. Its production vendors are M/s Venus Industries Mumbai, M/s IMTEC Kolkata. Capacity is 10,000 N99 masks per day. Material for these are sourced from Ahmedabad Textile Industry's Research Association, which is already having plenty of government orders for N95 masks. The mask costs Rs 70 per piece.

**Website link:** <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1608649>

### **Ventilators**

Since COVID-19 affects pulmonary functions, keeping in mind the futuristic requirement, Society for Biomedical Technology (SBMT) programme of DRDO has been modified to cater to the current situation. Defence Bio-Engineering & Electro Medical Laboratory (DEBEL), Bangalore (a DRDO lab) has identified a vendor (M/s Scanray Tec Pvt Ltd, Mysore) to produce critical care ventilator. It has been created by using existing technologies like breath regulators, pressure/flow sensors, etc. Presently, innovation is on to create 'Multi Patient Ventilator' wherein a single ventilator can support several patients. This innovation is expected to be available within a week. Around 5,000 ventilators will be produced in the first month and 10,000 subsequently. The DRDO has identified local alternatives to the supply of critical components. Already Secretary (Pharmaceuticals) has identified nine companies for design transfer to produce and Mr Anand Mahindra for the fabrication of components. Each ventilator unit will cost around Rs four lakh.

**Website link:** <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1608649>

---

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY EFFORTS ON COVID-19

*by*

# Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW)

---

### ICMR prepares a plan to increase testing capacity to 100,000 a day

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has devised a plan to boost India's COVID-19 testing capacity to at least 100,000 tests a day to meet the spurt in demand in case the epidemic worsens.

**Website link:** <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/icmr-readies-plan-to-increase-testing-capacity-to-1-lakh-per-day-if-situation-worsens-11586178638274.html>

### The ICMR has approved 'Truenat™ beta CoV test on Truelab™ workstation' as a screening test for COVID-19

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has endorsed the utilization of demonstrative machines utilized for testing drug-safe tuberculosis for leading coronavirus tests. The ICMR has approved 'Truenat™ beta CoV test on Truelab™ workstation' and has suggested it as a screening test, the summit wellbeing research body.

**Website link:** <https://microbiozindia.com/health-news/the-icmr-has-approved-truenatm-beta-cov-test-on-truelabtm-workstation-as-a-screening-test-for-covid-19/>

### COVID -19 Resource Centre

The website is maintained by FETP Network – India. It aims to disseminate information related to the geographical distribution of COVID-19 pandemic. The site also contains detailed information about the first 100 positive COVID-19 cases.

**Website link:** <http://covidindiaupdates.in/>

### COVID-19 Testing Laboratories

Hospitals admitting suspect cases of COVID19 should collect nasal and throat swab samples in one VTM tube and transport them to the nearest testing laboratory in the cold chain. The list of Government and Private laboratories with COVID19 testing facility.

**Website link:** <https://covid.icmr.org.in/index.php/testing-facilities>

### COVID-19 information by ICMR

This provides complete information related to COVID-19 like Testing Laboratories, Rapid response team, Diagnostic kit evaluation, Testing strategy, etc.

**Website Link:** <https://www.icmr.nic.in/content/covid-19>



## COVID-19 - Sample collection guidelines

The document gives information on sample collection, packing and transport to the laboratory for COVID-19 testing. It is used by hospitals involved in collecting samples for COVID-19 testing.

**Website Link:** [http://www.nie.gov.in/images/leftcontent\\_attach/COVID-SARI\\_Sample\\_collection\\_SOP\\_255.pdf](http://www.nie.gov.in/images/leftcontent_attach/COVID-SARI_Sample_collection_SOP_255.pdf)

## Information regarding testing of samples for sars-cov-2 in the emergency

Regional VRDL, ICMR-NICED is a designated centre for testing of COVID-19, presently catering to the states of Sikkim and West Bengal

**Website Link:** <http://www.niced.org.in/news/covid19.htm>

## Standard Operating Procedure for Specimen Collection, Packaging and Transport Guidelines for 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

This document describes the information for collection, packaging and transport of clinical specimens to Influenza group at ICMR-National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, Maharashtra for diagnosis of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

**Website Link:** [http://niv.co.in/SOP\\_Specimen\\_Collection\\_2019-nCoV.pdf](http://niv.co.in/SOP_Specimen_Collection_2019-nCoV.pdf)

## ICMR provides COVID-19 Testing Labs in India

ICMR provides a map of all COVID-19 Testing Labs across India. Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) is amplifying test sites, and more laboratories are being opened to conduct tests across states.

**Website Link:** <https://covid.icmr.org.in/index.php/testing-facilities>

## How rapid antibody tests are different from existing PCR tests for

## COVID-19

PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test require nasal or throat swabs. It takes about five hours for the results to come out, whereas rapid testing kits give early results. They use blood samples of suspected patients and typically takes around 15-30 minutes to provide the result. Under this, one has to clean their finger with an alcohol swab and use the lancet provided for finger-pricks.

**Website Link:** <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/how-rapid-antibody-tests-are-different-from-existing-pcr-tests-for-covid-19-explained-1663441-2020-04-05>

## Union Government places orders for over 10 Crore Anti-Malarial Hydroxychloroquine tablets

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has recommended the anti-malarial drug for those involved in the care of suspected or confirmed cases of the coronavirus and also, for asymptomatic household contacts of laboratory-confirmed cases. As a result, the order for 10.70 crore more tablets of the anti-malarial drug hydroxychloroquine has been placed. Over 70 lakh tablets were purchased earlier.

**Website Link:** <https://swarajyamag.com/insta/covid-19-union-government-places-orders-for-over-10-crore-anti-malarial-hydroxychloroquine-tablets>

## AarogyaSetu App (Mobile App)

AarogyaSetu App is an initiative for staying informed and alert against COVID19. The App aims to develop a digital Bridge to fight against COVID-19.

Download App: [https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=nic.goi.aarogyasetu&hl=en\\_GB](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=nic.goi.aarogyasetu&hl=en_GB)

---

---

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY EFFORTS ON COVID-19

*by*

# Other Scientific and Academic Institutions

---

---

### **Low-cost 3D-printed antimicrobial face-shield to control the spread of COVID-19**

NIPER-G designed, developed & validated a 3D-printed antimicrobial face-shield to control the spread of novel coronavirus. Careful analyses of several resources for risk measurement and on how viruses spread through other body cavities like oral, ophthalmic & olfactory, etc. Thereby NIPER-G solved to fabricate a 3D printed object to avoid further passing on COVID-19 transmission from one person to others.

**Website link:** <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1613220>

### **A 3D-Printed Prototype with Multiple Features to Stop the Spread of Novel Coronavirus**

NIPER-G designed, developed & validated a 3D-printed hands-free object in terms of opening or closing of the doors, windows, drawers (both vertical & horizontal), refrigerator handle, elevator buttons, laptop/desktop keyboards, including turning on/off switch buttons. Careful analyses of several resources for risk measurement and on how viruses spread through bare hands, we solved to fabricate a 3D printed object to avoid further passing on COVID-19 transmission from one bare hand to others.

**Website link:** <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1613220>

### **IISER Pune's Efforts against COVID-19: Computer-Aided Designs for a Mechanical Ventilator**

IISER Pune researchers are involved in a multi-institutional effort to produce open-source computer-aided-designs for a mechanical ventilator that is currently in use in hospitals. This work is being carried out in collaboration with Capt. (Retd.) Rustom Bharucha from Bharucha Instrumentation and Control, Pune, India; IUCAA, Pune; IISER Pune; IndoGenius, New Delhi; and King's College London, United Kingdom.

**Website link:** <http://www.iiserpune.ac.in/news/iiser-pune-s-efforts-against-covid-19-computer-aided-designs-for-a-mechanical-ventilator>

### **IISER, Thiruvananthapuram makes hand sanitizers in support of the fight against COVID-19**

IISER Thiruvananthapuram has made a substantial quantity of hand sanitizers for handover to various agencies in support of the fight against the COVID-19 infection.

**Website link:** <http://www.iisertvm.ac.in/news/read/news-iiser-tvm-makes-hand-sanitizers-in-support-of-the-fight-against-covid-19>

### **IIT Roorkee professor makes the App to alert the government if someone violates quarantine**

IIT Roorkee professor has created a new surveillance system for tracking suspected

patients. Professor of the civil engineering department, Dr Kamal Jain developed an App that can track individuals and also can do geofencing around him. The system or authorities will get an alert if the quarantined person violates geofencing. In case GPS data is not received, the location will be obtained automatically through the triangulation of mobile towers. If the internet is not working in a certain area, the location will be received through SMS. If the application gets off, an alert will be received immediately. The location of the person can be obtained by sending an SMS to the device.

**Website Link:** [https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/gadgets-news/iit-roorkee-professor-makes-app-to-alert-government-if-someone-violates-quarantine/articleshow/75012608.ms?fbclid=IwAR2ta5OYbahefRpCgR2qaZbCtIBGviP6wiCAG5hCvUObhm1s3hN7\\_je6yZw](https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/gadgets-news/iit-roorkee-professor-makes-app-to-alert-government-if-someone-violates-quarantine/articleshow/75012608.ms?fbclid=IwAR2ta5OYbahefRpCgR2qaZbCtIBGviP6wiCAG5hCvUObhm1s3hN7_je6yZw)

### **IIT Roorkee, AIIMS Rishikesh Develop Low-Cost Portable Ventilator To Tackle COVID-19**

IIT Roorkee has developed a low-cost portable ventilator that can be useful to ensure the survival of COVID-19 patients. Named as 'Prana-Vayu,' the closed-loop ventilator is developed in collaboration with AIIMS Rishikesh, and is equipped with state-of-the-art features. The automated process controls the pressure and flow rates in the inhalation and exhalation lines. Besides, the ventilator has feedback that can control tidal volume and breathe per minute.

**Website Link:** [https://www.ndtv.com/education/iit-roorkee-aiims-rishikesh-develop-low-cost-portable-ventilator-to-tackle-covid-19-2205139?fbclid=IwAR113GFmuQzfRN5spa2L0P-6JlpZ\\_zLt6jo7Ch1nNAX6n9ARWGTqzEq4Kjc](https://www.ndtv.com/education/iit-roorkee-aiims-rishikesh-develop-low-cost-portable-ventilator-to-tackle-covid-19-2205139?fbclid=IwAR113GFmuQzfRN5spa2L0P-6JlpZ_zLt6jo7Ch1nNAX6n9ARWGTqzEq4Kjc)

### **IIT Roorkee develops low-cost 3D**

### **printed face shields for health care professionals fighting COVID-19 pandemic**

To help healthcare professionals in the fight against COVID-19 pandemic, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee has developed a low-cost 3D printed face shields as a protective measure from the deadly virus infection while attending patients. The shield has been developed by a group of students and professors in the premier institute's technical facility named 'The Tinkering Laboratory' which provides a platform to the students for innovative experiments.

**Website link:** <https://www.hindustantimes.com/education/iit-roorkee-develops-low-cost-3d-printed-face-shields-for-health-care-professionals-fighting-covid-19-pandemic/story-cmsu0ktp0fYdMFJGvrcfPL.html?fbclid=IwAR0RawuLsvGS3UCm1us2wQHYevBgDJ4q38gKqGIS8fGoXVfhGd54NVSGQsA>

### **DST approves funding for developing a gel for nasal passage as prevention for COVID-19**

The Department of Biosciences and Bioengineering, IIT Bombay, develop a gel that can be applied to nasal passage, which is a major entry point of the corona virus. This solution is not only expected to protect the safety of health workers, but can also lead to reduction in community transmission of COVID-19, thereby helping disease management.

**Website link:** <https://vignyanprasar.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/DST-approves-funding-for-developing-a-gel-for-nasal-passage-as-prevention-for-COVID-19-7apr20.pdf>

### **IIT Kanpur researchers to design a cost-effective virucidal coating of surgical masks for preventive measures against COVID-19**

The research by a team of scientists from IIT Kanpur is being funded by Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB), a statutory body of Department of Science and Technology for developing a protective coating that would greatly help in making medicated masks and medical wear (PPE) for fighting COVID-19. The researchers from the Department of Chemistry, IIT Kanpur, will be designing the virucidal coating using polymers which can resist attachment of bacteria and virus. Additional protection will be included in the polymer coating using molecules that can either destabilize and/or neutralize coronaviruses and other viruses like influenza. The combination of anti-microbial polymer coating and functionalized drugs is also expected to provide a synergistic antiviral effect.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/iit-kanpur-researchers-design-cost-effective-virucidal-coating-surgical-masks-preventive-measures>

### **Call for Proposal for COVID-19 Research at IIT Delhi Supercomputer**

IIT Delhi is committing a total of INR 1 crore worth of High-Performance Computing (HPC) Resource for COVID-19 research to merit-based proposals selected from a nationwide call of proposals. Experts from IIT Delhi will evaluate all proposals. Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated on a first-come, first-serve basis. Deadline for submitting proposals is 15th April.

**Website link:** <http://www.iitd.ac.in/content/call-proposal-covid-19-research-iit-delhi-supercomputer>

### **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati Invites COVID-19 Grand Challenge**

IIT Guwahati is seeking a solution(s) from the students' community on measures

that can be adopted on priority basis to tackle this pandemic crisis of any one of the broad objectives on Detection of infected persons, Precautions to halt its spread, Newer treatment approaches, Society impact, Behavior changes, Disease outbreak pattern, Resources distribution, Transportation of goods, Migration of humans, Supporting health care workers, Supporting essential services.

**Website link:** <http://www.iitg.ac.in/upload/17004822395e8608c700915.pdf>

### **DST sets up rapid response centre at SINE, IIT Bombay to combat COVID-19**

In a rapid response to combat COVID-19 global pandemic, Department of Science & Technology, Government of India has approved setting up of a Centre for Augmenting WAR with COVID-19 Health Crisis (CAWACH), at a total cost of Rs 56 Cr to scout, evaluate and support the innovations and start-ups that address COVID-19 challenges. The Society for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (SINE), a technology business incubator at IIT Bombay supported by DST has been identified as the Implementing Agency of the CAWACH. CAWACH will identify up to 50 innovations and startups that are in the area of a novel, low cost, safe and effective ventilators, respiratory aids, protective gears, novel solutions for sanitizers, disinfectants, diagnostics, therapeutics, informatics and any effective interventions to control COVID-19.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/dst-sets-rapid-response-centre-sine-iit-bombay-combat-covid-19>

### **Researchers make hand sanitizer for local use in Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kharagpur**

A team of researchers from IIT Kharagpur's School of Medical Science and Technology quickly developed an



alcohol-based hand rub following the present scenario of the scarcity of hand sanitizers/ hand wash preparations in the market due to their massive demand. The team created the formulation based on guidelines recommended by the World Health Organization. The Transport Section of the Institute has also developed another formulation.

**Website link:** <https://kgpchronicle.iitkgp.ac.in/preventive-care-iitkgp/>

### **Face Shields for Healthcare Workers During Lockdown**

Prof Santanu Dhara and Prof Sangeeta Das Bhattacharya, researchers at the School of Medical Science and Technology at IIT Kharagpur, have made a prototype to make face shields for healthcare workers from home during the lockdown. The face shield is an essential part of the personal protective equipment (PPE) required for healthcare workers taking care of patients with suspected COVID-19.

**Website link:** <https://kgpchronicle.iitkgp.ac.in/making-face-shields-for-healthcare-workers-during-lockdown/>

### **3D printed valves for split use of ventilators to serve multiple patients**

The use of 3D printed valves is to enable the use of ventilators for multiple patients.

**Website link:** <https://covid19.iisc.ac.in/>

### **A recombinant subunit vaccine for SARS-CoV-2**

The goal is to develop a rapidly producible vaccine for protection to front-line health workers, senior citizens and individuals with co-morbidities such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

**Website link:** <https://covid19.iisc.ac.in/>

### **Cyclone separator design for**

### **compressor exit flow oil and dust particle clean up**

The aim is to develop a cyclone-based oil droplet separator system as part of the ongoing IISc ventilator development effort, which can be used to reduce the oil droplet and dust particle load on standard filters, thereby prolonging their life and reducing the requirement for frequent maintenance intervals.

**Website link:** <https://covid19.iisc.ac.in/>

### **Drones for disinfection**

As people are locked inside their homes, they are primarily responsible for their hygiene and care to prevent the spread of COVID-19. However, central/state governments and various civic bodies are undertaking multiple measures to disinfect outdoor spaces and public infrastructure, which is a massive resource-intensive task. General Aeronautics (GA), a startup incubated by the Society for Innovation and Development, IISc, is helping the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) in accelerating the process by using drones to disinfect hard-to-reach areas.

**Website link:** <https://covid19.iisc.ac.in/>

### **GoCoronaGo – contact tracing app and network analytics**

The App GoCoronaGo to help identify people who may have crossed paths with COVID-19 positive subjects by tracking their interactions in the past using Bluetooth and GPS. It uses temporal network analytics in the backend to understand the risk propensity even for distant contacts, understand disease spread and identify high-risk people who are likely to contract and spread the virus. It also provides alerts on isolation and proximity scores and helps enhance social distancing. It also has a geofencing feature for those who are under quarantine and can provide their symptoms which are

used in the risk evaluation.

**Website link:** <https://covid19.iisc.ac.in/index.php/2020/04/02/gocoronago-contact-tracing-app-and-network-analytics/>

### **Mobile diagnostic testing lab for COVID-19**

The goal is to scale up mobile diagnostic testing capabilities and cut down turnaround times from sample collection to test results from 1-3 days, as India is preparing to deal with a spike in the number of cases across the country. As the pandemic spreads to the interior parts of the country that do not have access to advanced molecular diagnostic test capabilities, there is an urgent need to build and deploy safe and accurate testing capabilities at various locations.

**Website link:** <https://covid19.iisc.ac.in/index.php/2020/04/01/mobile-diagnostic-testing-lab-for-covid-19/>

### **Modeling of epidemic spread in Indian urban conditions**

This project aims to model the epidemic spread, taking Indian urban conditions into account. The goal is to assist epidemiologists and decision-makers with (a) understanding the effectiveness of imposing and lifting various kinds of restrictions, (b) anticipating hospital needs, (c) devising testing strategies.

**Website link:** <https://covid19.iisc.ac.in/index.php/2020/04/02/modeling-of-epidemic-spread-in-indian-urban-conditions/>

### **N95 mask renewal**

In the event of a shortfall of N95 masks, propose devising a method to clean them without affecting their specifications.

**Website link:** <https://covid19.iisc.ac.in/index.php/2020/03/30/n95-mask-renewal/>

renewal/

### **Oxygen concentrator**

Development of low-cost oxygen concentrators that could be coupled with ventilators. The zeolite of a specific size is being used to separate oxygen from the air. A mechanism is being created to control the flow and direction for optimum oxygen generation. The operation of this process is automated. This concentrated oxygen can be directly used with ventilators.

**Website link:** <https://covid19.iisc.ac.in/index.php/2020/03/30/increasing-oxygen-concentration-for-ventilators/>

### **Project Praana: Open Source Ventilator Development**

Project Praana (Sanskrit/Kannada for “breath/life”) is a voluntary prototype ventilator design effort run by a group of engineers primarily associated with IISc. Project Praana aims to use components available in India to build a mechanical ventilator, whose production can be rapidly scaled up. Praana is designing the system as much as possible with components used in the automotive and water filter industries in India. If necessary, some critical sensors deployed in space and defence applications can also be repurposed for this emergency. The main aspects of the design are easy sourcing of components in India, quick manufacturability and simple user interface.

**Website link:** <https://covid19.iisc.ac.in/index.php/2020/03/30/project-pranaa-voluntary-ventilator-prototype-design-effort/>

### **UV-based disinfecting device**

A UV based disinfection system would be efficient in killing the virus as well as faster cleaning cycle time. This can also be used to decontaminate reusable personal protective equipment in times of extreme

scarcity which presently is for single use.

**Website link:** <https://covid19.iisc.ac.in/index.php/2020/03/30/uv-based-disinfecting-device/>

### **COVID Gyan**

COVID Gyan website serves as a hub to bring together a collection of resources in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. These resources are generated by public supported research institutions in India and associated programs. The content presented here relies on the best available scientific understanding of the disease and its transmission.

The chief contributor organisation to COVID-19 are:

1. Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai
2. Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru
3. Tata Memorial Centre (TMC), Mumbai
4. Institute for Stem Cell Science and Regenerative Medicine (inStem), Bengaluru
5. Vigyan Prasar (VP), New Delhi
6. IndiaBioscience, Bengaluru
7. Webduniya, New Delhi

**Website link:** <https://covid-gyan.in/>

### **Low-cost 3D-printed antimicrobial face-shield to control the spread of COVID-19**

NIPER-G designed, developed & validated a 3D-printed antimicrobial face-shield to control the spread of novel coronavirus. Careful analyses of several resources for risk measurement and on how viruses spread through other body cavities like oral, ophthalmic & olfactory, etc. Thereby NIPER-G solved to fabricate a 3D printed object to avoid further passing on COVID-19 transmission from one person to others.

**Website link:** <http://www.niperguwahati.ac.in/>

ac.in/

### **A 3D-Printed Prototype with Multiple Features to Stop the Spread of Novel Coronavirus**

NIPER-G designed, developed & validated a 3D-printed hands-free object in terms of opening or closing of the doors, windows, drawers (both vertical & horizontal), refrigerator handle, elevator buttons, laptop/desktop keyboards, including turning on/off switch buttons. Careful analyses of several resources for risk measurement and on how viruses spread through bare hands, we solved to fabricate a 3D printed object to avoid further passing on COVID-19 transmission from one bare hand to others.

**Website link:** <http://www.niperguwahati.ac.in/>

### **NIT Durgapur has made an indigenous automated AMBU bag system**

NIT Durgapur has developed an indigenous automated AMBU bag system, that can serve as a quick and temporary substitute for ventilators in emergencies. AMBU stands for Artificial Manual Breathing Unit. The present system is automated and can be tuned for oxygen requirements. The system has been christened "Pranesh".

**Website link:** <https://nitdgp.ac.in/home>

---

---

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY EFFORTS ON COVID-19

*by*

# Private Sector Enterprises

---

---

### **DST funded company to scale up device to enrich oxygen supply in air for the treatment of COVID-19 patients**

Genrich Membranes, a spin-off company, based on proprietary technology licensed from CSIR-National Chemical Laboratory, Pune is being funded by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) to scale up membrane oxygenator equipment (MOE) that it has developed to treat COVID-19 patients. Based on innovative, indigenous hollow-fiber membrane technology, the MOE enriches oxygen in the air up to 35% under pressure (4-7 bar, using oil-free compressor).

The equipment consists of membrane cartridge, oil-free compressor, output flowmeter, humidifier bottle, nasal-cannula, and tubing & fittings. The compressed, filtered air from the compressor is fed to the membrane cartridge, which selectively permeates oxygen over nitrogen offering oxygen-enriched air as the product at the ambient pressure. The membrane cartridge capable of distinguishing oxygen and nitrogen restricts the passage of viruses, bacteria, and particulate matter. The product air is of medical grade.

The device is safe, does not require trained manpower for its operation, needs minimum maintenance, is portable, compact, and with plug-and-play facility provides on-site, quick-start oxygen-enriched air.

**Website link:** <https://dst.gov.in/dst-funded-company-scale-device-enrich-oxygen-supply-air-treatment-covid-19-patients>

**Mylab partners with Serum** Institute India's CEO Adar Poonawalla and Abhijit Pawar, Chairman AP Globale to scale-up production of the COVID-19 test kit Mylab Discovery Solutions has developed the first COVID-19 rapid testing kit in India. This testing kit has been approved by the Indian Food and Drug Administration, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), and the ICMR. This kit can give test results within 2.5 hours. After joining hands with Serum Institute of India and AP Globale, the test capacity of Mylab has increased from 1.5 lakh tests a week to 20 lakh (2 million) tests a week.

**Website link:** <https://mylabdiscoverysolutions.com/press-release/>



# COVID-19

## in Digital Media

**DR HARSH VARDHAN**, Union Minister, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Science & Technology, and Earth Sciences speaking on Coronavirus

**Source:** <https://www.indiascience.in/videos/dr-harsh-varadhan-interview-on-coronavirus-h>

**TACKLING COVID-19 WITH SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY:** Interview of Prof K VijayRaghavan, PSA to Government of India

Part-I **Source:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkICcONnKGQ&feature=youtu.be>

Part-II **Source:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9xcgBg0EqM&feature=youtu.be>

**VIGYAN DARPAN:** Interview with DG-CSIR on Coronavirus


**Source:** <https://www.indiascience.in/videos/vigyan-darpan-interview-with-dg-csir-h>

**VIGYAN DARPAN:** Interview with AIIMS Director Dr Randeep Guleria

**Source:** <https://www.indiascience.in/videos/vigyan-darpan-h-telecast-on-23-slash-03-slash-2020>

**SCIENCE THIS WEEK:** Corona Virus and mental health

**Source:** <https://www.indiascience.in/videos/science-this-week-corona-virus-and-mental-health-e>



---

---

The India Science and Technology (ISTI) web portal serves as a one stop online information resource to bring together a collection of resources in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. These resources are generated by efforts made by numerous initiatives and schemes made available by several Departments and Ministries of Government of India. These are being implemented by public supported research institutions in India. The content presented here relies on the best available scientific understanding of the disease and its transmission.

---

---

**TO GET MORE INFORMATION ON COVID-19,  
please visit:**

<http://www.indiascienceandtechnology.gov.in/covid-19-the-pandemic>

---

---