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Experts call for more innovation to control COVID-19

03 August 2020 | News

Experts emphasize their commitment to importance of patient safety and highest level of ethics while considering options for fast tracking of vaccine trial methods



The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) convened a multicountry online symposium on novel approaches in science and ethics of vaccine development, bringing leading vaccine scientists and researchers to a common platform.

The symposium called on countries and scientific institutions to rapidly advance vaccine trials without cutting corners.

In addition, experts agreed that all vaccine trials must and can conform to the highest standards of patient safety and ethical norms while exploring fast tracking methods.

Participants also commended the efforts of India in its contributions to vaccine development and preparedness.

Prof. K. VijayRaghavan, Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, while opening the symposium said “we cannot afford to let COVID-19 dictate our lives, the scientific community must come together to find a timely solution to this pandemic”.

He highlighted, vaccine development under pandemic conditions is much more challenging than in ordinary times. Ensuring the development of a safe and effective vaccine, in a timely manner, involves understanding the merits of different approaches to development techniques, varied validation approaches, and the ethical considerations around all of them. Above all, the principles of community engagement and informed consent is to be upheld in all vaccine development and rollout efforts.

“India has to be at the forefront of global vaccine preparedness,” said Professor Balram Bhargava, Director-General of ICMR. “We are committed to work with the global scientific community in ensuring that a vaccine is available in a timely manner.