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CSIR institutions hold virtual policy dialogue on COVID-19 vaccine

03 March 2021 | News

This event was organised to celebrate the National Science Day and to have a policy discourse from eminent personalities on the journey of indigenous development of the COVID-19 vaccine in the midst of the pandemic



Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Institutions CSIR-NISTADS (National Institute of Science, Technology and Development Studies) and CSIR-NISCAIR (National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources), New Delhi, on March 1, jointly organised a half-day session, on 'A Policy Dialogue on COVID-19 Vaccine from Self-Reliance to Global Leadership: Opportunities, Challenges, and Policy Imperatives in COVID Era'. This event was organised to celebrate the National Science Day and to have a policy discourse from eminent personalities on the journey of indigenous development of the COVID-19 vaccine in the midst of the pandemic.

The event saw active participation of academicians, young researchers, professionals and students.

"After the lockdown, we planned a collective intelligence series to develop focused policy documents on the opportunities and challenges of COVID-19 for India that can strengthen the Governments' efforts," said Dr Ranjana, Director CSIR-NISTADS and CSIR- NISCAIR in her opening remarks.

Dr Shekhar C Mande, DG-CSIR, mentioned that CSIR has actively participated in COVID-19 mitigation strategies. He shared that the CSIR lab Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT), Hyderabad has prepared the adjuvant for the Bharat Biotech vaccine *COVAXIN*.

Dr Shailja Vaidya Gupta, Senior Adviser- Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the GoI, Delhi suggested that the government should build transparent systems, improving accessibility of data in the public domain & decentralisation of vaccine regulatory process.

Dr Geetha Vani Rayasam, Head, SCDD, CSIR addressed the role of science communication. "Partnership from the public is vital and that is going to come only by increasing the awareness and communication to them", she mentioned.

Dr S K Varshney, Adviser & Head International Cooperation, DST, New Delhi, said, "Our vaccines are easy to store. We have supplied nearly six million doses of vaccines as a gift to needy countries, 10 million commercial units have been supplied and in near future, we would be supplying to UN health workers and WHO workers among many others."