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Building a pandemic resistant world

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PAFI has organized deliberations on healthcare with India's leading medical experts, to brainstorm and discuss the ideas and possible solutions on these issues at our upcoming 7th National Forum on October 22 & 23, 2020.



The COVID-19 pandemic has proved to be the most challenging public health emergency witnessed globally that has stretched healthcare infrastructure of even the developed countries. India, despite, its inherent complexities and challenges, responded well by strengthening its 'medical infrastructure'. We put in place a strong and effective implementation of the healthcare action plan.

COVID-19 has brought the healthcare industry to the forefront and has also ensured that countries now look inwards to build a strong self-reliant robust healthcare system that can address various challenges thrown up in the last few months. But self-reliance can only be built on a strong platform of mutual trust and global cooperation that provides a clear roadmap for the future growth of the industry.

In order to meet the requirement of PPEs, N95 masks and ventilators, India's private sector companies rose to the occasion, and significantly augmented the production of essential medical supplies. As a case in point, India's MedTech company Skanray Technologies, that has been manufacturing ventilators since 2014 having a capacity to produce 5,000 ventilators in just 8-12 weeks, had to ramp up their capacity to 30,000. In order to meet the pressing demand, they collaborated with the Bharat Electronics Limited and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for production and scaled up from 70-80% indigenous materials to 100%. A classical story of India's collective resilience!

We are emerging out of this pandemic with an implementation of various effective strategies like focus on testing, ramping up of in-house medical supplies & manufacturing and vaccine research and development. As we move forward to build a pandemic resistance world, there are some key lessons. A transformative future where more adaptable, flexible, multi-purpose and inclusive healthcare infrastructure can help society stay resilient, is the need of the hour.

We must empower our health infrastructure, invest significantly in research & development, develop enough trained workforce and exchange information on diseases and response mechanisms that is both strong and inclusive. Increase in Healthcare spending as a percentage of GDP will help us achieve this objective. One of the most critical factors is to build trust and partnership between Government, industry and society. Working on global coalition is another important parameter for charting future growth.

We at Public Affairs Forum of India (PAFI) recognize the importance of trust building for an inclusive and collaborative engagement amongst various stakeholders in the implementation of healthcare policies which are beneficial for the entire healthcare ecosystem. In similar lines we have organized deliberations on healthcare with India's leading medical experts, to brainstorm and discuss the ideas and possible solutions on these issues at our upcoming 7th National Forum on October 22 & 23, 2020.

A health security agenda which is accepted and feasible for all the economies is also important to chart a rapid response and recovery path for the future. For this to happen, we need to focus on pillars like regular bilateral interactions between various economies; creation of larger and deeper platforms for exchange of ideas between academia and R&D experts to find innovative solutions to health care issues and building of global industry linkages that can strengthen a rapid response and recovery path for the future.

Evaluation of health security capacity to undergo planning and resource mobilization to address gaps will also be essential. In order to strengthen these pillars, building trust for a collaborative approach has become an imperative since the outbreak of the pandemic.

The motto of achieving transformative future, with inclusive growth that is more holistic and adaptable will require incorporation of lessons from past inequalities and inequities, so as to help society withstand future upheavals.

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