

# Government Launches Mission COVID Suraksha to accelerate Indian COVID-19 Vaccine Development

Posted On: 29 NOV 2020 5:45PM by PIB Delhi

The Government of India (GOI) has [announced the](#) third stimulus package of Rs. 900 Crore for the ***Mission COVID Suraksha- The Indian COVID-19 Vaccine Development Mission***. This grant will be provided to the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) for Research & Development of Indian COVID-19 vaccines.

The COVID-19 Vaccine development Mission with end-to-end focus from preclinical development through clinical development and manufacturing and regulatory facilitation for deployment, would consolidate all available and funded resources towards an accelerated product development. This will help accelerate development of approx. 5-6 vaccine candidates and ensure that these are brought closer to licensure and introduction in market for consideration of regulatory authorities for introduction in public health systems, to combat further spread of COVID infection.

The important objectives of the fund will be accelerating pre-clinical & clinical development; licensure of COVID-19 vaccine candidates that are currently in clinical stages or ready to enter clinical stage of development, establishing clinical trial sites, and strengthening the existing immunoassay laboratories, central laboratories and suitable facilities for animal studies, production facilities and other testing facilities to support COVID-19 vaccine development. The other important objective will be supporting development of common harmonized protocols, trainings, data management systems, regulatory submissions, internal and external quality management systems and accreditations. Capabilities for process development, cell line development and manufacturing of GMP batches for animal toxicology studies and clinical trials will also be supported under the Mission. A key element will be development of suitable Target Product Profile so that vaccines being introduced through the mission have preferred characteristics applicable for India.

Led by Department of Biotechnology and implemented by a dedicated Mission Implementation Unit at Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), the existing activities under National Bio Pharma Mission (NBM) and Ind-CEPI Mission will provide complementary strengths to this Mission.

Phase-I of the COVID Suraksha Mission has been allotted Rs.900 Crore for a period of 12 months.

A total of 10 vaccine candidates have been supported by Department of Biotechnology so far at both academia and industry and as on date, 5 vaccine candidates are in human trials including the Russian Vaccine Sputnik-V with at least 3 more in advanced stages of preclinical to enter human trials shortly.

Dr RenuSwarup, Secretary Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology and Chairperson BIRAC said, “Mission COVID Suraksha is our targeted effort to enable development of indigenous, affordable and accessible vaccines for our country and will complement the National Mission of AtmanirbharBharat”. “India has exhibited enormous strength in vaccine manufacturing and through this National COVID Vaccine Mission, we are confident that our vaccine manufacturers will develop affordable and accessible vaccine not only for India but the world”, she added.

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NB/KGS/(DBT release)

(Release ID: 1676998)

