

DG CSIR makes presentation to Vice President on Sewage and Air Surveillance System to detect COVID-19

The Vice President also briefed about activities undertaken by various CSIR labs

DG suggests setting up of the system in Indian Parliament

Vice President assures to discuss it with Lok Sabha Speaker and the Government

Posted On: 30 MAR 2021 11:46AM by PIB Delhi

A presentation suggesting the setting up of sewage and air surveillance system in the Indian Parliament to find the prevalence of COVID-19 was made to the Vice President and Chairman, Rajya Sabha today by the Director-General of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Dr. Shekhar C Mande.

Dr.Mande was accompanied by Dr. Rakesh Mishra, Director, Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Dr. S. Chandrasekhar, Director, Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT), Dr. Venkata Mohan, IICT and Dr. Atya Kapley from NEERI, Nagpur.

Dr. Mande also briefed the Vice President about the activities undertaken by various laboratories of CSIR.

The CSIR DG informed the Vice President that sewage surveillance provides qualitative as well as quantitative estimate of the number of people infected in a population and could be used to understand the progression of COVID-19 even when mass scales tests for individuals are not possible. It is a measure to comprehensively monitor the prevalence of the disease in communities in real time.

Elaborating on the relevance of sewage surveillance, Dr. Mande pointed out that COVID-19 patients shed SAR-CoV- 2 in stools. Apart from symptomatic individuals, asymptomatic people also shed the virus in their stools.

Presenting data of the sewage surveillance carried out to find the trend of infection in Hyderabad, Prayagraj (Allahabad), Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Nagpur, Puducherry and Chennai, he said it provides an unbiased estimate of numbers since the sampling is not done at individual level. On the other hand, the numbers obtained by regular testing depend on the number of individuals tested.

Dr. Mande said that sewage surveillance of COVID-19 would be relevant not only to understand the present

epidemiology of the disease but would be an indispensable tool for early and easier detection of future COVID-19 outbreaks.

He also suggested setting up air sampling system to monitor viral particles and potential infectivity threat.

The Vice President complimented the scientists for their work and assured the delegation that he would discuss the issue with the Lok Sabha Speaker, Shri Om Birla and the Government.

MS/RK/DP

(Release ID: 1708376)