

Indian Intervention on agenda item 2 - Collaborative actions to harness technologies during pandemics  
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(19-20 August, 2020, Bangkok)

Mister Chair  
Distinguished Delegates  
Ladies and Gentlemen

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Chair on assumption of the Chairmanship of this Committee.

2. We note the background document prepared by UN-ESCAP under this agenda item regarding collaborative actions to harness technologies during pandemics.

3. The COVID-19 pandemic has severely tested the resilience of all nations. In India, we have tried to make the fight against the pandemic a people's movement, by combining the efforts of Government and society. We have given the highest priority to deliver benefits to poor households. India has announced a package of more than USD 300 billion to bring the economy back on track, build modern infrastructure and put in place a technology-driven system. India has put forward a vision of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' a self-reliant and resilient India, integrated with the global economy.

4. India's experience to fight this pandemic has demonstrated the strength of digital technology as a model to increase the government's outreach to remote locations.

5. The Government of India firmly believes and recognizes the fundamental importance of harnessing digital technologies and solutions to combat COVID-19. We have a responsibility that everything we do during and after this crisis must be with a strong focus on building more equal, inclusive and sustainable economies and societies that are more resilient in the face of pandemics, climate change and the many other global challenges we face. Also emerging digital technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, and IoT can be effectively leveraged during and after this critical phase.

6. In our joint fight against COVID-19, we have extended medical and other assistance to over 150 countries. Our Prime Minister announced to create a SAARC COVID emergency fund.

7. The Government of India has effectively leveraged digital technologies for dissemination of information, integration of Chatbots with regional languages support, data Collection, sharing of

Application Programming Interface (API) and GIS based dashboard for COVID-19.

8. India has designed and launched the contact tracing technology, Aarogya Setu App, wherein contact tracing is done through bluetooth & GPS realizing. It takes care of privacy-first by design, inform users about best practices and is available in 11 Indian languages. It has become the world's fastest app to reach 50 million downloads in first 13 days of launch. So far, more than 125 Million users are registered on this application. We have also implemented COVID Quarantine Alert System, a platform that helps to create virtual Geo-Fences for people who have been advised to be in quarantine.

9. We have launched SAMHAR-COVID-19, Super-computing, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, and Healthcare Analytics based Research for combating COVID-19 in partnership with startups and industries, to build a Rapid Supercomputing System and Research Community for India to fight COVID-19. Under this, National Analytical Platform for Dealing with Intelligent Tracing, Tracking and Containment of COVID-19 has been developed for infected persons and quarantined people along-with the mobile applications for health experts, law enforcement agencies and citizens.

10. We have also taken up the task of carrying out computational drug repurposing simulations for the purpose of lead molecular discovery against COVID-19.

11. A tele-medicine solution – e-Sanjeevani OPD, has been developed by the Government of India that aims to provide health-care services to patients through safe and structured video-based clinical consultations between doctors in a hospital and patients in the confines of their home during the current situation.

12. India has set up a COVID-19 Task Force for mapping of technologies from research & development laboratories, academic institutions, start-ups, and micro, small and medium enterprises to fund nearly market-ready solutions in the area of diagnostics, testing, health care delivery solutions and equipment supplies.

13. The Government has also implemented a project called Remedial Action, Knowledge Skimming and Holistic Analysis of COVID-19 (RAKSHAK) that attempts to find quick and long-lasting solutions to problems faced by different segments of the society from the COVID-19 pandemic using Artificial Intelligence as the enabling core technology.

14. Under the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber Physical Systems, we have created a technology platform that will also focus on development and deployment of applications based on AI-

driven diagnostics, personalized treatment, early identification of potential pandemics, imaging diagnostics, etc.

15. The Common Service Centers (CSCs) in India are delivering financial and e-health/ tele-medicine to the citizens and also assisting in data entry, validation and management to provide the accurate dissemination of information in public domain with respect to COVID-19.

16. During this pandemic, we have also started doorstep delivery of cash to poor citizens through AADHAAR Enabled Payment System (AEPS). Government is also helping in delivery of essential goods such as medicines, groceries, ventilators, masks, personal protection equipments etc. through the postal department.

17. To conclude, I take this opportunity to urge the Committee to actively engage with the member States, and to extend them all possible assistance by way of facilitating technology-transfer and capacity building, among other necessary interventions.

I thank you, Mister Chair.

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