

WEBINAR

by Elets Technomedia

Fighting Corona - Leveraging Scientific Research & Innovation

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— SPEAKER —

PROF. ASHUTOSH SHARMA

Secretary
Department of Science & Technology
Government of India



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Ashutosh Sharma Calls to Improve the Quality of Innovation

The Coronavirus has created an unprecedented halt across the globe. Over 190 countries are reeling under the epidemic as it is spreading across the globe. Across the globe, countries are closing borders and asking citizens to stay home in the midst of the Coronavirus outbreak. The third phase of the lockdown in India began with considerable relaxations, but curbs will continue in containment areas so that the gains achieved so far in the fight against COVID-19 are not squandered away. The country has been divided into three zones—Red, Orange, and Green—based on Coronavirus risk-profiling. The extended lockdown is slated to last till May 17. Addressing the topic of “Fighting Corona - Leveraging Scientific Research & Innovation” **Prof. Ashutosh Sharma, Secretary, Department of Science & Technology, Government of India** presented his views in a webinar organised by Elets Technomedia and hosted by **Dr Ravi Gupta, Founder and CEO, Elets Technomedia.**

Ashutosh Sharma said “Department of Science & Technology (DST) is a very good experiment by the government of India. DST was established in 1971 to promote new areas of science and technology in the country. The DST has been making policies for science and technology and providing funds to many innovations across the country. It's been a huge platform for empowering science. In



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the last 49 years, we have evolved in a dynamic way.”

He further said DST is about building capabilities and future-ready and it's a system for scientists by scientists. We must focus on quality rather than quantity in innovation, he said.

Over new innovations, he said we have started a scheme named NIDHI (National Initiative for Development and Harnessing Innovations), an umbrella program for nurturing ideas and innovations into successful startups.

He also said India is number 3 on tech startups and while our quantity of research is adequate, the quality of research can further improve by shifting the research to profound, disruptive were needed, cutting edge and relevant.

Over the COVID-19 crisis, he said there is no cure or vaccine for the virus. The focus is on testing, tracking, and cutting down the transmission of

COVID across the country. The govt is focusing to contain the epidemic and curb it from going to the third phase. We are fighting COVID-19 on 11 different fronts. It's a multi-dimensional problem so we need new ways to tackle. We need to use scientific modern tools to fight the pandemic.

He also said Industry will have to part of our innovation. We are trying to connect startups with established industries. We are number three in the world in the number of scientific and engineering publications, and also at number three in many cutting edge fields. The government through its policies and support creates an enabling environment for R&D, innovation.

With individual driven science, machine learning, the convergence of technology we could bring new elements to our education system and academic research, he added.

He also said we must empower school children and develop critical thinking within them to produce the best of scientists in the future.

He also lauded the Survey of India which completed its 250 years in the system. Digital maps that are of utmost necessity in the crisis are developed by Survey of India to track the COVID-19 patients, he added.

He also said our globe is moving towards remote technology and we must seize this opportunity to make this count.

Over the future plans, he said, climate change is slow thing and we need to pay attention to it. The world must be ready for intelligent machines.

He also said we must marry the enthusiasm of young and experience of older scientists to get better results.

Lastly, he said we need to focus on –“Jugarad, Dandha, Panga” to resolve things. ●