

## Ramaiah Webinar on Diplomacy for Science & Technology to Manage COVID-19 Pandemic

### Introduction

The coronavirus, the cause of COVID-19, started locally in Wuhan, China, and has spread globally. It neither recognizes the geographical and political boundaries of nations, nor their rules of cross-border engagement. It sets its own pace of transmission, incubation, infection, maturation, and demise. India and other countries must respond individually and collectively to its threat by invoking and innovating their rules of cross-border engagement to flatten their curve of infection, recovery, and death from COVID-19.

Current and emerging science & technology (S&T) is central to a successful battle against Covid 19. No country has all the necessary S&T tools for a successful fight and containment of the disease. Diplomacy to assure the availability, accessibility, and quality of S&T to manage the COVID-19 pandemic is central to India's success. For example, it is central to assuring the availability of test kits, accessibility of ventilators in all the hot spots, and the quality of research & development to develop vaccines. India must work in concert with many countries globally and regionally through consortia, multilateral agreements, and bilateral agreements to provide these assurances to its people. In an environment that is simultaneously highly competitive driven by global demand and highly collaborative driven by necessity, diplomacy must facilitate the relationships between India and the other countries for the transfer of biological, medical, engineering, epidemiological, and social S&T. The transfer may be through advice, exchange, cooperation, collaboration, commercial transaction, or gift. India's diplomacy must help overcome the financial/economic, geographical, cultural, informational, material, temporal, and transportation barriers to the transfer. The diplomacy must encompass a variety of both state and non-state actors who can aid the identification, medical treatment, personnel deployment, personal protection, strategic management, and access to manage the pandemic. These dimensions and elements are organized as an ontology in Figure 1. The ontology encapsulates the above logic and poses a variety of current topics for discussion within it. In this context the Ramaiah Webinar on Diplomacy for Science & Technology to Manage COVID-19 Pandemic intends to frame, highlight, and debate the key issues in the topic from the vantage of India and the globe.

### Ontology of Diplomacy for Science & Technology to Manage COVID-19 Pandemic

The ontology is a structured natural-language visualization of the large number of pathways to use diplomacy for S&T to manage COVID-19 pandemic. It makes visible 1,54,350 potential pathways. Two illustrative pathways are:

- Global-consortia economic/financial partnership for biological science/technology advancement by industry actor for strategic management to manage COVID-19.

- National informational partnership for epidemiological science/technology cooperation by non-state research actor for identification to manage COVID-19 pandemic.

Diplomacy		Science & Technology		Pandemic Management	
Scope	Type	Field	Objective	Actor	COVID-19
Global	Financial/Economic	Biological	Advice	State	Identification
Consortia	Geographical	Medical	Exchange	Government	Medical treatment
Multilateral	Cultural	Engineering	Advancement	International	Personnel deployment
Bilateral	Informational	Epidemiological	Cooperation	Regional	Personal protection
Regional	Material	Social	Collaboration	National	Strategic management
Consortia	Temporal		Commerce	State	Access
Multilateral	Transportation		Gift	Local	
Bilateral				Industry	
National				Research	
				Personnel/Individual	
				Non-State	
				Civil Society	
				Industry	
				University	
				Research	
				Personnel/Individual	
				NGO	

**Figure 1: Ontology of Diplomacy for Science & Technology to Manage COVID-19 Pandemic**

The discussion will be free-flowing, structured brainstorming for about two hours anchored around the ontology. The ontology can be used to chart a roadmap for India’s diplomacy for S&T to manage the COVID-19 pandemic. It can be used to map the pathways India has deployed to date, assess their efficacy, positively reinforce the successful ones, negatively reinforce the unsuccessful ones, and experiment with new ones. It will aid in discussing and addressing the need for, the priorities in, and the pathways to manage COVID-19. The discussion will help formulate a roadmap for research on, policies for, and practice of diplomacy for S&T to successfully manage the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Issues

The webinar discussion will focus on the following issues:

1. What should be the scope and types of partnership needed for managing different aspects of the pandemic?
2. Which fields of S&T and what objectives will help overcome the challenges to manage the pandemic?
3. Who should be the actors involved in the process and what should be their goal in managing COVID-19?

## Conclusion

Diplomacy for S&T to manage COVID-19 must be based on the experience of the stakeholders, knowledge of policymaking experts, and evidence from research. The challenge of managing the pandemic goes beyond the boundaries of nations as the pandemic’s propagation is dynamic and permeable. No single country can manage the pandemic on its own. The interventions must be



ongoing and multilayered. Managing the pandemic calls for collaborations at different levels by various actors with many objectives that will enable different partnerships in the field of S&T through diplomacy.

**Date:** 24th July 2020

**Time:** 3 pm to 5 pm (IST)

**Facilitator:** Dr Arkalgud Ramaprasad, Director, Ramaiah Public Policy Center; Professor Emeritus, University of Illinois at Chicago, USA

**Moderator:** Dr Chetan B Singai, Deputy Director, Ramaiah Public Policy Center

**Coordinator:** Sree Ganga S D, Research Associate, Ramaiah Public Policy Center

## List of Panellists

Sl.No	Name	Affiliation
1.	Mr Aditya GS	MSc International Relations Graduate, LSE
2.	Ms Angana Guha Roy	Research Associate, Delhi Policy Group, New Delhi
3.	Dr Aparna Kumaraswamy	Project Manager, Healthtech, Swissnex India, Bengaluru
4.	Dr B Chagun Basha	Senior Technical Expert, Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy
5.	Dr B R Guruprasad	National Institute of Advanced Sciences (NIAS), Bengaluru
6.	Dr Dinesh Srivastava	National Institute of Advanced Sciences (NIAS), Bengaluru
7.	Ms Harini Madhusudan	National Institute of Advanced Sciences (NIAS), Bengaluru
8.	Prof Kavyashree Kumar	Assistant Professor, Mount Carmel College, Bengaluru
9.	Dr M. Mayilvaganan	Associate Professor, National Institute of Advanced Sciences (NIAS), Bengaluru
10.	Dr M. Sai Baba	National Institute of Advanced Sciences (NIAS), Bengaluru
11.	AMB Manju Seth	Diplomat retired from the Indian Foreign Service
12.	Dr Neeta Inamdar	Professor and Head of the Department, Manipal Center for European Studies, Manipal
13.	Dr Nimita Pandey	STI Policy Fellow, DST-Centre for Policy Research, IISc, Bengaluru
14.	Dr Prakash Panneerselvam	Assistant Professor, International Strategic & Security Studies Programme, National Institute of Advanced Sciences (NIAS), Bengaluru
15.	Dr Rajesh Shah	President, Indian Medicolegal & Ethics Association, Hon. Gen. Surgeon, H.E. Governor of Gujarat
16.	Dr Shambhavi Naik	Research Fellow, The Takshashila Institution, Bengaluru
17.	Dr SujitBhattacharya	Chief Scientist, CSIR- National Institute of Science, Technology and Development Studies, New Delhi
18.	Dr V S Ramamurthy	Emeritus Professor, National Institute of Advanced Sciences (NIAS), Bengaluru
19.	Prof Vinod M J	Professor, Department of Political Science, Bangalore University, Bengaluru