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Experts deliberate on huge investments in current vaccination trials

07 December 2020 | News

Prof. K. VijayRaghavan, Principal Scientific Adviser, Government of India delivers an address on Science and Technology and the â??New Normal,



IIT Madras Alumni Association's Annual Flagship Event 'Sangam 2020 – Driving the New Normal' is making major contributions in helping India discover new opportunities and successfully navigate this challenging period.

From a free 'Masterclass' Series to upskill Indian in the pandemic era, a survey to gauge attitudes of the public to Science and Technology to deliberations with policymakers, academia and the industry, the association is taking up multiple efforts.

Delivering an address on Science and Technology and the 'New Normal,' Prof K VijayRaghavan, Principal Scientific Adviser, Government of India, said, "A vaccine that is administered has to be safe, has to have an immune response that suggests it can deal with the infection and must actually be effective in the field. Therefore, all the vaccines that are in late-phase trials are subjected to very stringent tests."

Further Prof. K. VijayRaghavan said, "There has been a huge amount of investment. The investment does not mean shortcuts. The investment comes by allowing what could otherwise have gone in series to now go in parallel. You stockpile and manufacture while the trials are going on but supposing the trials fail, the whole stockpile has to be dumped."

Kris Gopalakrishnan, Co-Founder, Infosys, unveiled the Sangam 2020 New Normal Report, based on a survey conducted by IITMAA in collaboration with the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India to understand public attitude to the state of new normal and to the role of science and technology. IITMAA intends to conduct this Survey on an annual basis under the name 'Bharat Public Attitude to Science Survey - Bharat PASS.'

Further, Kris Gopalakrishnan, said, "During the pandemic, it has been amazing to see the speed at which the science has moved, in terms of trying to understand the virus, trying to figure out cures, develop the vaccine in a record period of time. Three vaccines which are already at the stage of being used and probably another 5-6 vaccines are coming online soon, which is again unprecedented. Clearly, this Perception Study is very important. Resilience is what is coming through."

Sangam 2020, was held from December 1-6, 2020, also featuring a month-long virtual showcase of global innovations from startups on the following topics:

'Bharat in the New Normal,'

'Healthcare and Therapeutics in the New Normal,'

'Future of Work and Education in the New Normal,' and

'Deep-tech in the New Normal.'