

# \$1 BILLION WB AID FOR INDIA TO FIGHT COVID-19

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: World Bank and India

The World Bank has approved a fast-track \$1 billion India COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Project.

The project will help prevent and detect the disease and respond to the pandemic and strengthen the country's public health preparedness.

The largest-ever health sector support from the bank to India, approved by the board of executive directors, will cover all States and Union Territories and address the needs of infected people, at-risk populations, medical and emergency personnel and service providers, medical and testing facilities, and national and animal health agencies.

The project will help scale up the efforts to limit human-to-human transmission, including reducing local transmission of cases and containing the epidemic from progressing further. In parallel, interventions to strengthen the health system will be rolled out to improve the country's capacity to respond to the epidemic and be better prepared to respond to emerging disease outbreaks, including transmission between humans and animals. Procurement of testing kits; setting up of new isolation wards — including turning hospital beds into intensive care unit beds; infection prevention and control; and purchase of personal protective equipment, ventilators, and medicines, particularly in district hospitals and designated infectious disease hospitals; will be scaled up under the project. "The World Bank is working in close partnership with the government to provide urgent and flexible support to the country as it fights the spread of COVID-19," Junaid Ahmad, World Bank Country Director for India, said on Friday. "This operation is expected to enhance surveillance capacities, strengthen diagnostic systems, and expand the capacity of laboratories," Mr. Ahmad said.

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