

World Bank approves \$1 billion aid to India to fight Covid-19

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The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors has approved a fast-track \$1 billion India COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Project to help India prevent, detect, and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and strengthen its public health preparedness.

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This new support will cover all states and Union Territories across India 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 immediately enable the **Government of India (GOI)** to scale-up 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 COVID-19 epidemic and be better prepared to respond to emerging disease outbreaks, including transmission between humans and animals," a World Bank statement said on Friday.

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, it said.