

NCSTC brings out popular COVID Katha in Hindi

The National Council for Science & Technology Communication (NCSTC), Department of Science & Technology (DST) in association with Dr. Anamika Ray Memorial Trust, has brought out the Hindi version of the Popular Multimedia Guide for Mass Awareness carrying important information on A-to-Z of COVID-19 pandemic.

The English version has already been released early this month. In order to fulfil the great demand of the Hindi version of COVID Katha especially from the Hindi heartland, the Hindi edition of the COVID Katha has been brought out with added and revised information for the benefit of the people.

Prof. Ashutosh Sharma, Secretary, DST while appreciating the *COVID Katha: A multimedia guide for mass awareness* has said that the interpretation of science in common man's language is important for awareness amongst laypersons and Hindi being largely spoken language the Hindi version of COVID Katha carries more value. Prof. Sharma said that science cartoons (scientoons) while carrying scientific messages and explaining the health concepts in a simple manner also add humour and amusement during the present health crisis when people feel stressed!

To spread general awareness on COVID-19 using multimedia techniques and digital platforms, the Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India, has come out with an interactive electronic guide to help people understand and address the pandemic with suitable knowledge and confidence.

Interestingly, a people supported COVID Katha movement has been started across the country, and a chain reaction is taking shape. The COVID Katha is being translated in the Khasi language of Meghalaya; Tamil version is also coming up; people are working on Bengali and Assamese versions on their own.

Various science communication enthusiasts are effectively trying to put together COVID Katha in different formats, i.e., Flip version, Animations, Videos and other formats. Several official agencies are also using various elements of COVID Katha in their social media and other mass communication campaigns on COVID-19, i.e., Do's & Don'ts, Scientoons, daily information using one alphabet every day, etc. Hindi and other languages versions of COVID Katha would help spread awareness deeper into grass-root level.

