

## Chinese S&T Ministry launches programme to tackle COVID-19

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### **MOST is re-examining two major scientific and technological projects**



As to the battle against the COVID-19, Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) has launched the programme of "Dealing With the Outbreak of COVID-19 Using Science and Technology", including four batches of 20 emergency projects until now.

Moreover, MOST is re-examining two major scientific and technological projects, including the "Creation of Important Innovative New Drugs" and the "Prevention and Treatment of Severe Contagions", and a series of national essential research and development plans. Recently, some important achievements from these projects have already been implemented in the front line of epidemic prevention and control.

When it comes to drug screening, front-line staff from different research teams collaborated on the basis of existing researches, making great efforts to systematically and massively screen the drugs that have been on the market already or already go into clinical trials. As a consequence, they discovered potentially effective anti- coronavirus drugs, such as Chloroquine Phosphate, Remdesivir, and Favipiravir. Furthermore, in recent days, researchers have urgently launched some clinical trials and the results show that the curative effect of drugs on patients is increasingly obvious.

Based on the R&D level and preliminary accumulation in the field of cell therapy, traditional Chinese medicine and plasma therapy in China, the clinical trials of the three therapies organized by the "Joint Prevention and Control Group" have been gradually carried out, and they are playing significant role in curing critically ill patients.

An emergency project titled "Clinical Study on the Prevention and Treatment of COVID-19 by Integrated Chinese and Western Medicine" was officially launched on February 3 with the support from the MOST. "The positive curative effect has been shown in treating COVID-19," said Zhang Boli, the project leader and the headmaster of Tianjin University of Traditional Chinese Medicine. It was reported that a total of 23 patients had been cured and discharged from Hubei Provincial Hospital of Integrated Traditional and Western Medicine and Wuhan Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine.