

CSR TODAY

An aerial photograph of a lush green tropical island. In the foreground, several rows of solar panels are installed on a grassy slope. The island is surrounded by clear blue water, and a small boat is visible in the distance. The background shows more islands and a hazy sky.

RNI NO. MAHENG/2013/48866 ■ VOLUME 08 ■ ISSUE 03 ■ OCTOBER 2020 ■ PRICE ₹100 ■ TOTAL PAGES: 52

COVID-19

An opportunity or setback for sustainable tourism?

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CSR NEED

Building climate-resilient infrastructure in the post-pandemic world

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The Walmart Foundation announces two new grants to help India's smallholder farmers

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Nutrition must remain a priority even amid a recession, experts urge



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CSR funds needed to help to enhance vaccine cover



Rajesh Tiwari
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**THE PUNE-
HEADQUARTERED SII
HAS PARTNERED WITH
BIOPHARMACEUTICAL
COMPANY
ASTRAZENECA TO
MANUFACTURE THE
EXPERIMENTAL
COVID-19 VACCINE
CANDIDATE DEVELOPED
BY UNIVERSITY
OF OXFORD.**

What could be the money that is needed to provide vaccine cover to all Indians and combat

Covid-19? A whopping Rs 80,000 crore - and this comes from the horse's mouth.

"Quick question; will the government of India have 80,000 crores available, over the next one year? Because that's what the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare needs, to buy and distribute the vaccine to everyone in India. This is the next concerning challenge we need to tackle," Serum Institute of India CEO Adar Poonawalla tweeted tagging Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

"I ask this question, because we need to plan and guide vaccine manufacturers both in India and overseas to service the needs of our country in terms of procurement and distribution," said Poonawalla, who heads the world's largest vaccine maker.

The Pune-headquartered SII has partnered with biopharmaceutical company AstraZeneca to manufacture the experimental Covid-19 vaccine candidate developed by University of Oxford.

It has registered for Phase II/III clinical trials on the Covid-19 vaccine candidate, Covishield, being developed by Oxford University-AstraZeneca, with the Clinical Trials Registry of India (CTRI) - and trials are underway across the country. The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) is following up on the process.


Besides SII-AstraZeneca, trials of two indigenous vaccines by Zydus Cadila and Bharat Biotech are also underway in India.

In this kind of scenario, it is CSR that is going to ensure that every Indian is covered - and this is the only answer to get rid of this pandemic.

The Rs 80,000 crore would be needed in a span of one year.

Fortifying the collaboration between Serum Institute of India (SII), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and taking it a notch higher, SII has announced an additional 100 million doses to be delivered, bringing the total now to be delivered by the partnership to up to 200 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines.

This brings the total number of vaccine doses to be covered by the partnership between SII, Gavi, and the Gates Foundation to an aggregate of up to 200 million doses, following the initial agreement for up to 100 million doses announced in August. The arrangement again provides an option to secure additional doses if the vaccines pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator sees a need for it.

The collaboration will provide upfront capital to SII to help it increase manufacturing capacity now so that, once a vaccine, or vaccines, gains regulatory approval and WHO Prequalification, doses can be distributed at scale to LMICs as part of the Gavi COVAX AMC mechanism as early as the first half of 2021. 

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CSR TODAY

OCTOBER 2020 | VOL. 08 | ISSUE 03

PRINTER AND PUBLISHER: Rajesh Tiwari

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Circulation: C.R. Tiwari

Printed, Published and Edited by
Rajesh Tiwari on behalf of Indian Centre
For Corporate Social Responsibility, Printed
at The Pack-Age, 196-I, Katrak Compound,
J.S.S. Road, Gaiwadi, Girgaon, Mumbai -
400 004 and Published from Indian Centre
For Corporate Social Responsibility, 106/A,
Nirman Kendra, Plot No.3, Dr. E. Moses
Road, Mahalaxmi Estate, Mahalaxmi,
Mumbai 400 011.

Editor: Rajesh Tiwari

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Elan Foundation and Salman Khan begins the reconstruction of houses for flood-hit victims at Kolhapur, Maharashtra

In February 2020, Elan Group announced the adoption of flood-affected Khidrapur village in Maharashtra. The construction of 70 houses for flood-affected victims has taken off at Khidrapur village, Kolhapur district at Maharashtra. The project is a joint initiative of Bollywood megastar Salman Khan, the Government of Maharashtra and Elan Foundation- a philanthropic arm of Gurugram based commercial realty developer Elan Group. The project is being funded by the government of Maharashtra to the tune of INR 95,000 per house whereas the rest of the expenses would be borne by Salman Khan and Elan Foundation.

Hon'ble Maharashtra Minister Shri Rajendra Patil Yadavkar tweeted that the work on 70 affected houses has finally begun. He had applauded the initiative and assured of full government support. He also posted a series of pictures which showed the minister doing a 'bhoomipujan' ceremony. The initiative was also commended by Salman Khan in an Instagram post.

At least 70 houses spanning across 250 square feet each would be given to victims whose houses were ravaged by the flood last year. Situated in the Kolhapur district, Khidrapur is famous for the Kopeshwar Temple that is dedicated to Lord Shiva.

The sarpanch of the village, Haider Khan Mokashi stated that the villagers are extremely happy with this development. They said that they



are proud of the Elan Foundation and Salman Khan for helping this tiny hamlet situated in a corner of the state.

"Shelter is the basic necessity and we empathize with those who lost their lives and homes due to floods. Elan Foundation is committed to augmenting the rehabilitation efforts in an endeavor to give a fresh start to flood-affected victims with a renewed vigour. The beginning of

the construction work is a step forward in realizing our vision to aid the marginalized section of the society," said Ravish Kapoor, MD, Elan Group.

The 2019 floods affected 223 villages in Kolhapur and displaced around 28,897 people in the district.

Elan Foundation is a philanthropic arm of Elan Group, Gurugram based commercial realty developer, developing revolutionary retail innovations that are powering the next upheaval in Indian realty industry. It has also aided the humanitarian relief efforts during the COVID-19 lockdown by distributing ration, masks and sanitizers free of cost to construction workers along with distribution of relief material to various parts of Bihar.

IIT Guwahati in Collaboration with Workspace Metal Solutions Pvt. Ltd. Develops a First-of-its-kind Self-Check Kiosk

The kiosk is a one-stop solution for checking if an individual is running a fever, low blood oxygen levels, therefore, potentially has COVID-19 or any another viral or bacterial infection, while providing 360° disinfection of the belongings through the UV-C chamber

The Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati in collaboration with Workspace Metal Solutions Pvt. Ltd., Udaipur, has developed a first-of-its-kind self-check kiosk. The small structure helps by streamlining the flow of people through the kiosk. The Kiosk only takes about 30 seconds to check whether the person safe to enter the premises or not. It is quick but very accurate contactless check which can determine if an individual is running a fever, low blood oxygen levels and, therefore, potentially has COVID-19 or any another viral or bacterial infection. The self-check kiosk has been developed by Dr. Senthilmurugan Subbiah, Associate Professor, Department of Chemical Engineering, IIT Guwahati, and Mr. Puneet Talesara, Founder, Workspace Group, and alumnus of IIT Guwahati. The cost of a self-check kiosk varies from



3.5 lakh to 7.5 lakh depending on the specification and features. The product has already been commercialised. The Institute has also installed self-check kiosk at its campus as well. The team has also filed for a patent.

With the gradual easing of public lockdown measures and return to normal life, it is the need of the hour to ensure safe entry to any premises. The fully automated touchless self-check kiosk has been designed as

CSR INDIA UNITED

Dollar Industries Limited donates Anti-Viral Face Masks to Paramilitary Forces in New Delhi

An initiative by Dollar Foundation, keeping in mind the health and safety of frontline heroes

Dollar Industries Limited, a prominent name in the hosiery and knitwear segment recently launched its new range of anti-viral products, in association with HealthGuard, Australia. As a part of Dollar's corporate social responsibility, Dollar Foundation donated 2000 pieces of anti-viral masks to the frontline heroes at CRPF

and CISF in New Delhi. Pramod Gupta, Director, Dollar Industries Limited met Mr. Rajesh Ranjan, Director General, CISF and handed over 1,000 Anti-Viral face masks to him. Additionally, Amit Kumar Singh, Regional Head Marketing (North India) at Dollar Industries Limited met Inspector General of CRPF, Mr. Ajay Kumar Yadav, and donated 1,000 Anti-Viral face masks to him.

Sharing his thoughts about the activity, Mr. Vinod Kumar Gupta, Managing Director, Dollar Industries Limited stated, "The COVID-19 has taken the country by storm and in distressing times like these our

warriors at CRPF and CISF have taken the initiative of collaboration within communities by maintaining vigilance in the form of law and order during the lockdown. As a virtuous Indian we salute the frontline COVID warriors for their paramount and indispensable services. As a small gesture of respect Dollar Industries Limited, shared their newly introduced anti-viral masks to the Central Industrial Reserve Force (CISF) and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) to support our fight against the virus."

Rajesh Ranjan, Director-General CISF and Ajay Kumar Yadav, Inspector General of CRPF were overwhelmed with the kind gesture and appreciated the organization's effort in reaching out to the forces during the ongoing pandemic. While expressing their gratitude, they congratulated the organization for creating products that are developed keeping mind the health and safety in these unprecedented times.

With an elaborate vision focusing on #DontBringTheVirusHome, Dollar Industries Limited curated a range of products in association with HealthGuard, Australia. The products are 99.94% effective against coronavirus and can be of great assistance to consumers as they adapt to the 'New Normal' ways of living.



Mr Pramod Gupta, Director, Dollar Industries Limited handing over Face Masks to CISF DG, Rajesh Ranjan in New Delhi



Mr Amit Kumar Singh, Regional Head North, Dollar Industries Limited handing over Face Masks to IG, CRPF, Mr Ajay Kumar Yadav in New Delhi

COVID-19

An opportunity or setback for sustainable tourism?

The coronavirus crisis presents an opportunity to rebuild the tourism industry in a more sustainable manner. Fostering eco-tourism initiatives could ensure recovery for the sector and for nature go hand in hand.

Misool eco-resort in Raja Ampat, Indonesia
Misool, an eco-resort in Raja Ampat, Indonesia.
Image: Shawn Heinrichs



As popular travel destinations have reopened, or prepare to reopen for international tourism, it remains to be seen whether the coronavirus will serve as a wake-up call to advance the decarbonisation of tourism, or whether sustainability will take a backseat to economic recovery. The tourism industry has been heavily impacted by the pandemic. Globally, tourist arrivals suffered a 22 per cent drop in the first three months of 2020—the equivalent of \$80 billion in lost tourist receipts.

The Asia-Pacific region was the worst hit with 33 million fewer arrivals. With international travel projected to decline by as much as 60-80 per cent in 2020, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) predicts that 100 to 120 million jobs in tourism are at risk.

On the flip side, the short-term environmental benefits of COVID-19 are undeniable: increased sightings of wildlife species, improved air quality and declining carbon emissions. The pandemic alone cannot, however, stop climate change.

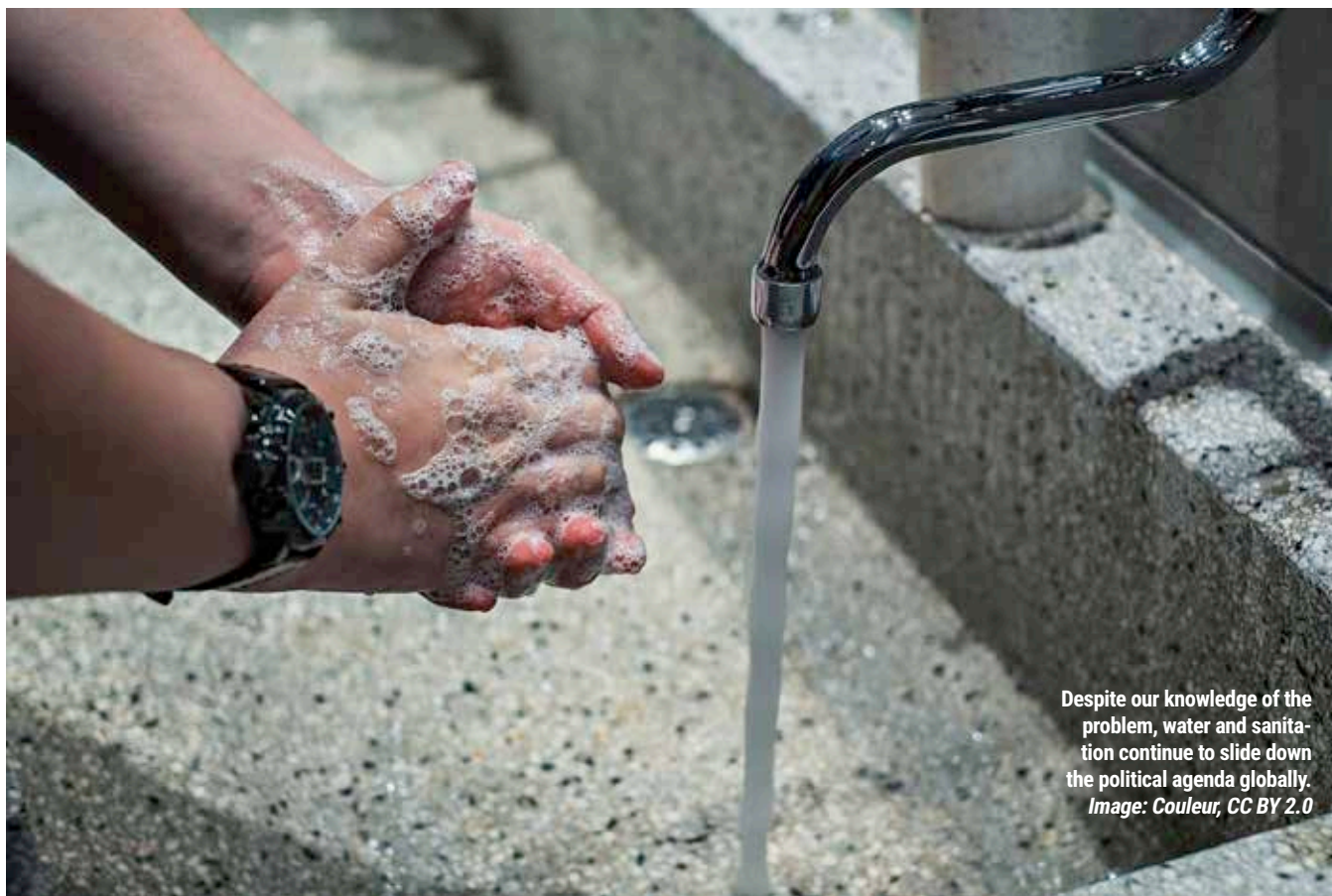
“In the developed world, the effects of the coronavirus on our natural world have been largely positive: carbon dioxide emissions have dropped, leatherback turtles are nesting in Phuket and Florida, and more people are becoming aware of the real cost of the wildlife trade,” said Marit Miners, co-founder of Misool, an eco-resort in Raja Ampat, Indonesia.

“However, in the developing world, an entirely different set of levers and knobs determine conservation outcomes,” she added.

Ecotourism—and conservation efforts—at risk

Organisations that rely on visitors to fund conservation projects, or to employ and support local communities, have been dealt a devastating blow, as declining revenue and cuts in external funding hinder their ability to finance law enforcement activities and staff salaries.

Reduced or suspended patrolling has led to a surge in illicit activities, including poaching, illegal fishing or deforestation,



Despite our knowledge of the problem, water and sanitation continue to slide down the political agenda globally.
Image: Couleur, CC BY 2.0

The neglected water and sanitation crisis

Hand washing is one of the best frontline defenses against the virus that causes Covid-19. Yet three billion people – almost half of the world's population – lack access to basic hand-washing facilities, writes **Kevin Rudd**.

The Covid-19 crisis has laid bare the importance of access to clean water, sanitation, and hygiene. As we all know now, hand washing is one of the best frontline defenses against the virus.

Yet three billion people – almost half of the world's population – lack access to basic hand-washing facilities, around one-third (2.2 billion

people) do not have access to safe drinking water, and almost twice as many (4.2 billion) go without safe sanitation services of any kind.

The situation is even worse in the Pacific Islands, where the share of the population without secure access to potable water is twice that of the global average, and where sanitary indicators are lower than in Sub-Saharan Africa.

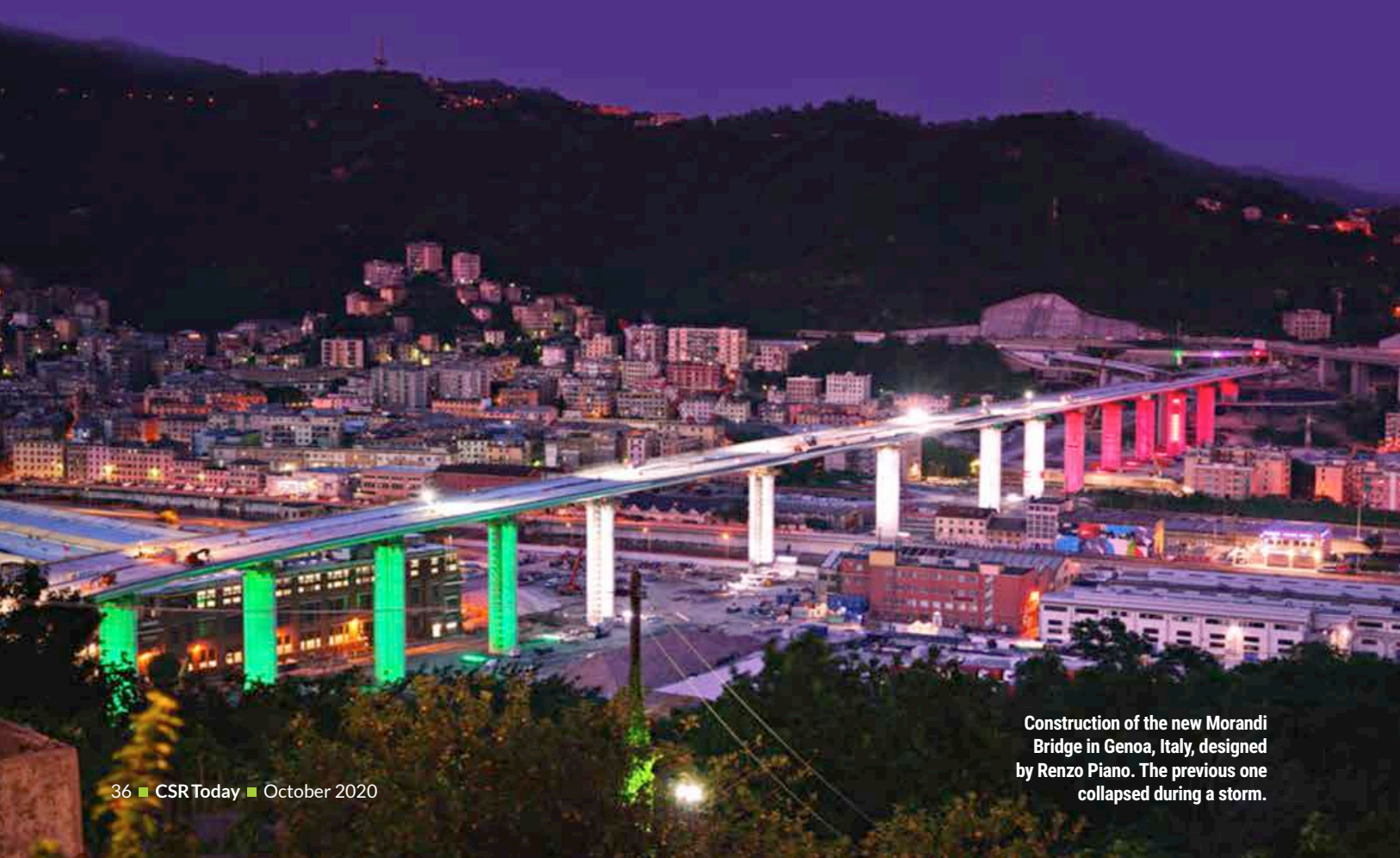
As we are seeing in countries like Papua New Guinea, the absence of facilities for maintaining basic hygiene makes it incredibly difficult to combat the virus once it takes hold.

Yet despite our knowledge of the problem, water and sanitation continue to slide down the political agenda globally. Politicians are rarely as eager to open a wastewater plant as they are to cut the ribbon in front of a new school or hospital.

But the problem is not so much a lack of political will as an inability to seize political opportunities. After all, it is hard to think of any other government service as impor-

Building climate-resilient infrastructure in the post-pandemic world

Identifying the key stakeholders relevant to an infrastructure asset and collaborating with those stakeholders will be a crucial method of building lasting climate resilience, write **Blair Chalmers & Lawrence Slade**



Construction of the new Morandi Bridge in Genoa, Italy, designed by Renzo Piano. The previous one collapsed during a storm.



Something doesn't sit right with me about burning garbage for energy.

What's wrong with **Burning** Garbage?

If companies were to tackle this seriously, it would make a significant amount of garbage in this country and create industries and markets for municipalities and communities to follow suit, writes **Sarah Golden**



SEAS AND FORESTS ARE MUDDYING THE CARBON BUDGET

As climates change, forests may not absorb more carbon as expected. But a new carbon budget could appeal to the oceans, says **Tim Radford** of Climate News Network

Two new studies could throw long-term climate forecasts into confusion. The planetary carbon budget – the all-important traffic of life's first element between rocks, water, atmosphere and living things – that underpins planetary temperatures and maintains a stable climate needs a rethink.

A warming climate makes trees grow faster. The awkward finding

is that faster-growing trees die younger. Therefore they must surrender their carbon back to the atmosphere quicker.

So tomorrow's forests may not be quite such reliable long-term banks of carbon pumped into the atmosphere as a consequence of profligate fossil fuel use by human economies.

The more reassuring news is that the ocean – that's almost three fourths of the planet's surface – may absorb

The Walmart Foundation announces two new grants to help India's smallholder farmers

- More than US\$15 million of a \$25 million commitment now invested
- More than 140,000 farmers, including nearly 80,000 women, to benefit

Underscoring the importance of smallholder farmers to India's pandemic recovery, the Walmart Foundation today announced two new grants as part of a commitment made in September 2018 to invest US\$25 million (approximately Rs. 180 crores) over five years in improving farmer livelihoods in India. The new funding, which totals \$4.5 million, will allow non-profits Tanager and PRADAN to further scale their efforts to help farmers earn more from improved output and fair market access. Both grantees will focus on increasing opportunities for women farmers via farmer producer organizations (FPOs).

With these two new grants, the Walmart Foundation has invested a total of \$15 million with eight non-government organizations (NGOs) in India, supporting programs designed to impact more than 140,000 farmers, including nearly 80,000 women farmers, to date.

Kathleen McLaughlin, president of Walmart Foundation and executive vice president and chief sustain-



Women farmers transplanting tomato at Baghmundi in Purulia district, a PRADAN site in West Bengal

ability officer of Walmart Inc., said: "The global COVID-19 pandemic has increased pressure on India's farmers, especially women farmers shouldering extra responsibilities in the household while seeing their incomes diminish overnight. We at the Walmart Foundation and our grantee partners are focused on supporting farmers to increase their resilience and sustainability for a better future."

Kalyan Krishnamurthy, Flipkart Group chief executive officer and a member of the Walmart Foundation Board of Directors, said: "There is huge potential for innovative technology solutions to help farmers in India improve productivity and yield, access valuable market information and succeed as part of a more efficient and transparent supply chain. FPOs

are key to the Foundation's strategy for empowering farmers and bringing them into the digital era."

Through its grants, the Walmart Foundation works with well-established NGOs that support FPOs to develop their capabilities and scale to more members. The overall aim is to help FPOs develop knowledge of sustainable farming practices, share business best practices, add value to primary agricultural commodities and improve access to finance and markets.

NGOs and their FPO partners proved critical during India's COVID-19 lockdown and are a key part of the nation's ongoing recovery. With the support of the Walmart Foundation, they were able to mobilize to meet urgent needs for food and

Blue Dart plants 1,11,000 trees in the Kanha-Pench Wildlife corridor in 2020

A part of the company's Go Green initiative, the plantation drive aims to reduce global warming, reduce human-wildlife conflict, conserve local flora & fauna and promote local livelihood

Blue Dart Express Ltd, India's leading express logistics service provider and part of the Deutsche Post DHL Group (DPDHL) will plant 1,11,000 trees in collaboration with Grow-Trees in Kanha-Pench Wildlife corridor. Blue Dart will complete planting these trees in the CY 2020 and these 1,11,000 trees are likely to offset 22,22,000 kgs of carbon per year, on maturity.

The trees being planted include indigenous species like Tamarind, Shisham (North Indian Rosewood), Siras (Frywood), Teak Wood, Karanj (Indian Beech), Custard Apple, Ber (Indian Plum), Kateswari (Red Silk Cotton), Kashid (Yellow Cassia), Wood Apple, Amla (Indian Gooseberry). Preserving the ecosystem around this reserve, rebuild wildlife habitats and supporting tribal communities along with aiding in increasing the forest reserve in the country are some of the objectives behind these plantation drives. Blue Dart has earlier planted 222,000 trees in the Kanha-Pench Corridor. The unique project of planting trees on the Kanha-Pench Corridor has helped revive the biodiversity



Photo from the 2017 plantation where a group of 17 enthusiastic Blue Darters led by Sandeep Petkar, Regional Head – West 2 participated in sapling plantation activity

of the region, reducing man-animal conflict while providing direct employment to over 70 families every year creating around 5,600 workdays during pit digging and plantation activities alone. Even during the tough times of the pandemic, immense support was provided to the villagers of the Karwahi, Dulara villages by the distribution of dry ration and generation of employment opportunities.

Since 2017, Blue Dart Express Limited has planted a total of 4,52,000 trees in collaboration with Grow-Trees.com across the five Indian states of Odisha, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Sikkim

which is expected to offset about 9 million kg of its carbon footprint.

These large scale plantations have helped promote eco-tourism, increase green cover and support tribal-rural communities, especially women from the Gond tribes. Commenting on the initiative, Mr. Balfour Manuel, MD, Blue Dart Express Ltd said, "Sustainability has been an integral part of our parent company Deutsche Post DHL's (DP DHL) strategy to emphasize its commitment to being responsible and working with communities across the globe. Our Group-wide environmental protection program GoGreen's



Image: Megan Thomas via Unsplash

Nutrition must remain a priority even amid a recession, experts urge

Amid a pandemic and belt-tightening times, smart food choices can bolster immunity; the key is to have a diverse diet and use your calories wisely by selecting micronutrient-filled foods, writes **Eveline Gan**

The impact of Covid-19 on global food supply chains and access to food has been vast. Lockdowns imposed by many governments to control the outbreak have also caused many businesses—in some cases, entire industries such as tourism—to shut, driving millions out of work and their households into financial insecurity.

In a world set to face challenging economic times, eating healthily must remain a priority even when on a tight budget, nutrition experts

told Eco-Business. Even without the threat of Covid-19 infection, eating well helps keep the immune system running efficiently. Diets have a direct impact on health and the body's ability to ward off or recover from illnesses. For instance, it is well-established that poor diets are linked to chronic diseases, such as Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease, which are currently the leading causes of poor health and deaths worldwide.

Mounting evidence also shows that people with these pre-existing condi-