Chandigarh, March 28

People in Punjab can now get their curfew passes for emergencies, report mass gatherings, know home quarantine patients and foreign returned travellers, and do a lot more on the COVA App, which will also soon provide facility to request for groceries and other essentials, as well as consultation with doctors.

Several states have adopted the unique Corona Virus Alert (COVA) app, which is underway for implementation in two provinces in Canada. The App was launched earlier this month to disseminate official information about COVID-19 pandemic.

The App, launched by Punjab Government along with its innovative Digital Punjab Team, is available on Android PlayStore and iOS AppStore. As of March 28th, it has more than 4.5 Lakh user registrations and more than 20,000 views of the dashboard per day. The application is available in English, Hindi and Punjabi.

While the App is up and running in Haryana, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, work on adoption of the App is in progress in Manipur, Meghalya, MP, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Delhi and Leh, according to Vini Mahajan, Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Governance Reforms. A total of 11 State Governments have requested access to the COVA Application and dashboard for their respective states and districts, she revealed.

The application aims to sensitize people and share with them protective and preventive measures that need to be adopted. The application also informs citizens of government
advisories and notifications related to the matter and encourages them to check for symptoms effectively.

Amid the curfew/lockdown imposed in the state, several new features have been added to the App, according to Vini Mahajan. These include Covid-19 Dashboard, Government Notifications, Audio Video awareness, Search of foreign returned travellers, Chat using BOT, issuing of Curfew Pass, Reporting mass gathering, marking oneself as Home Quarantined and Geo Fencing of Home Quarantined. Approved applications for Curfew shall have an E-Pass sent to the registered phone number.

The Admin Portal, which lies with the district administration and Government Headquarters, offers various reports with the collected information for monitoring, assessing the situation and taking necessary actions. The Dashboard shows thematic maps of confirmed, suspected and home quarantined cases, while for home quarantined citizens, there are features such as geo tagging to track movement beyond premises.

Monitoring of home quarantined individuals is done in such a way that the dashboard alerts the district administration if the person leaves his premises, without permission. Updating and managing information of registered patients, as well as management and action on reported mass gatherings, are also available on the App.

According to Vini, work is on to add more features to the App, such as Telemedicine consultancy, allowing users to Connect with doctors for health advisory over voice calls via an IVR, and request for delivery of groceries and essentials. The district administration shall partner with local vendors for the purpose and citizens shall be able to place an order for delivery on the COVA application itself, said Vini, adding that the move is aimed at improving citizen service delivery and ease citizen experience during the lockdown. People will soon also be able to use the App to become a volunteer and also donate towards CM Relief Fund.