Aarogya Setu Mobile App - Tracking COVID-19

The Government of India launched 'Aarogya Setu,' an app to track the cases of COVID-19 and alert the citizens of the country to keep safe. This article will read the overview, objectives and constitution of the Aarogya Setu App.

Candidates can visit the **official website** of Aarogya Setu (mygov.in) to dive deeper into the relevant information.

Like Aarogya Setu, the government has launched many apps and schemes for the welfare of the citizens of the country. The links of two related schemes launched by the government are given below.

For the list of important Government Schemes with the detailed explanation which will be helpful for the aspirants of UPSC exam and other competitive exams, visit the given link.

Overview of Aarogya Setu

In the fight against Coronavirus COVID-19 in India, the Government launched a mobile application Aarogya Setu to connect essential health services with the citizens of India.

Aarogya Setu is a COVID-19 tracking app that uses GPS and Bluetooth features of smartphones to track the infection. It helps in determining whether the person has been in close contact with any other infected person or not.

To take a step forward for protecting the citizens, the government has launched the app in 11 different languages (Now 12). Through Aarogya Setu people will be able to know or track the infection in close vicinity more accurately and effectively.

Objectives of Aarogya Setu

The Aarogy Setu is developed keeping in mind the following objectives:

1. To spread awareness of the novel Coronavirus outbreak among Indian citizens.
2. To augment the Government of India's initiatives, particularly the Department of Health, in proactively reaching out to the users and informing them about the risks, best practices and relevant advisories relating to the containment of COVID-19.
3. To establish a connection between the government and the people of India for health services, facilities and updates from the health ministry nationally and state-wise.

Information Available in Aarogya Setu

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Aarogya Setu. The mobile app has been developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) that comes under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

At present, the Arogya Setu app includes three primary sections, each with their own uses. These sections are –

- **Your Status** - This section, as the name suggests, determines the risk factor of the user to contract the disease. To assess your risk, the app considers your age, the people who you come into contact with and the area where you reside. Users of advanced age are more likely to suffer from coronavirus. Similarly, those residing in hotspot areas suffer from increased chances of contracting the virus.
- **Self-assessment** - This is a questionnaire section, through which users can self-diagnose whether they suffer from Coronavirus. You need to answer every question regarding your current health condition. Based on your answers, the Arogya Setu app can determine whether you may have contracted the virus. In the case of positive assessment, the app will also provide guidance regarding your next step. Users can check the app to understand whether they should follow precautions or seek medical attention, based on the self-assess results.
- **Covid-19 Update** - The update section allows you to stay up to date regarding the number of cases, both locally and nationally. The accurate numbers can help you assess your risk further. Additionally, the availability of official updates prevents rumours and misinformation from spreading.

Features of Aarogya Sethu

- User Status (tells the risk of getting COVID-19 for the user)
- Self Assess (helps the users identify COVID-19 symptoms and their risk profile)
- COVID-19 Updates (gives updates on local and national COVID-19 cases)
- E-pass integration (if applied for E-pass, it will be available)
- See Recent Contacts option (allows the users to assess the risk level of their Bluetooth contacts)

It tells how many COVID-19 positive cases are likely in a radius of 500 m, 1 km, 2 km, 5 km and 10 km from the user.

Reception

The Aarogya Setu had five million downloads within three days of it being launched, surpassing *Pokémon Go* as the world's fastest-growing mobile app. It had reached 100 million installations by 13 May 2020, 40 days after its initial launch.

The NITI Aayog CEO revealed that "the app has been able to identify more than 3,000 hotspots in 3–17 days ahead of time.

However, users and experts in India and around the world say the app raises huge data security concerns. The app collects details like name, number, gender, travel history via Bluetooth in order to let users know if someone with COVID-19 is in the vicinity. Data is analyzed by scanning a database of known cases of infections and shared with the government simultaneously.

The major area of consent is the privacy of the data collected, or lack thereof. Bluetooth is susceptible to hacking and every other known cyber security threat. Ethical hackers such as Robert Baptiste, have pointed out the security lapses in the app. Robert even shared details of who was infected or not even in the Prime Minister's office, prompting several software developers to call for the source code to be made public.

This application uses contact tracing to keep a note of all individuals that a user meets during this pandemic. If one or more of these individuals develop Covid-19 symptoms in the future, this app immediately alerts the user of such a development. GPS and Bluetooth are two of the essential requirements for Arogya Setu App to function properly.

Listed below is a full breakdown of how the app can trace people you meet in real life:

- After app installation, users will need to permit Bluetooth and GPS access to the program.
- With the Bluetooth functionality, this app will determine all nearby users of the Arogya Setu software.
- At the same time, GPS tagging at every 15 minutes will help the app determine where a user is visiting with precision.

- These records are stored on your phone. However, if your self-assessment through this app shows a strong likelihood of Covid-19 infection, this data will be uploaded to a server for government inspection and use.

How to use the Aarogya Setu App

Step 1: Download this application.

Step 2: Run the app and allow location sharing and Bluetooth access.

Step 3: Users will receive an OTP on their registered phone number, which they must enter correctly to proceed.

Step 4: Select your gender.

Step 5: Enter personal details, such as name, age and profession.

Step 6: Enter all international travel details if you have stepped outside the country in the previous month.

Step 7: Start a 20-second assessment test to assess whether you show any markers of Covid-19.

The information on Aarogya Setu is covered under Government Schemes which is an important Static GK topic with regards to UPSC or any other competitive examination.

Candidates preparing for any competitive exams can check the relevant links: