

# THE HINDU

## **COVID-19: DST funds two companies for new diagnostics**

**They are to develop antibody kits as well as a quicker version of the Rapid RT-PCR test**

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A health worker holds swab samples for COVID-19 Real-Time Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) test. File.

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) has funded two companies, FastSense Diagnostics (FD) and Module Innovations (MI), to develop antibody kits as well as a quicker version of the Rapid RT-PCR (reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction) test that is now the most widely used diagnostic approach to test for the virus.

MI is a Pune-based healthcare start-up that is working on a point of care diagnostic kit which can detect the virus in “10-15 minutes”. The diagnostic kit is being developed on the lines of one of its products called ‘Usense’, which is a point of care diagnostic kit that can detect urinary tract infections within 15 minutes. The start-up is now developing nCoVSENSE, a test device that can detect antibodies generated against COVID-19, Ashutosh Sharma, Secretary, DST, said in an interview on Monday.