

**Ministry of Science & Technology**  
**(Department of Biotechnology)**  
**Monthly Summary for the month of June, 2019**

**Major Events & Achievements**

**a) Signing of LOI with Costa Rica in the area of Biotechnology:** Department of Biotechnology has signed a LOI with Ministry of Science, Technology and Telecommunications (MICITT) of the Republic of Costa Rica with the objective to broaden and deepen cooperation in Science & Technology in the field of Biotechnology and to encourage industrial R&D and related investment flows, bilaterally and/or regionally. The priority areas of identified for Cooperation include biomedicine and Health, Agriculture; biodiversity, Biofuels and Bioenergy; Nanotechnology and Bioinstrumentation; Animal & marine Biotechnology. The Cabinet has approved the signing of LOI during its meeting held on 12 June, 2019.

**b) Promotion of Innovation in Clean Energy:** Department of Biotechnology represented Government of India in the 83<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the International Energy Agency (IEA) committee on Energy Research and Technology (CERT) and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Universal meeting of Technology Collaboration Programmes (TCPs) on 17-19 June held in Paris. Outcomes and major schemes were presented to promote innovation, research, development and demonstration in Clean Energy.

**c) Biological Data Sharing Policy :** DBT has initiated effort for framing a 'Biological Data Storage, Access and Sharing Policy of India (BDSASP)' aiming at broad research use of biological data that enhances public benefits by facilitating speedy discoveries in biosciences directly associated with human being. The first Advisory Committee meeting to review the zero draft policy was conducted earlier in DBT, New Delhi, where inter-ministerial members and domain experts participated. The Committee reviewed the zero draft document and as per the suggestions of the Advisory Committee, Draft-1 document has been prepared and placed in the Public domain for comments.

**d) Human Resource Development under DBT- STATE partnership:** Life Sciences and Biotechnology Skill Vigyan programme executed by DBT focuses on providing high quality hands on training in tools and techniques in multidisciplinary areas of biotechnology for entry level students (10+2 and Graduates in Biotechnology). A total of six states have been supported. Two more states - Karnataka and Telangana have been supported during the month.

**e) Launch of Webinar Series by the Department of Biotechnology:** The first Webinar series of the DBT was held on 25<sup>th</sup> June with the aim to promote Biotechnology. The webinars will provide a virtual opportunity to engage, stimulate interaction and apprise the scientific community of not only the latest schemes and programmes of the Department and also keep them abreast of current research trends by domain experts. This series includes students, young researchers and scientists from across the country especially those from the remote regions.

**f) Organization of Training Program to strengthen the Stem Cell Research :** Institute for Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine (InStem), an autonomous institute of the Department organized the training program in reprogramming human somatic cells to induced pluripotent stem to strengthen the stem cell research between June 03<sup>rd</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Twelve doctoral students/scientists, selected from more than 100 applicants, participated in this course, which had both hands-on training sessions and lectures. The focus was on techniques involved in generation and maintenance of high quality human iPSCs from human somatic cells.

**g) DBT Popularization programme:** A symposium was organized at RGCB(Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology) an autonomous institute of Department on 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2019 showcasing 'Woman Science Power' for making popularization programmes more effective and wider in its outreach. The one-day symposium included lectures by eminent scientists and faculty from Mar Ivanios college, Thiruvananthapuram and RGCB. The event also included participation of summer trainee students from various parts of India in the poster sessions and the discussions.

**h) The Department has constituted 3 Institutional Biosafety Committees** during the period under report. As per the request of GEAC, MoEFCC, the Department has constituted a Field Inspection and Scientific Evaluation Committee (FISEC) for on-the-spot inspection of Brinjal fields to assess the veracity of spread of unapproved Bt Brinjal in Haryana and neighbouring states to confirm the presence of gene(s), and to recommend strategies and measures to contain the illegal activity.

**i) There have been 27 research publications and two patent** filled by the Autonomous Institutes of the Department during the period of report.