

Government of India
Ministry of Science and Technology
Department of Biotechnology

Monthly Cabinet Summary, July-2019

1. Important policy decisions taken and major achievements during the month:

a) Guidelines for Evaluation of Nanopharmaceuticals in India: Inter-Ministerial Committee Chaired by Secretary, Department of Biotechnology on 5th July, 2019 accepted the 'Guidelines for Evaluation of Nanopharmaceuticals in India'. This document has been prepared as a guidance manual for the regulators to ensure the quality, safety and efficacy of nanopharmaceuticals as well as to encourage the commercialization of nanotechnology based inventions by increasing their benefit-to-risk ratio.

b) "Mission programme on cereals": A Brainstorming meeting was organized on 6th July, 2019 at ICAR-National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources, New Delhi by Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology, Govt. of India to review the status of land races and indigenous wheat germplasm & their use for developing climate resilient cultivars.

c) Launch of DBT-BIRAC "Leadership Dialogue Series"- A Communication & Outreach initiative of the Department: Department of Biotechnology has initiated a "Leadership Dialogue Series" in collaboration with BIRAC as an initiative under Communication & Outreach of the Department, wherein eminent national and global leaders from varied scientific fields are being invited to deliver, lecture/talk about their experience in navigating challenges and also share their experiences in climbing to the top leadership roles and their respective roles. The first lecture of this series was delivered by **Bharat Ratna, Prof. C.N.R. Rao** on "Climbing the limitless ladder of excellence" on 18th July, 2019 at Indian Institute of Sciences (IISc), Bangalore. The second lecture of this series was delivered by Dr. Trevor Mundel, President of Global Health, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, on the topic titled "Innovating for Impact: How India can lead in helping world's some of the toughest health challenges" on 29th July, 2019 at All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi. Both the lectures were attended by several hundred students, researchers, faculties, and scientists.

d) International workshop on NGS data analysis and Ensembl resources: NIPGR in collaboration with European Bioinformatics Institute (EMBL-EBI), Cambridge, UK, has organized an international workshop on NGS data analysis and Ensembl resources (NGS-Ensembl) during July 9 - 12, 2019. The objective of this workshop was to train the researchers on Ensembl genome browser and REST APIs, NGS data analysis, and database development. Further, for promoting exchange of ideas, dissemination of information and to explore collaborations, Institute organises scientific lectures and hosts study tours of school & colleges, on regular basis.

e) DBT Popularization programme: A symposium was organized at Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics (CDFD) an autonomous institute of Department in July, 2019 for popularization of Biotechnology. The one-day symposium included lectures by eminent scientists

and faculty from the institute. The event also included participation of summer trainee students from various parts of India in the poster sessions and the discussions.

f) Polyherbal Mouthwash for Managing Oral Mucositis and Periodontal Disease: Oral cancer is a leading problem in India and radiation induced-mucositis is a very painful condition arising as a sequel to oral cancer treatment. There are no effective medications available in the market to delay the onset, alleviate or cure this condition. Similarly, periodontal diseases widely occur in Indian population and effective herbal remedies are not currently available. To address these issues, Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology (RGCB) & Regional Cancer Centre (RCC), Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, jointly developed a polyherbal mouthwash, an herbal cleansing composition comprising extracts from five medicinal plants, which has shown significant clinical efficacy in patients affected with these conditions. This formulation, jointly owned by RGCB & RCC, is under patenting (Application No: 3310/CHE/2010). To further develop and commercialize the mouthwash as a marketable product, RGCB have entered into Technology Transfer Licensing agreement with Ceego Labs Pvt Ltd, Chennai on July 31, 2019.

g) Biosafety Research

The division had conducted 173rd meeting of the Review Committee of Genetic Manipulation (RCGM) on 1st July, 2019. During the meeting, the Committee considered 118 applications including information items submitted by various applicants. After deliberation on each application, appropriate decision was taken by the RCGM. The Department has constituted 4 Institutional Biosafety Committee(s) during the period under report.

h) DGFT Cases

Comments of the Department were communicated to Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) on 1 application received on SCOMET items.

i) There have been 30 research publications and three patents filed by the Autonomous Institutes of the Department, and the Department have processed 3 patents for maintenance during the period of report.