Monthly Cabinet Summary, January -2020

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

(i) **Public-Private Partnership**
1. The Department has initiated a new program on “Drug Development” in collaboration with Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC). This program is aimed at reducing the disease burden, providing treatment options for these priority diseases and putting India on the global map in terms of R&D innovation in the area of drug development. Under the programme, a Joint call on “Development of Drugs from existing leads with established proof of concept” was launched. The vision of the initiative is to develop indigenous and cost-effective new drugs against diseases prevailing in our country. The emphasis is to develop drugs for TB, Cardio Vascular Diseases (CVD), Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Diseases (COPD) and cancer (oral, head & neck, cervical and breast cancer).

(ii) **International Cooperation**
1. **Indo-EU Cooperation:** The first meeting of Monitoring cum Expert Committee (MEC_INF) for proposals to be supported under “Next Generation Influenza Vaccine to Protect Citizens Worldwide” was held on January 22, 2020 in DBT, New Delhi. The meeting was organised to acquaint, synchronize and negotiate considerations pertaining to the research approaches viz. ethical, statutory & regulatory bottlenecks and financial requirements for the proposals to be jointly supported by the European Union (EU) and the Department of Biotechnology, India.

2. **Indo-Danish partnership for waste water management and green transition:** Mr. Jeppe Kofod, Foreign Minister, Denmark visited the DESMI Waste Water Management Project Site at Barapullah, New Delhi on January 15, 2020. During the visit, the challenges in the area of waste water management, the scope of Danish technologies and collaboration with research institutions which are engaged in this area were discussed. The DESMI project was initiated to trap the floating debris from the Barapullah drain and convert them into value added products by suitable gasification/carbonisation technology for reducing the damage to the local environment.
(iii) Science for Society

1. International Summit on Women in STEM—"Visualizing the Future: New Skylines" was held on 23rd and 24th January 2020, New Delhi. The Department organized the Summit with an overall aim to boost the participation of women in STEM field for development of scientific career. Different sessions of the summit included mechanisms of leadership building, empowering women through networking, career opportunities and interactive exercises with scientists. Discussions and interactive sessions between aspiring young, mid-career and senior scientists in the STEM field were held to understand the future requirements for employment of women and their career progression. Around 400 participants from different STEM fields across the globe participated in the event including scientists, socialists, entrepreneurs, researchers, teachers and students.

(iv) Medical Biotechnology

1. The 61st Steering Committee meeting of the Sickle cell Disease and Thalassemia Control Program was held at Mission Directorate, National Health Mission, Bhubaneswar, Odisha on 13th January, 2020. During the meeting, the proceedings were discussed with the Mission Director, NHM Odisha and the Health Secretary, Govt. of Odisha. The meeting was attended by all the stakeholders including the senior officers from DBT and the officials from Government of Odisha. The Committee discussed in detail the implementation plans related to establishment of testing labs, media campaign, data management and training of health staff under this project. The first phase of the project will initially begin from Sambalpur and Koraput districts and then be extended to the other four districts of Odisha. The Committee noted the progress of the preparatory activities and made recommendations for the execution of this project in the pilot Districts.

(v) Biosafety and regulations

1. "The Revised Simplified Procedure/Guidelines for Import, Export, and Exchange of Genetically Engineered organisms and products thereof for R&D purpose" were issued by the Department on 17th January, 2020. The process of import/export and exchange of materials has been simplified in consultation with the stakeholders and the timelines for the approval process have been reduced.

2. The 179th meeting of Review Committee of Genetic Manipulation (RCGM) was conducted on 9th January, 2020. During the meeting, the Committee considered 81 applications including information items submitted by the various applicants. After deliberation on each application, appropriate decision was taken by the RCGM.

3. DGFT & DSIR Cases: The comments of the Department were communicated to DGFT on two applications seeking permission for export of SCOMET (Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment and Technologies) items.
(vi) **Publications & Patents**
There have been 46 research publications by the Autonomous Institutes of the Department.

(vii) **Technology/products developed by the Autonomous Institutes: 4**
   a. Highly efficient (~27%) genetic transformation protocol for foxtail, an important minor millet.
   b. Titanium dioxide-based enrichment of phosphor-peptides for nuclear proteome analysis in chickpea.
   c. Hairy root transformation for the functional genomics in chickpea.
   d. Isolation of mitochondrial DNA from root tissues of mung bean.

(viii) **Autonomous Institutions of the Department of Biotechnology- at Annexure I**

(ix) **Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) of the Department of Biotechnology: at Annexure II**
II. Compliance Report on Important Matters/Issues

(i) Important policy matters held up on account of prolonged inter ministerial consultations: N/A

(ii) Compliance of Cabinet/Cabinet Committee decisions: N/A

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<th>No. of COS decisions pending for compliance</th>
<th>Proposed action plan/timelines for compliance of COS decisions</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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(iii) No. of cases of ‘sanction for prosecution’ pending for more than three months: Nil

(iv) Particulars of cases in which there has been a departure from the Transaction of Business: Nil

(v) Rules or established policy of the Government: N/A

(vi) Status of implementation of e-governance:

- Total No. of active files: 7581
- Total No. of e-files generated during January, 2020: 172

(vii) Status of Public Grievances:

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<th>No. of Public Grievances redressed during month: 27</th>
<th>No. of Public Grievances pending at the end of the month: 20</th>
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(viii) Information on the specific steps taken by the Ministry/Department for utilization of the Space, Technology based tools and application in Governance and Development: Nil

(ix) Confirmation that the incumbency details of all posts in the Ministry/Department and its organizations falling under the purview of the ACC have been updated on AVMS: It is confirmed that the incumbency details of all the posts in the Ministry/Department (both Autonomous institutes and PSUs under DBT) falling under the purview of the ACC have been updated on AVMS.

(x) Status regarding compliance of the directions of ACC. A paragraph on Cases in which the ACC directions have not been complied with distinct heading: It is confirmed that the directions of ACC are complied with.

(xi) Status of cases where recommendations from PESB have been received but the proposals are yet to be submitted to the ACC Secretariat: It is stated that the same may be treated as ‘Nil’

(xii) Status of Government e-Marketplace (GeM): Procurement made through GeM for the month of January, 2020 is Rs. 5,34,664/.