

DR. JITENDRA SINGH ANNOUNCED LAUNCH OF DATA-DRIVEN RESEARCH TO ERADICATE TB- “DARE2ERAD TB” BY THE DEPARTMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY, M/O SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, ON THE OCCASION OF WORLD TB DAY TODAY

Relevant for: Science & Technology | Topic: Biotechnology, Genetics & Health related developments

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh today announced the **launch of Data-Driven Research to Eradicate TB- “Dare2eraD TB”** by the Department of Biotechnology, M/o Science & Technology, on the occasion of World TB Day.



Addressing the event to inaugurate “Step Up to End TB” event at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi by Smt. Anandiben Patel, Governor of Uttar Pradesh in presence of Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare and Dr. BHarati Pravin Pawar, Minister of State of Ministry of Health& Family Welfare, Dr. Jitendra Singh said that there is a need for a mass movement to get rid of Tuberculosis to realise dream of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi of a “TB MukT Bharat” by year 2025.



Dr. Singh said that in India, we are still carrying on with the stigma of Tuberculosis with around 2-3 million cases every year, which is a matter of concern. He pointed out that Department of Biotechnology, under Ministry of Science & Technology has contributed to advancing TB science, through various initiatives. He said that the DBT has been supporting basic and applied research on TB over the past three decades with major focus on three areas - disease biology, drug discovery and vaccine development.

The Minister said that Dare2eraD TB will be the umbrella TB program of DBT comprising of following key initiatives-

Dr Singh said that Indian Tuberculosis Genomic Surveillance Consortium (InTGS) is proposed on lines of the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Consortia (INSACOG). The InTBK Hub- Indian TB Knowledge Hub will be a Webinar series starting from World TB Day that will create Academia-Industry connect to discuss challenges and exchange ideas and carry forward open innovations between all TB stakeholders. He emphasised that In order to fully understand the biological characteristics of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (Mtb) and the effect of the mutations on transmission, treatment and disease severity, analysing the genomic data of the organism is essential as the Whole Genome Sequencing (WGS) is increasingly gaining traction as an important molecular tool for Tuberculosis surveillance.



Dr. Jitendra Singh exuded confidence effective use of the WGS technology would allow rapid identification of the origin and drug resistance (DR) profile of the TB strains in the patients. This would in turn facilitate treatment strategies for better control of TB transmission to reduce disease burden.

The Department of Biotechnology, M/o Science & Technology has also cultivated international partnerships for Tuberculosis research. The Regional Prospective Observational Research in Tuberculosis (RePORT) India initiative, a bilateral collaborative effort is being supported under the aegis of the Indo-US Vaccine Action Programme (VAP), to advance tuberculosis (TB) research in India. The Department has initiated a major network programme on “MDR-TB in North East India: a genomic driven approach” involving 22 NER institutes from 8 states and 14 other Institutes.



Shri Rajesh Bhushan, Secretary, M/o Health & Family Welfare, Shri Rajesh S Gokhle, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology, M/o Science & Technology, Dr. VK Paul, Member, Niti Aayog and Professor Balram Bhargava, DG, ICMR were amongst several other dignitaries present on the occasion.

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