

COUNTRY'S FIRST 'ONE HEALTH' CONSORTIUM LAUNCHED BY D/O BIOTECHNOLOGY, POST COVID 19

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Health & Sanitation and related issues

COVID-19 pandemic showed the relevance of 'One Health' principles in the governance of infectious diseases, specially efforts to prevent and contain zoonotic diseases throughout the world. The risk of infectious agents capable of jumping the barriers of species is increasing, mainly because of the potential of novel infectious agents to spread rapidly around the globe due to increased travel, food habits and trade across borders . Such diseases have devastating impacts on animals, human, health systems, and economies, requiring years of social and economic recovery. Sensing this urgent need, the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science and Technology, Govt supported a mega consortium on 'One Health'. Dr. Renu Swarup, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology, Govt. of launched the First 'One Health' project of DBT through video conferencing. This programme envisages carrying out surveillance of important bacterial, viral and parasitic infections of zoonotic as well as transboundary pathogens in India, including the North-eastern part of the country. Use of existing diagnostic tests and the development of additional methodologies when required are mandated for the surveillance and for understanding the spread of emerging diseases.

Dr. Renu Swarup in her address during the launch of the programme remarked that this Consortium, consisting of 27 organisations led by DBT-National Institute of Animal Biotechnology, Hyderabad, is one of the biggest one health programs launched by Govt of India in post-COVID times. The One health consortium consists of AIIMS, Delhi, AIIMS Jodhpur, IVRI, Bareilly, GADVASU, Ludhiana, TANUVAS, Chennai, MAFSU, Nagpur, Assam agricultural and veterinary university and many more ICAR, ICMR centres and wild life agencies.

Subsequently, Dr. Renu Swarup, Secretary, DBT inaugurated the International mini-symposium on "Essentials of One Health" through Video Conferencing. Dr. Swarup in her inaugural address emphasized the need of a holistic approach to understand the health of human, animals and wildlife to minimize the damage caused by future pandemics. International and national speakers shared their views on initiating and nurturing the concept of 'One Health' where man, animal, plants and environment are needed to be considered complimentary to each other for maintaining health of all.

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