

DBT plans new strategies to boost biotech industry

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As per a circular by the department of biotechnology, ministry of science and technology, government of India, the premier biotech agency is completing 30 years and will be celebrating its 30th Foundation Day in February, 2016.

Therefore, the DBT felt appropriate at this point to assess and analyze in consultation with all stake-holders the 4P's- Progress, Promises, Problems and Plans for future.

In this connection a strategy meet was organized on August 31, 2015 at NCR Biotech Science Cluster, Faridabad.

The minister of science and technology, Dr Harsh Vardhan presided over the meeting. The meeting was attended by the directors and senior faculty of DBT aided autonomous institutes and other senior experts across the country. Besides that, the members of the civil society, secretary and all officers of DBT were present. Strategies for boosting biotech industry, stem cell research, genome engineering, computational biology and drug discovery were outlined at the this strategy meet on biotechnology.

In his opening address, Dr K Vijay Raghavan, secretary, DBT gave an overview and detailed assessment of the impact over the years and highlighted how DBT has contributed significantly through its efforts towards supporting key missions, spear heading cutting edge research, building Institutional and human resource capacity, forging industry academic partnership, leveraging international strength through collaborations and guiding policy thinking and analysis.

Dr Harsh Vardhan in his inaugural address highlighted the importance of Biotechnology Sector to contribute to the society. He said that it would be important to develop a new sense of urgency and work towards preparing an action plan and address key strategies for the future to deliver perceptible and measurable impact for the benefit of society.

The minister also stated that the biotechnology sector which has an important role and cuts across all other sectors, takes forward its strategy in partnership with other S&T ministry, departments and state governments.

He appreciated the good work that DBT is doing in taking forward Biotechnology Research in the country and stressed the necessity to fix 3 to 4 focus areas with achievable targets in the next 2 to 3 years. He outlined malnutrition as one of the key focus areas elaborating that whereas there has been much research on nutrition, the research needed to be translated to yield benefits for people.

Dr Vardhan highlighted that while the overall strategy of the DBT was clear, each institution and each unit of DBT should have

measurable targets over the next couple of years.

In the presentations made by the directors of DBT autonomous institutions and other experts a broad overview of various thematic areas was presented highlighting specifically where we stand vis-à-vis the global scenario, the challenges faced and future action plan.