



श्री चित्रा तिरुनाल आयुर्विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान, त्रिवेंद्रम, तिरुवनन्तपुरम - 695 011, केरल, भारत

SREE CHITRA TIRUNAL INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY

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(An Institute of National Importance under DST; Government of India) (एक राष्ट्रीय महत्व का संस्थान, विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी विभाग, भारत सरकार)

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Announcement of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between SCTIMST and WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION has been held on 9th August 2024 in New Delhi, in the INSA Auditorium. The Chief Guest was Hon'ble Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh, Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Earth Sciences, Minister of State (Independent Charge) of Science & Technology, Minister

of State in the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of State in the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievance. The function was presided over by Dr. Vijay Kumar Saraswat (Member, NITI Aayog, Govt. of India and Hon'ble President of the Institute), with the Guests of Honour Dr. Abhay Karandikar (Secretary, Department of Science and Technology) and Dr RodericoH. Ofirin (WHO India Representative). Along with the dignitaries, top officials from SCTIMST, Prof. Sanjay Behari (Director, SCTIMST), Dr. Manikandan S. (Deputy Director, SCTIMST), Dr. AnoopKumar Thekkuveetil (Project Co-ordinator), and Dr. Dr HariKrishna Varma P. R (Head of the BMT Wing, SCTIMST) shared the dais.Two officials from WHO Headquarters, Geneva, Ms. Adriana Velazquex Berumen (Team Lead, Medical Devices and InVito Diagnostic), and Dr. Mike Ward, (HTAP, Essential Medicine and Health Care Products) joined online to felicitate the event. Dr. Manisha Sridhar (Regional Advisor to South East Asia Regional Office, WHO), Dr. Manoranjan Mohanty (Head, AI Division, DST) and many other officials attended the program as special invitees.



The program started with a prologue of Dr. Manikandan S., Deputy Director, SCTIMST. He welcomed the gathering and the dignitaries. Dr. Sanjay Behari, Director, SCTIMST expressed his gratitude to the

three legends in the respective scientific arena, Hon'ble Minister Dr. Jithindar Singh, Hon'ble President and Member NITI Aayog Dr. V. K. Saraswath and Hon'ble Secretary of Department of Science & Technology Dr. Abhay Karandikar for their support to fortify the achievements of Institute.



Dr.Behari specified that the vertex of world is now trying to grip the Indian ethos, constituting the developments like the implementation of new medical device policy, initiation of new educational policy and the start of the government e-market that emphasises on indigenization of the product. Also, the treasury single account, and the policies of self-reliant India and 'Viksith-Bharath-2047' are in force. All these led to the shift of focus our academia from conducting basic research and publishing, to translational research, technology development and commercialization. Now, this has become the recurring theme of every academic, medical and technological institute in India. Dr.Behari hailed the occasion to be the important milestone in the saga of medical devices development in India. Scientist's team in SCTIMST has developed specific RNA isolation technology and RT-PCR technology for disease detection, both of which have been successfully commercialized during the Covid-19 pandemic. The kits based on these technologies by SCTIMST for Covid represent the earliest successful products during Covid pandemic which enabled in the early diagnosis of viral infection. He mentioned that WHO had brought out a very unique scheme, the

CTAP and Covid Technology Access Pool, for transfer of technologies across the world during pandemic period. The signing of the MoU after obtaining the kind permission of Department of Science and Technology and the Ministry of External Affairs, facilitated the adoption of this technology by WHO. This will establish a transparent global mechanism for pooling the knowledge and intellectual property and the data on scaleup production, so that the technologies available in all countries at affordable rates. The significance of this meeting is that WHO has expanded the CTAP program into HTAP program with the C of Covid is replaced with H of health. The MoU helps to transfer the commercially available technology made in India to different parts of the world. Dr. Behari highlighted all the achievements of the institute and applauded people behind every success.



Dr. Roderico H. Ofri extended his heartfelt gratitude to the Government of India for facilitating the signing of the MoU between SCTIMST and WHO. This MoU has metamorphosed into the Health Technology Access Pool (HTAP) which covers larger health problems and aims to strengthen the global system. He emphasized that the global health priorities should be redefined by regional, national

and global production capacities for technical innovations in healthcare and expressed his expectation for more innovations and collaborations.

Dr. Abhay Karandikar, Hon'ble Secretary, Department of Science and Technology, congratulated SCTIMST and WHO for the historic collaboration that resulted in this MoU. He mentioned that SCTIMST works in the intersection of medicine and technology and developed various devices that commercialized and being used throughout the country. He expressed that this MoU and further partnership with WHO will open up a path for SCTIMST to bring their technologies on a global scale and this will not only give visibility to SCTIMST products, but also will provide opportunity for the scientist, engineers and doctors of SCTIMST to collaborate with International institutions and



international faculty to bring the technology on the global platform. Dr. Karandikar specified that by signing this MoU with WHO, SCTIMST has proven its strength in the field of invitro diagnostics and these collaborations can be taken forward in other areas of biomedical devices and technologies as well. He assured SCTIMST and WHO that DST will continue to support and strengthen such initiatives

not only in India but globally to access the technologies that are being developed through partnership and collaborations of DST to create an equitable world.

Dr. Adriana Velazquez Beruman, and Dr. Michael Ward, joined online from WHO Headquarters to felicitate the function. They desired more MoU's and collaborations may ensue with SCTIMST in the near future.

Dr. V.K. Saraswat, Hon. Member of NITI Aayog and President of the Institute congratulated SCTIMST and WHO for having MoU on developing medical devices. Since taking the charge as the president of SCTIMST, he could monitor a tremendous ecosystem of work in the intersection of medical technology, engineering and science materials, which have amalgamated to a system of developing



devices for medical procedures. He mentioned that SCTIMST is the only institution to come up with real innovations in the field of medical devices. The notable highlight is the work on the latest version of a prosthetic heart valve. Dr. Saraswat mentioned WHO support in research in development and innovation taking products from SCTIMST to the hospitals for the service of humans is a great exercise. He expressed that Atmanirbhar Bharath is the vision of our Prime Minister for self-reliant country by 2047, towards a totally a developed nation. He wished SCTIMST will develop more devices and WHO will be the flag bearer for leading SCTIMST into global market and this MoU is very productive and useful for human beings.



Dr. Jitendra Singh, Hon'ble Minister, Department of Science and Technology expressed his gratitude to the WHO for its wonderful humanitarian initiatives in India. He referred to the Covid technology access pool (CTAP) of the WHO, now known as Health technology access pool (HTAP), is an excellent initiative as it gives access to successful health technologies to various countries. He said that Ministry of Science and Technology is proud to be a part of the MoU as it allows SCTIMST and Department of Science and Technology to enter into a partnership with global entrepreneurs,

licensing the technologies and creating revenue generation through royalty. Recalling the Prime Minister's call for Atmanirbhar Bharat or Self-reliant India during the hard Covid times in the year 2020, despite producing indigenous devices we need to produce them at the required volume to meet the demand he added. Dr. Singh emphasized that by promoting indigenous manufacturing and reducing reliance on imports, this partnership strengthens India's position as a leader in healthcare innovation. He specified additionally, it contributes to the development of a highly skilled workforce, further enhancing the nation's manufacturing capabilities. He highlighted our world-class facilities related to the development of technologies like in vitro testing, genomics, precision medicine and vaccine production and added that technology developed by SCTIMST is a part of the rapidly expanding ecosystem of medical diagnostics. Dr. Singh expressed his confidence on the collaboration with WHO, which will result in more technology development as well as innovations and foster international partnerships to strengthen our medical, diagnostic, and therapeutic infrastructure and stay ahead in combating global diseases and future pandemics. He recalled the pioneering efforts made by Padma Vibhushan late Prof M S Valiathan, the founding Director of SCTIMST, whose vision has been responsible for the outstanding work the institute is carrying out in the field of biomedical technology development. He also remarked that this partnership strengthens India's position as a leader in healthcare innovation with focus on "Technology for Medical Diagnosis" and thanked the Prime Minister for constant encouragement.

Vote of thanks has been propounded by Dr. Harikrishna Varma P. R (Head, BMT wing), SCTIMST.

