

DBT celebrates 30 years: Stakeholders gather at Delhi

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In his inaugural speech at the DBT's Global Biotech Summit 2016, its Secretary, Dr K Vijay Raghvan laid emphasis on the strengths of Indian bioscience landscape.

“It is amazing that many innovations in various verticals have happened. We have done good on the biotech translations, international collaborations etc. At the core of it, whatever has been done is a gamble. We may succeed in the longer run. Our star colleges have gone far ahead in increasing the awareness on biotech among the student community,” said Dr Vijay Raghavan.

The DBT Secretary shared memories on Dr Ramachandran's efforts to establish the DBT. He lauded the contribution of former Secretaries of DBT, Dr C R Bhatia, Dr Manju Sharma and Dr M K Bhan in taking the various new initiatives forward. Dr Raghavan in particular talked about the premier schemes launched by DBT in past such as Dr Ramalingasami Scholarship and DBT-Wellcome Trust Program.

“Stunted growth among children has been a major challenge. It can be due to various socio-economic factors where DBT can play a significant role,” mentioned Dr Raghavan.

Biotech has empowered our agriculture: Radha Mohan Singh

Dr Radha Mohan Singh, union agriculture minister while addressing delegates expressed his happiness on the DBT's 30 year completion. He mentioned, “The department has done great work

in developed various products through the biotechnology. This Summit shows the strength of Indian biotech industry and presents an opportunity to discuss new areas and underlying potential.”

Minister talked about the importance of agriculture and its relevance in Indian context. “Our scientists have helped us to get up from the highly adverse situation. The technology developed by our scientists has helped us to reach out. Even recently in 2014-15, new technologies have helped us to take care of the scarce rainfall in various regions, saving us from famine conditions.”

“Hope the new knowledge and agri-technologies will care of future challenges in India,” he said.

Brainstorming can help realize our great biotech dream: Dr Vardhan

Dr Harsh Vardhan, minister for science and technology, in his special address spoke on the target of \$100 billion biotech industry by 2025. He mentioned that it was certainly achievable but stakeholders would have to put in focused efforts.

Calling the DBT is one of the best departments, Minister said, “Even after 60 years of independence, we are still struggling with basic issues. There are certain areas we have been lacking but the occasions like these remind us about the opportunities. All of us by now realize that biotechnology can solve most of our issues in near future across verticals such as pharma, agriculture and energy requirements.”

“Biocon is a prime example of successful journey in entrepreneurship. Dr Kiran Mazumdar Shaw is a role model as she had to face hardships before she established this business. She provides jobs today to 7,000 people,” said Dr Vardhan.

“It is not just about the business or the market but biotech has got altogether different relevance due to its connect with living organisms. It can resolve lot of complications of mankind,” he concluded.

Next revolution going to be in BT: Chowdhary

The minister of state for science and technology, Mr Y S Chowdhary in his talk was more focused on the relevance of biotech in strengthening India’s economy.

“There is the need to implement joint efforts from not only centre and state governments but all the agencies and industry. It is important to remember that BT is not IT. It takes much patience and incubation period to achieve results,” said Mr Chowdhary adding further, “Every nook and corner should be aware about the biotech potential. The underlying opportunities can be leveraged.” Minister suggested that Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) which has been doing great to promote startups, must encourage even its employees to collaborate with budding entrepreneurs.”