

Press release

Japan & India step up ties in the field of Science & Technology

DBT-AIST International Laboratory for Advanced Biomedicine (DAILAB) inaugurated at IIT Delhi

In order to promote close and effective collaboration between India and Japan, the Department of Biotechnology of India (DBT), Govt. of India and National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST, Japan) had established a joint international research laboratory, named **DAILAB** (DBT-AIST International Laboratory for Advanced Biomedicine) at the Biomedical Research Institute of AIST in Tsukuba, Japan in October 2013. DAILAB is the first joint international laboratory of DBT and AIST in the field of Biomedicine. The laboratory is actively conducting research projects on integrated drug screenings for stress, aging and cancer intervention with prime focus on elucidation of functional mechanisms of selected drugs. Besides, several education and training programs to young researchers from India and other countries are offered.

The Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi) has now established a sister **DAILAB** in its premises, which was inaugurated on November 04, 2015 by Dr. Renu Swarup, Senior Adviser, Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India, in the presence of Prof. R. Chidambaram, Principal Scientific Advisor to Govt. of India and Chairman, Scientific Advisory Committee to the Cabinet, Govt. of India.

In her address, Dr. Renu Swarup (Senior Advisor, DBT) said, "This collaborative program offers a global vision to both the countries and helps in training many young researchers and joint research at both sides. Thus, this joint initiative should aspire to achieve not only strong bilateral ties, but also global leadership in biomedicine. She also emphasized the need for closer Industry Academia relations in R&D". In her words, the new age of research requires strong networking, collaboration and integration.

Prof. R. Chidambaram, in his keynote address, elaborated the challenges that lay ahead for biomedical R&D and expressed his hope to see India and Japan as strong leaders in a broader arena of biotechnology beyond some niche areas of biomedicine. He appreciated the biomedical research on Ayurvedic herbs for validation of their activities and mechanisms by highly powerful merger of experimental and informatics platforms.

AIST's President, Prof. Ryoji Chubachi, sent a congratulatory video letter to the participants on the occasion of DAILAB opening ceremony. He had recalled the strong Indo-Japan ties in science and technology and expressed his hope to see this unique joint initiative of DAILAB to reach greater heights in the years to come.

Supported by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Govt. of India and National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST), Japan, the DAILAB has a vision to promote collaborative effort in the biomedicine. The DAILAB will broadly focus on creation of high quality manpower for biomedical research and focused R&D on niche areas of biomedicine and biotechnology. "The objective of DAILAB is to provide an opportunity for IITD faculty and AIST scientists to bring complementary expertise & innovative problem solving capabilities and conduct research at a larger scope leveraging the infrastructure/expertise at both the institutions. IIT Delhi will provide the infrastructure for the DAILAB activity" informed Prof. Shibani Kishan Koul, Deputy Director (Strategy and Planning), IIT Delhi.

IIT Delhi has a strong group of faculty and research infrastructure in Biotechnology and Biomedical Engineering. The inception of this bilateral initiative would add impetus to the current biomedical research being conducted in the institute and would accelerate the technology development and human capital for the biotech industry.

The DAILAB will primarily concentrate on five core areas: Bioinformatics, Cancer Biology, Drug Discovery & Delivery, Imaging Technology and Biosensors.

The collaboration between IIT Delhi and National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST), Japan has its origin in the year 2010 as a part of DBT-AIST bilateral workshop that was hosted by IIT Delhi. Both the institutions continued to work together for five years even when no formal MoU existed between these Institutions until June 2015. The collaboration has been very active both in research as well as in organizing educational and training programs at both sides. "A common theme between the two interest groups at IIT Delhi and AIST has been to tackle complex biological problems and invent new ways for drug discovery and disease intervention from an interdisciplinary perspective. It has been highly successful in terms of collaborative research outcomes and personnel exchange and training", added Prof. Suneet Tuli, Dean (R&D), IIT Delhi.

Headed by Dr. Noboru Yumoto (Fellow), the senior AIST delegation that participated in the DAILAB inaugural event at IIT Delhi included Dr. Yoshihiro Ohmiya (Director, Biomedical Research Institute), Tomohiro Tamura (Director, Bioproduction Research Institute), Dr. Koichi Awazu (Deputy Director, International Affairs), Dr. Renu Wadhwa (Head, DAILAB@AIST), Dr. Yoshiaki Onishi (Director, Research Planning), Dr. Sunil Kaul (Chief Senior Researcher) and Dr. Motomichi Doi (Group Leader, Molecular Neurobiology). The First Secretary (S&T), Embassy of Japan in India Mr. Kazuhisa Yoshida, also participated in the event and expressed full support of the Embassy for this joint initiative.

On the same day November 04, 2015, an Indian delegation under the leadership of Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Hon'ble Union Minister for Science and Technology along with officials from Ministry of Science and Technology, Govt. of India and from the Embassy of India to Japan, visited the DAILAB at AIST in Tsukuba, Japan. The Union Minister for Science and Technology launched the DAILAB website on the occasion, which is available from the URL <http://web.iitd.ac.in/~sundar/dailab>.

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