

Press-Release (19-Aug-2019)

A Two Week Program on, 'Recent Trends and Challenges in Biopharmaceuticals', at National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER)-SAS Nagar

Under India's Foreign Policy of Ministry of External Affairs, GOI, National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research, S.A.S. Nagar (NIPER, SAS Nagar, *the institute of National Importance*) has been chosen by the Ministry of External Affairs, GOI, to conduct ITEC programmes in the field of Biopharmaceuticals. The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) is a flagship programme of the Indian Government's capacity building efforts and is fully funded by the Government. Under ITEC, India has economic cooperation with 161 countries in Asia, Africa, East Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean as well as Pacific and Small Island and members from these partner countries are invited to share in the Indian developmental experience.

NIPER-SAS Nagar is conducting such training programme since last 20 years. This year also the Institute is organizing a two-week Intensive Training Program on "*Recent Trends and Challenges in Biopharmaceuticals*" from 19th-29th Aug, 2019. A total of 20 participants from 11 partner countries (**Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Egypt, Honduras, Iran, Mauritius, Mozambique, Sudan, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe**) with a background of Pharmacist and Drug Regulatory, Academia, etc. are attending this course. Experts from the biopharmaceutical industry, academia, research institutes and regulatory agencies will deliver lectures and will participate in the deliberations. About 3 sessions will be held on hands on training on different biotechnology techniques and visit to biopharmaceutical industries are also a part of this ITEC programme.

The inaugural session was held with lamp lighting and Sarswati Vandna. Dr. Abhay H Pande, Course Coordinator, welcomed the participants and encouraged them to take maximum benefit of the course. Dr. Pande also gave a brief introduction of the course to the guests and the participants. He informed that biopharmaceuticals are the fastest growing sector of the pharmaceutical industry and with the advancement in the numerous technologies, tens of novel recombinant proteins are entering into clinical use every year. Because of fierce competition, biopharmaceutical manufacturers are forced to develop effective, safe and cheaper drug molecules to succeed in this increasingly competitive environment. In order to speed up the development of protein biopharmaceuticals for clinical use, a strong understanding of these challenges are very much important. Dr. Pande stated that this course is designed to provide a platform for discussing various issues related to biopharmaceuticals and in the process impart knowledge to the participants about recent trends and challenges in biopharmaceuticals.

Prof. U. C. Banerjee, Department of Biotechnology, stressed the importance of this course to the overseas participants and said that development of the upstream and downstream process are the key in developing biopharmaceuticals.

Prof. Raghuram Rao Akkinapally, Director, NIPER addressed the gathering and gave information about NIPER-SAS Nagar to the overseas participants. He also applauded efforts of NIPER being made in the past 20 years to organize various training programs under ITEC. He thanked ITEC division of Ministry of External Affairs for entrusting upon NIPER the responsibility of conducting ITEC programmes. Prof. Rao expressed that India, with its research capabilities and innovation in pharmaceutical sector, has made the drugs affordable,

which includes biopharmaceuticals also. He also expressed that today India stands as the 'pharmacy' of the world and there is a dire need to develop novel biopharmaceuticals in the country. He also introduced Dr. Sanjay Trehan, chief guest of the function to the audience.

Dr. Sanjay Trehan, President & Global Head of Drug Discovery and Development, Panacea Biotech Ltd, Punjab the Chief Guest of the function said that India has emerged as a biggest suppliers of vaccines to world health organization (WHO). He noted that biopharmaceuticals is the future of medicine, however, producing biopharmaceuticals is a big challenge and is more complex than producing generic drugs. Dr. Trehan said that gradually the world economy is shifting towards the knowledge-based economy as opposed to the product-based economy which was the norm earlier. He suggested that scientists should engage themselves in research so as to make biopharmaceutical drugs with low cost so that even poorest of poor can afford them.

In the end Dr. Abhay H. Pande proposed a vote of thanks. The inaugural session ended with a group photo of all the participants with the Chief Guest.