

CSIR-IMTECH in partnership with Zydus Cadila for development of newer drugs for drug-resistant infectious diseases

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The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) - Institute of Microbial Technology (IMTECH), a premier microbial institute under the aegis of the Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India, recently signed a collaborative research agreement with Zydus Cadila, an innovation-driven global healthcare group. The research partnership will primarily aim to identify new drug candidates for treatment of drug-resistant infections.

The agreement between CSIR-IMTECH and Zydus will see scientists from both organizations working closely together on microbiology & genomics to identify new lead candidate as novel anti-tuberculosis compounds. For this project, scientists at IMTECH will utilize their expertise and scientific knowledge in microbiology while Zydus Cadila will provide its expertise in medicinal chemistry & pharmaceutical drug development with an aim to develop new drug combinations against drug-resistant pathogens which causes severe diseases in India and across the world.

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) threatens the effective prevention and treatment of an ever-increasing range of infections caused by bacteria, parasites, viruses and fungi is a serious threat to global public health that requires action across all government sectors and society. Emergence of Multi drug-resistant (MDR)/Extremely drug-resistant (XDR) tuberculosis is a big challenge in India and across several other countries in the world. WHO's Global Antimicrobial Surveillance System reports occurrence of AMR among 500,000 people with suspected bacterial infections across several nations. The cost of health care for patients with resistant infections is higher than

care for patients with non-resistant infections due to longer duration of illness, additional tests and use of more expensive drugs.

Drug resistance is a global threat and India needs sustained research & development efforts to tackle this global scourge. Speaking on the sidelines of agreement signing, Dr. Anil Koul, Director, IMTECH said urgently need, “With limited investment in discovery of urgently needed new drugs, collaboration with Zydus opens up new opportunities in discovery of novel and new antibiotic classes. I am glad that IMTECH as a premier public R&D organization is forging new alliances with industry to address the national issue of AMR including tuberculosis.”

Mr. Pankaj Patel, Chairman of Zydus Cadila on this occasion said, “We are committed to support the End TB Strategy. Given the vast scientific experience of CSIR-IMTECH in microbial related research, and Zydus' expertise in drug discovery and development, we welcome this opportunity to partner with CSIR-IMTECH and hope to deliver new therapies for the nation”.

A positive outcome from such collaborative efforts could define the way drug discovery would be carried out in future in India via public-private partnerships.

CSIR-IMTECH is a national center for excellence in microbial sciences and was established in 1984. IMTECH's vision is to discover and develop translational products and new drugs to address key unmet medical needs. While Zydus Cadila is a fully integrated, global healthcare provider, with strengths all along the pharmaceutical value chain. With a core competence in the field of healthcare, Zydus has successfully developed novel therapies that have provided people in India an access to new and hitherto unavailable drugs.

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