

High-level Media Coverage



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Global Health Strategies

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Headline: [6th BIRAC Innovators Meet Inaugurated by Dr. Harsh Vardhan in New Delhi](#)

Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), a public sector undertaking of the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) organized a two-day Innovators Conclave & Bio-Innovation Fair at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The theme for the conclave was BIRAC Bio-Innovations: Propelling the Bio-economy. The conclave was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Union Minister for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, and attended by Guest of Honour, Mr. YS Chowdary, Hon'ble Minister of State (MoS), Science & Technology and Earth Sciences. The Conclave brought together nearly 300 innovators and startups, scientists from industry and academia, public and private sector, policy makers, and national and international organisations.

Inaugurating the conclave, the Chief Guest, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Hon'ble Union Minister for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, said, "BIRAC led by the DBT is playing a catalytic role in building a 100 billion-dollar Indian bio-economy. We are now effectively leveraging the research and entrepreneurial capabilities of this sector to address the needs of our people by creating affordable products that have the potential to change lives and catapult India into a brighter future. Our Government is focused on making India a global hub for innovation and BIRAC is playing a crucial role in shaping the biotech innovation ecosystem of India."

The Guest of Honour, Shri YS Chowdary, Hon'ble MoS, Science & Technology and Earth Sciences said, "Over the last 5 years, a foundation has been laid for making India a global leader in biotechnology research and development. We are ensuring that our innovators and indigenous products receive the encouragement and support to make their mark on the international biotech stage. We are very proud of the impact that BIRAC has generated in such a short span and this Innovation Conclave is testament to it."

BIRAC has provided financial and mentoring support to more than 500 companies, and nearly 500 young entrepreneurs and startups. BIRAC's partnership network includes more than 15 implementing agencies both national and international, nearly 700 national experts from academia, industry, public and private research laboratories, donor agencies and other government departments that can contribute towards building the innovation ecosystem of India.

Prof. Vijay Raghavan, Secretary, DBT and Chairman, BIRAC during the event said, "The country's biotech startup landscape has shown immense growth over the last five years. BIRAC was created to bridge the space between policy, industry and academia in the biotech sector and bring all stakeholders together on one platform. Our impact on the biotech innovation landscape is clearly visible."

The conclave was host to a bio-innovation fair and an innovation market place and featured a number of key panel discussions including "The Startup Conversation: Gaps, Opportunities and the way forward" featuring venture capitalists and angel investors and a discussion on "Pathways to create impact through Biotech Innovations to the power of Infinity" featuring decision-makers and experts. The conclave ended with the bio-innovation fair awards. The bio-innovation fair played host to more than 65 innovations supported under various initiatives of DBT and BIRAC.



Dr. Renu Swarup, Senior Advisor, DBT and Managing Director, BIRAC said, “BIRAC has transformed the biotech innovation ecosystem in the country. Our investments in the Indian innovation ecosystem are bearing fruit and our innovations are now showing real impact and producing tangible benefits for society. This Innovation Fair is the perfect occasion for us to showcase what our up and coming investigators are working on and how they hope to transform India. This fair also gives us the opportunity to showcase the potential for scale-up of these innovations to relevant stakeholders and decision-makers.”

BIRAC plays an important role in the Startup India Action Plan, the Government of India’s flagship program to boost entrepreneurship in the country. Innovations backed by the DBT and BIRAC have also heavily contributed to flagship programs of the government such as Make in India and Swachh Bharat. BIRAC has supported 25 Bio-incubators and 2 Regional Centres for Entrepreneurship development. The support for innovation and startups has today resulted in more than 100 technologies and products at different stages of commercialisation.

About BIRAC

Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) is a not-for-profit Public Sector Enterprise, set up by Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science and Technology Government of India, to empower the emerging biotech industry to undertake strategic research and innovation. BIRAC is a new industry-academia interface and implements its mandate through a wide range of impact initiatives, be it providing access to risk capital through targeted funding, technology transfer, IP management and handholding schemes that help bring innovation excellence to Indian biotech firms and make them globally competitive. BIRAC has initiated several schemes, networks and platforms that help to bridge the existing gap between industry-academia research and facilitate novel, high quality and cost-effective affordable technologies. BIRAC has initiated partnerships with several national and global partners to collaborate and deliver the salient features of its mandate.



Publication: Business Standard
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Headline: [DST to adopt village clusters to make self sustainable:Vardhan](#)

Union minister Harsh Vardhan today launched a project under which clusters of villages in Uttarakhand will be adopted to make them self-sustainable through scientific methods.

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) will adopt four clusters at Gaidikhata, Bazeera, Bhigun (in Garhwal) and Kausani (in Kumaon).

The scheme - Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyay Vigyan Gram Sankul Pariyojana - will see interventions in the areas of processing and value addition for products like milk, honey, mushroom, herbal tea, forest produce, horticulture and local crops, medicinal and aromatic plants in the selected clusters.

Under the scheme, these village clusters would be helped in post-harvest processing of kiwi, strawberry, cherry, tulsi, ginger through solar drying technology.

Stringent product and process control interventions for energy and water conservation would also be ensured through this project, Vardhan said.

The clusters were selected after a series of discussions by the officials of the DST, the Uttarakhand State Council of Science and Technology and stakeholders like the Gramodaya Network, Surabhi Foundation and Uttarakhand Utthan Parishad.

At another event, Vardhan also launched a two-day bio-innovation fair.

The government is focused on making India a global hub for innovation and Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), a PSU under the Department of Biotechnology, is playing a crucial role in shaping the biotech innovation ecosystem of the country, he said.

The two-day biotechnology conclave is a platform for the innovators to showcase what they are working on.

"This fair also gives us the opportunity to showcase the potential for scale-up of these innovations to stakeholders and decision-makers," DBT secretary K Vijay Raghavan said.



Publication: Hindustan Times
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Date: 22 nd September, 2017

Headline: [Science minister says innovations not reaching the people](#)

At the BIRAC Innovators Conclave in Delhi, Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan had an important question for the officials and innovators present: “How much of what we are able to do we are able to take to the people?”

The summit was accompanied by an innovation fair that was organised to showcase the work of 65 innovators who were supported by the BIRAC, a public sector company under the Department of Science and Technology, Ministry of Science and Technology.

The BIRAC innovator awards were also announced acknowledging the work of organisations across India. Viravecs Labs from Bangalore won the prize under the Healthcare (Therapeutics) category. ATGC Biotech from Hyderabad won the prize in the Agriculture category. Tuscano Equipments from Chennai was recognised for their work in the area of healthcare device and diagnostics.

Vivira Process Technologies was recognised for their work in Industrial Biotechnology.(Product development) and Openwater.in from Bangalore won it in the industrial biotechnology (technology development) category.

Prime Minister Modi has repeatedly said that there is a need to do science that helps solves the problems of the people. BIRAC under its SPARSH program is currently accepting proposals under the theme ‘waste to value.’

While BIRAC supports innovation in the early stages of ideation and proof of concept, bringing it to the market for people to use these products is often the Achilles heel for most entrepreneurs.

“The challenge is to connect them to the market, the growth of the economy and society,” Vijay Raghavan, secretary of DBT, said, of innovations supported by the DBT.

BIRAC has in the past seeded 75 startups of which about 60% have been able to mobilize investment, and have attracted about 550 crore as investment, Renu Swarup, Managing Director of BIRAC said. Apart from waste to wealth, maternal and child health has been a major thrust area for the organisation.

BIRAC also announced a biotech equity fund of 150 crore. Swarup described it as a ‘gamechanger.’ However, as some of the speakers at the inauguration pointed out funding is a major hurdle for bringing innovations from proof of concept stage to the commercial production.

In India the budget for science and technology is a fraction of what it is in developed countries. “For atleast for 30-40 years we have been asking for improvements in budgets now even from my own government,” Harsh Vardhan said.



Publication: United News of India
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Edition: Online

Date: 22 nd September, 2017

Headline: [Govt focused on making India global hub for innovation: Vardhan](#)

The Government is focused on making India a global hub for innovation and Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) is playing a crucial role in shaping the biotech innovation ecosystem of India, Union Science and Technology and Earth Sciences Minister Harsh Vardhan said here today. 'Department of Biotechnology (DBT) is playing a catalytic role in building a 100 billion-dollar Indian bio-economy and is now effectively leveraging the research and entrepreneurial capabilities of this sector to address the needs of our people by creating affordable products that have the potential to change lives and catapult India in to a brighter future,' the Minister said while inaugurating BIRAC's Innovators Conclave and Bio-Innovation Fair. On the occasion, Minister of State for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences YS Chowdary said, 'Over the last 5 years, a foundation has been laid for making India a global leader in biotechnology research and development. We are ensuring that our innovators and indigenous products receive the encouragement and support to make their mark on the international biotech stage. We are very proud of the impact that BIRAC has generated in such a short span and this Innovation Conclave is testament to it.' On the occasion, the dignitaries also released two books--BIRAC Innovations: Propelling the Bio-Economy and The BIRAC Star Entrepreneurs. BIRAC, a public sector undertaking of the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science and Technology has organised the two-day Innovators Conclave and Bio-Innovation Fair here at the India Habitat Centre. The theme for the Conclave is BIRAC Bio-Innovations: Propelling the Bio-economy. The Conclave brings together nearly 300 innovators and startups, scientists from industry and academia, public and private sector, policy makers, and national and international organisations.



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"Department of Biotechnology (DBT) is playing a catalytic role in building a 100 billion-dollar Indian bio-economy and is now effectively leveraging the research and entrepreneurial capabilities of this sector to address the needs of our people by creating affordable products that have the potential to change lives and catapult India in to a brighter future," the Minister said while inaugurating BIRAC's Innovators Conclave and Bio-Innovation Fair.

On the occasion, Minister of State for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences YS Chowdary said, "Over the last 5 years, a foundation has been laid for making India a global leader in biotechnology research and development. We are ensuring that our innovators and indigenous products receive the encouragement and support to make their mark on the international biotech stage. We are very proud of the impact that BIRAC has generated in such a short span and this Innovation Conclave is testament to it." On the occasion, the dignitaries also released two books--BIRAC Innovations: Propelling the Bio-Economy and The BIRAC Star Entrepreneurs. BIRAC, a public sector undertaking of the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science and Technology has organised the two-day Innovators Conclave and Bio-Innovation Fair here at the India Habitat Centre. The theme for the Conclave is BIRAC Bio-Innovations: Propelling the Bio-economy. The Conclave brings together nearly 300 innovators and startups, scientists from industry and academia, public and private sector, policy makers, and national and international organisations.



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The theme for the conclave was BIRAC Bio-Innovations: Propelling the Bio-economy, and was inaugurated by Union Minister for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, and attended by Guest of Honour, YS Chowdary, Minister of State (MoS), Science and Technology and Earth Sciences.

The Conclave brought together nearly 300 innovators and startups, scientists from industry and academia, public and private sector, policy makers, and national and international organisations.

"BIRAC led by the DBT is playing a catalytic role in building a 100 billion-dollar Indian bio-economy. We are now effectively leveraging the research and entrepreneurial capabilities of this sector to address the needs of our people by creating affordable products that have the potential to change lives and catapult India into a brighter future. Our Government is focused on making India a global hub for innovation and BIRAC is playing a crucial role in shaping the biotech innovation ecosystem of India," said Dr. Harsh Vardhan.

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BIRAC has provided financial and mentoring support to more than 500 companies, and nearly 500 young entrepreneurs and startups. BIRAC's partnership network includes more than 15 implementing agencies both national and international, nearly 700 national experts from academia, industry, public and private research laboratories, donor agencies and other government departments that can contribute towards building the innovation ecosystem of India.

"The country's biotech startup landscape has shown immense growth over the last five years. BIRAC was created to bridge the space between policy, industry and academia in the biotech sector and bring all stakeholders together on one platform. Our impact on the biotech innovation landscape is clearly visible," said Vijay Raghavan, Secretary, DBT and Chairman, BIRAC.

The conclave was host to a bio-innovation fair and an innovation market place and featured a number of key panel discussions including "The Startup Conversation: Gaps, Opportunities and the way forward" featuring venture capitalists and angel investors and a discussion on "Pathways to create impact through Biotech Innovations to the power of Infinity" featuring decision-makers and experts.

The conclave ended with the bio-innovation fair awards. The bio-innovation fair played host to more than 65 innovations supported under various initiatives of DBT and BIRAC.



"BIRAC has transformed the biotech innovation ecosystem in the country. Our investments in the Indian innovation ecosystem are bearing fruit and our innovations are now showing real impact and producing tangible benefits for society. This Innovation Fair is the perfect occasion for us to showcase what our up and coming investigators are working on and how they hope to transform India. This fair also gives us the opportunity to showcase the potential for scale-up of these innovations to relevant stakeholders and decision-makers," said Dr. Renu Swarup, Senior Advisor, DBT and Managing Director, BIRAC.

BIRAC plays an important role in the Startup India Action Plan, the Government of India's flagship program to boost entrepreneurship in the country. Innovations backed by the DBT and BIRAC have also heavily contributed to flagship programs of the government such as Make in India and Swachh Bharat.

BIRAC has supported 25 bio-incubators and two regional centres for Entrepreneurship development. The support for innovation and startups has today resulted in more than 100 technologies and products at different stages of commercialisation.



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Headline: [Bio-Innovations: Propelling the Bio-economy of the Nation Dr. Harshvardhan Inaugurates Two-Day Innovators Conclave and Bio-Innovation Fair](#)

Dr. Harshvardhan Inaugurates Two-Day Innovators Conclave and Bio-Innovation Fair

The Government is focused on making India a global hub for innovation and BIRAC is playing a crucial role in shaping the biotech innovation ecosystem of India", said Dr. Harshvardhan, Union Minister for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Environment, Forest and Climate Change, while inaugurating BIRACs Innovators Conclave & Bio-Innovation Fair at New Delhi today. The Minister further added, DBT is playing a catalytic role in building a 100 billion-dollar Indian bio-economy and is now effectively leveraging the research and entrepreneurial capabilities of this sector to address the needs of our people by creating affordable products that have the potential to change lives and catapult India in to a brighter future."

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister of State for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences Shri Y.S. Chowdary said, Over the last 5 years, a foundation has been laid for making India a global leader in biotechnology research and development. We are ensuring that our innovators and indigenous products receive the encouragement and support to make their mark on the international biotech stage. We are very proud of the impact that BIRAC has generated in such a short span and this Innovation Conclave is testament to it."

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The keynote address was given by Dr. Anil Kakodkar, former Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission of India.

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Inaugurating the conclave, the Chief Guest, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Hon'ble Union Minister for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, said, "BIRAC led by the DBT is playing a catalytic role in building a 100 billion-dollar Indian bio-economy. We are now effectively leveraging the research and entrepreneurial capabilities of this sector to address the needs of our people by creating affordable products that have the potential to change lives and catapult India into a brighter future. Our Government is focused on making India a global hub for innovation and BIRAC is playing a crucial role in shaping the biotech innovation ecosystem of India."

The Guest of Honour, Shri YS Chowdary, Hon'ble MoS, Science & Technology and Earth Sciences said, "Over the last 5 years, a foundation has been laid for making India a global leader in biotechnology research and development. We are ensuring that our innovators and indigenous products receive the encouragement and support to make their mark on the international biotech stage. We are very proud of the impact that BIRAC has generated in such a short span and this Innovation Conclave is testament to it."

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