

Press Release



September 21-22, 2017

September 22, 2017, 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 in to 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. VijayRaghavan, 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.
