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Indian research institutions and Oxford Nanopore to collaborate on genomic Centres of Excellence

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With focus on rare disease, newborn screening, oral cancer, and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) studies

UK-based Oxford Nanopore Technologies, the global company behind a new generation of nanopore-based molecular sensing technology, has signed Letters of Intent with the Biotechnology Research and Innovation Council-Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics (BRIC-CDFD), and the Biotechnology Research and Innovation Council-National Institute of Biomedical Genomics (BRIC-NIBMG), which commit to the establishment of two new Indian Centres of Excellence (CoE) in genomics.

Signed in the presence of the Secretary for DBT, Dr Rajesh Gokhale, the landmark CoEs will help to position India as a regional leader in advanced genomics, and are expected to span rare disease, cancer, and infectious disease surveillance, to support India's national ambitions in addressing these public health issues. The CoEs will create opportunities for education and support skills development and training in sequencing technologies.

The first Letter of Intent, signed in collaboration with BRIC-CDFD, will see the two partners enter into a R&D collaboration in rare disease research, which will facilitate the deployment of Oxford Nanopore's sequencing technologies for research, education, and clinical applications. This will enable BRIC-CDFD to benefit from cutting-edge advancements in genomics and to validate Oxford Nanopore sequencing for rapid characterisation of rare genetic diseases in the Indian clinical context.

In a separate agreement with BRIC-NIBMG, the parties agree to leverage the technology to implement new pipelines and multi-omics applications, including advancing research initiatives in key public health areas, such as maternal and child healthcare through newborn screening, and supporting the study and development of genomic applications in oral cancer. In addition, BRIC-NIBMG will use the Oxford Nanopore technology for antimicrobial resistance (AMR) surveillance as part of the wider 'One Health' agenda.