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Dept of health, biotech sign MoU for affordable health

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DHR joins hands with DBT for deliverable and affordable health technologies



New Delhi: Dr V M Katoch, secretary, Department of Health Research (DHR), and Dr M K Bhan, secretary, Department of Biotechnology (DBT) signed an MoU paving the way for collaborative biomedical R&D of affordable technologies for the health of the people.

Several broad areas such as policy perspective, including economic analysis and prediction of affordable technologies for potential use in public health programs have been identified. A joint working group will come into effect that would steer the programs for biomedical research in product development, process optimization and scale-up including evaluating the products for commercialization.

Dr Bhan stated that DBT is already engaged in development and evaluation of vaccines, diagnostics, biomarkers, therapeutic bio-molecules and nutraceuticals. Dr Katoch further mentioned that both DBT and DHR along with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) would utilize and compliment their facilities and infrastructure to facilitate the scientists to work on projects and programs of mutual interest and a consensus mechanism would be developed for harmonizing administrative and financial processes and approvals.

Dr Bhan added that both sides would work together on transformative, interdisciplinary mega-projects and find out ways for speedy delivery of products at affordable cost to benefit the people of the country. Dr Katoch also consented to constitute a small group of eminent scientific experts to strategize and oversee the projects and programs and also for conducting scientific audit to review the performance and progress of the collaborative projects.

These projects would be strategic in nature keeping in view the national priorities. Both Dr Bhan and Dr Katoch expressed confidence that through this collaborative effort, a system would be developed for rapid delivery of useful health technologies and products to the people of the nation.