



ICGEB New Delhi Hosts International Round Table on Global Genomic Collaborations for Pandemic Preparedness

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The International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), New Delhi, hosted a Special Round Table today, titled, *“Investigating and translating Genomic Evidence for Public Health Response to SARS=Cov-2”*, bringing together leading researchers, science administrators, and institutional representatives from India and Italy to deliberate on the role of genomic evidence in strengthening global public health preparedness.

The meeting underscored the importance of pan-global scientific collaborations in developing coordinated and data-driven responses to emerging infectious diseases. Participants highlighted that the experiences gained from the COVID-19 pandemic have made it imperative for nations to work collectively to enhance genomic surveillance, research translation, and health system readiness.

The Round Table featured the participation of Prof. Lawrence Banks, Director-General, ICGEB; Prof. Ramesh Sonti, Director, ICGEB New Delhi; Scientists & science administrators from Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India; All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) New Delhi; Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI) Faridabad; and the Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS), Rome. The presence of personnel from the Embassy of Italy in India further reinforced the commitment to strengthening India–Italy cooperation in science, technology, and innovation.

Dr. Sergio Ledda, Scientific Attaché at the Embassy of Italy in New Delhi, emphasized the importance of effectively communicating scientific knowledge produced in laboratories to the general public. He highlighted that such communication not only empowers citizens with accurate information but also plays a vital role in dispelling misinformation and debunking false narratives prevalent in the public domain.

Dr. Lawrence Banks underscored the crucial role of scientific cooperation between India and Italy, particularly in the area of pandemic preparedness. He noted that scientific research has been instrumental in both understanding and containing the spread of the virus during the recent pandemic. Dr. Banks further cautioned that future pandemics are inevitable—the only uncertainty lies in when, where, and with what intensity they will emerge.

The deliberations reflected a shared vision of developing sustained international partnerships and collaborative research models between India and Italy to address future pandemics and global health challenges.

Through initiatives such as this Round Table, ICGEB continues to serve as a hub for scientific diplomacy and global collaboration, fostering innovation and preparedness in public health research.





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