



ICGEB New Delhi Hosts Curtain Raiser of ESTIC 2026, Highlighting India's Potential in System and Synthetic Biology

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The International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), New Delhi, hosted the curtain raiser event of the Emerging Science, Technology and Innovation Conclave (ESTIC 2026), featuring a special session on System and Synthetic Biology and their transformative potential in advancing scientific research, biotechnology and innovation in India.

The event was graced by Prof. Gobardhan Das, Member, NITI Aayog, as the Chief Guest. Other distinguished dignitaries included Dr. Rajesh S. Gokhale, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology (DBT); Dr. Dhananjay Kumar Tiwary, Scientist-H, DBT; and Dr. Ramesh V. Sonti, Director, ICGEB New Delhi.

Dr. Ramesh V. Sonti provided an overview of ESTIC 2026, which will be held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. Dr. Sonti, highlighting the significance of System and Synthetic Biology, informed that DBT would be steering a session on "Systems and Synthetic Biology" in ESTIC 2026. Dr. Sonti further said that these emerging fields touch virtually every aspect of life and offer considerable opportunities for scientific advancement.

The session on System and Synthetic Biology highlighted the growing importance of interdisciplinary approaches to understanding complex biological systems and engineering biological processes for applications in healthcare, agriculture, industrial biotechnology and sustainable development. These emerging fields offer significant opportunities to accelerate innovation, develop novel biotechnological solutions and strengthen India's position in the global bioeconomy.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Dhananjay Kumar Tiwary, MD BIRAC, Scientist-H, DBT, highlighted the transformative potential of System and Synthetic Biology, emphasising their applications in healthcare, biomanufacturing and biodesign. He also underscored the role of Artificial Intelligence in accelerating biological research and highlighted the BioE3 Policy's potential to create new opportunities for India's biotechnology sector.

In his address, Dr. Rajesh S. Gokhale, Secretary, DBT, welcomed the participants and underscored the pivotal role of science in driving innovation and societal progress. Drawing on the discovery and large-scale production of penicillin, he highlighted that

scientific discoveries achieve their full impact when they are translated into scalable solutions and made accessible to society. He emphasised the growing significance of biology as a powerful platform for innovation, noting that biotechnology is entering its second revolution, with the potential to shape multiple aspects of human development. He also stressed the need to accelerate the translation of laboratory discoveries into practical applications by strengthening research, development and scale-up.

The Chief Guest, Prof. Gobardhan Das, Member, NITI Aayog, highlighted India's growing scientific capabilities and the immense potential of biotechnology to drive national development, strengthen the innovation ecosystem and address emerging global challenges. Referring to the vision articulated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, he underscored the increasing significance of biology, science and biotechnology in shaping India's future. Prof. Das also expressed confidence in India's potential to emerge as a global biotechnology leader and emphasised the importance of translating fundamental research into practical applications. Citing the development of COVID-19 vaccines as an example, he highlighted how fundamental biological research can lead to life-saving innovations and help address major public health challenges.

The curtain raiser event set the stage for discussions on the role of emerging scientific disciplines in advancing India's research and innovation agenda in the lead-up to ESTIC 2026.

About ESTIC 2026

The Emerging Science, Technology and Innovation Conclave (ESTIC 2026) is a flagship national platform organised by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), under the guidance of the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India. Scheduled for 27–29 October 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, the conclave aims to bring together leading scientists, policymakers, industry leaders, researchers and deep-tech innovators to showcase scientific breakthroughs, foster interdisciplinary collaboration and accelerate the translation of research into impactful technologies.

Covering 12 key thematic areas, including System and Synthetic Biology, advanced manufacturing, energy technologies, artificial intelligence, semiconductors and advanced healthcare, ESTIC 2026 seeks to strengthen India's science, technology and innovation ecosystem in support of the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

Through its continued commitment to cutting-edge research, scientific collaboration and capacity building, ICGEB New Delhi remains dedicated to advancing biotechnology and strengthening India's contributions to global science and technology.

About ICGEB New Delhi

The International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), New Delhi, is a leading centre for research and training in the life sciences. Its research programmes span infectious diseases, vaccines and diagnostics, plant biotechnology, bioenergy, bioinformatics and other emerging areas of biotechnology. Through scientific research, capacity building and international collaboration, ICGEB contributes to advancing biotechnology for human welfare and sustainable development.



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