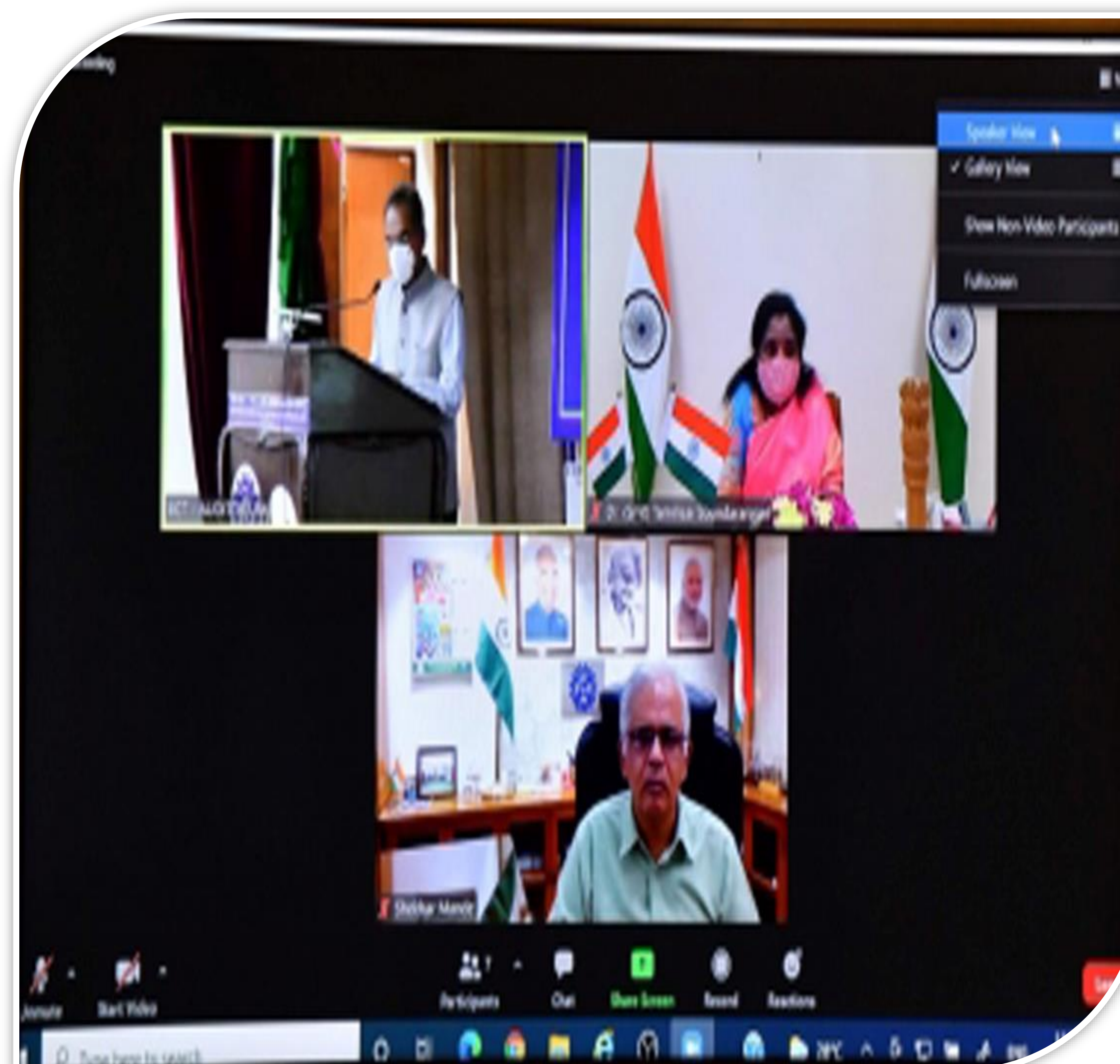


CSIR IN MEDIA



CSIR

NEWS BULLETIN 06 TO 10 AUGUST 2021



Traditional polyhouses get a makeover with retractable roofs

CSIR-CMERI, IHBT

10th August, 2021

Horticulture farmers to get help from new retractable-roof polyhouses with state-of-the-art technology developed by scientists of CSIR-CMERI, to help them grow both seasonal and non seasonal produce with greater success. Scientists from CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CMERI), Durgapur in West Bengal have developed a retractable-roof polyhouse that will enable farmers to open or shut the roof of the polyhouse as per the requirement.



“Till recently, we had only the ‘naturally ventilated’ polyhouses. But this one with the retractable roof will help farmers control the temperature and growing environment of the crops,” Jagdeesh Manik Rao, senior scientist CSIR-CMERI, told Gaon Connection. “For example when it rains and the particular crop needs the rain, the farmers can open up the roof and allow the rain in. If the crop needs to be protected from rain, the roof can be covered. It is the same with sunlight,” he explained.

A model of the polyhouse with a retractable centre will be set up in Ludhiana, Punjab at CMERI extension centre. The foundation stone for it was laid on July 31, by Harish Hirani, director, CSIR-CMERI. He also inaugurated a naturally ventilated polyhouse facility there.

CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (IHBT) based in Palampur, Himachal Pradesh is also associated with the development of the retractable-roof polyhouse.

The retractable roof works automatically. “We are installing sensors to gauge rain, carbon dioxide, humidity and temperature. The polyhouse will create the right environment for the crops,” Rao explained. These retractable-roof polyhouses will do away with the need of extra blowers, ventilation vents, etc.

Twin design polyhouse

There are two kinds of retractable-roof polyhouses. One, where the roof can be opened and closed manually by the farmer, and the other where it is automatic. “The manually operated retractable roof polyhouses are priced at thousand rupees a square metre while the fully automatic ones cost fifteen hundred rupees a square metre,” Rao said.



In order to study the pros and cons of the retractable roof polyhouse when compared to the naturally ventilated polyhouse, CSIR-CMERI scientists will be observing and recording the findings at Ludhiana's extension. Both kinds of polyhouses are set up there where horticultural crops are growing.

“Farmers in our country sometimes face extreme weather conditions, such as heat, cold, rain...They also have to contend with pests which destroy about fifteen per cent of our crops,” Hirani told Gaon Connection.

Tracking climate change

Polyhouses are sensitive to the environment and can protect the crops to quite an extent, Hirani said. The traditional polyhouses with a fixed roof have the disadvantage that because the area underneath is always covered, the temperature of the soil can go up and there can be insufficient sunlight for the plants.

This can be adjusted with the polyhouses with the retractable roofs, Hirani pointed out. These polyhouses would to a large extent control the growing environment of the crops, especially in the face of climate change, he added.

“The technology used in the retractable-roof polyhouses will enable the farmers to get the updates on the weather conditions, what the crops need in terms of humidity, temperature, moisture, etc.,” the director of CSIR-CMERI said. “This way it will help the farmer cultivate both seasonal and nonseasonal crops,” he explained.

Scientists in Ludhiana will be testing both kinds of polyhouses and they hope to make this technology ready for the farmers to use in six months' time.

Published in:

Gaonconnection

This year too, there's no public celebration of Ganesh festival

CSIR-NEERI

09th August, 2021

Decision taken in view of a possible third wave, says Deputy Commissioner

With the focus now being more on preventing a possible third wave of COVID-19, the Dharwad district administration has banned the public celebrations of the Ganesh festival in the district as a precautionary measure.

The Ganesh festival is celebrated in a grand manner by installation of Ganesh idols in Ganesh pandals that come up in almost every locality, particularly in the twin cities of Hubballi-Dharwad with a large number of people visiting these pandals.

A decision on banning public celebration of Ganesh festival was taken during a meeting of officials chaired by Deputy Commissioner of Dharwad Nitesh Patil in Dharwad on Monday. Last year, also the administration banned public celebration on account of the pandemic.

Mr. Patil said that while the festival will be celebrated in September, the decision was taken as a precautionary measure and also because the preparations for installation of Ganesh pandals begin early. This apart, those bursting fire crackers during the festival should use only green fire crackers authorised by the CSIR and NEERI, he said.

He said that the decision was taken in anticipation of a possible third wave hitting the State in September. He said that according to experts, there could be a spike in the number of cases by August-end, particularly in the wake of a surge in the number of infections in the neighbouring States of Kerala and Maharashtra.

The Deputy Commissioner said that it will be in the best interest of public health that the festival is celebrated indoors. Already, idol makers have been warned against making idols out

of PoP. Getting PoP idols from other States is also totally banned and those violating the rule will be liable for punishment, he said.

Chabbi Ganesh

Regarding Chabbi Ganesh (Ganesh idols installed at Chabbi village), Mr. Patil said that as the Ganesh idols in several houses in Chabbi village of Hubballi taluk attracted people even from other States, it would be mandatory for those coming for darshan to have RT-PCR test negative report to enter the village.

He said that the National Green Tribunal has issued guidelines on green fire crackers and sellers of firecrackers have been asked to adhere strictly to the norms and sell only those authorised by CSIR and NEERI. The firecrackers should have QR code and hologram and those violating the norms will be strictly dealt with.

Published in:

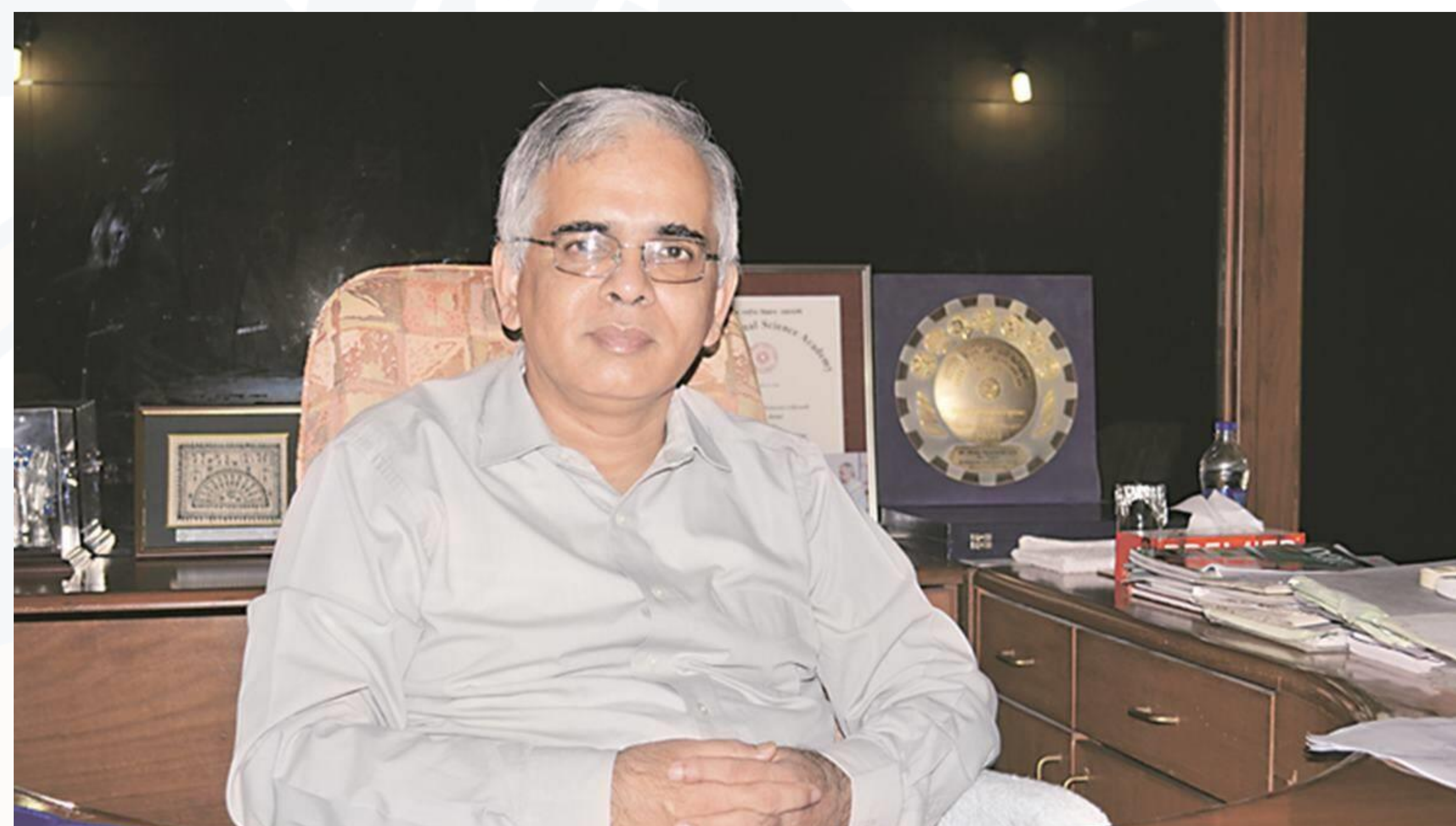
[Thehindu](https://www.thehindu.com/)

Maharashtra has potential to become model-state for the world: CSIR chief

CSIR

09th August, 2021

Shekhar Mande was delivering an address on 'Contribution of Maharashtra in the field of science', a virtual talk organised as part of 'Maharashtra Diamond Jubilee Lecture Series' hosted by Maharashtra Information Centre, on Sunday. Use science as an effective medium to find solutions for society and its well-being, Shekhar Mande, director general, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), has urged young scientists.



Mande was delivering an address on 'Contribution of Maharashtra in the field of science', a virtual talk organised as part of 'Maharashtra Diamond Jubilee Lecture Series' hosted by Maharashtra Information Centre, on Sunday.

“There is no doubt that Maharashtra will lead and has the potential to become a model state for the world. I urge all young scientists to use science and channelise their efforts for the well-being of society,” Mande said.

During his address, the CSIR chief shared past and ongoing research at a number of scientific institutions, including IIT-Bombay, National Institute of Virology, National Centre for Cell Science, National Institute of Radio Astrophysics, Inter University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre and others.

“Our state-run universities, too, have showcased top-class scientific works and have contributed immensely towards scientific progress,” he said.

He added that not just science and research, Maharashtra had promoted education, particularly medical education.

Along with Pune, cities like Kolhapur, Nagpur, Mumbai and Aurangabad were homes to educational institutes and universities that have made great contributions, he said.

He highlighted Maharashtra's scientific and progressive history by using mathematician Bhaskaracharya, Dr Anandibai Joshi, who was among the foremost medical practitioners of India, and social reformer Lokmanya Balgangadhar Tilak as examples.

Mande said while Covid-19 had brought focus and greater need for carrying out studies of new viruses and diseases, He said it was in Pune where Imperial Bacteriological Laboratory (IBL) was established in 1889. It was from Pune that all regional centres of IBL, now known as ICAR-Indian Veterinary Research Institute, were later branched to Bareilly, Palampur, Kolkata, Mukteshwar and Bengaluru.

Stop-lock gate fixed at Andhra Pradesh's Pulichintala Project

CSIR-NGRI

09th August, 2021

VIJAYAWADA/GUNTUR: Water Resources department officials completed the installation of Stop-Lock gate at 16th sluice of Pulichintala Project by Saturday midnight. Only 8.23 TMC of water was in the reservoir by 12 noon on Sunday. All the 23 gates of the projects have been closed. Officials are expecting more inflows from Nagarjuna Sagar project in the coming days. As the inflows are increasing to Srisailem



from Tungabhadra dam, Pulichintala project is expected to get more inflows in the coming days.

Around two dozen experts from Polavaram and Visakhapatnam were involved in the installation of the stop-lock gate. The preparatory works for installing the stop-lock arrangements was made on Friday and installation works commenced at the break of dawn on Saturday.

Total 11 iron plates or blocks, each weighing around 30 tonnes, were inserted into the grooves in the sluice walls. Using a heavy-duty crane, these plates were inserted in predetermined order. Each plate is interlocked with another, finally making it one giant block of iron stopping the flood.

From 44 TMC, the water storage level was decreased to 5.4 TMC by Saturday morning, when the all gates were closed.

Mild tremors in Pulichintala

Mild tremors were felt in Pulichintala region of Guntur district on Sunday early hours. Three tremors of 2.3, 2.7 and 3.0 magnitude on the Richter scale occurred for about a couple of seconds between 7:53:11 am to 8:16:26 am. However, their impact was hardly felt in the villages near Pulichintala project and NGRI experts as well as project engineers ruled out any adverse impact on the project.

According to National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI) senior scientist Sri Nagesh, the mild tremors, which are referred to as micro earthquakes, were felt near Pulichintala village and some 5 km upstream of Pulichintala project. The first tremor occurred south-west of Pulichintala village, second one occurred at the southeast of the village and third one at northeast of the village.

Atchampet Tahsildar Usha Rani said that as the tremors were of very low magnitude, the people in the region didn't experience them. The engineers of Pulichintala dam said that the project is completely safe. No loss of life or property was reported.

Published in:

[Newindianexpress](http://www.newindianexpress.com)

COVID-19: 45 cases of delta plus variant reported in Maharashtra so far

CSIR

08th August, 2021

A total of 45 cases of the Delta plus variant of coronavirus have been reported in Maharashtra during genome sequencing, the state health department said on Sunday, adding one patient had died. At 13, the maximum number of these patients hailed from Jalgaon in north Maharashtra followed by Ratnagiri (11) in the coastal Konkan region.

"80 per cent of the samples sent for genome sequencing had tested positive for the Delta Plus variant (of coronavirus). The 45 patients are from Jalgaon (13), Ratnagiri (11), Mumbai (6), Thane (5), Pune (3), and one each from Palghar, Sindhudurg, Sangli, Nandurbar, Aurangabad, Kolhapur, and Beed," the department said in a statement.

Of these 45 samples, information about 35 patients have been taken by the health department. One death was reported while the rest of the patients reported mild to medium type symptoms, it said. The exact number of samples sent for genome sequencing and the period during which they were analysed is not mentioned.

Union Minister of State for Health Bharati Pawar informed Lok Sabha in a written reply on Friday that analysis of the genomic data is a continuous and ongoing process. Periodic updates are shared with experts and states and are also regularly made available in the public domain through the media bulletin of INSACOG (Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Consortium). States are regularly advised to send samples for genome sequencing and provide clinical data of positive persons to enable greater epidemiological insights to identify the link between the surge in cases at various places to the variants, the minister stated.

Elaborating on the steps being taken to check the spread of the Delta variant, Pawar had said to monitor the variants of SARS-CoV-2 virus, initially, genomic sequencing was conducted

through the National Institute of Virology, Pune. Subsequently, the Union government established the INSACOG in December 2020 as a consortium of 10 laboratories of the Ministry of Health, Department of Biotechnology, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). The network of INSACOG laboratories has since been increased to 28, Pawar stated.

Published in:

[Freepressjournal](https://www.freepressjournal.in)

CFTRI to host two-day webinar on Food Processing Unit

CSIR-CFTRI

07th August, 2021

Mysore/Mysuru: A two-day webinar titled 'Online course-cum-training: An Overview of Food Processing Machineries & Unit Operations' has been organised by CSIR-Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI) on Aug. 17 and 18 from 9.30 am to 1.30 pm.

This event is held under CSIR Integrated Skill Initiative for the benefit of MSMEs & Startups working in the area of Food Processing with the involvement of experts involved in various engineering operations and machinery development.

The webinar will broadly cover topics such as: Challenges in Food Processing; Unit Operations in Food Processing; Primary & Secondary Grain Processing; Machineries for Processing of Fruits & Vegetables; Roasting, Drying & Frying Machines; Packaging & Labeling; Machinery Layouts for MSMEs; Standards, Regulatory Requirements & Energy Auditing.

ITI/ Diploma/ Graduates, who are aspiring to be entrepreneurs, new entrepreneurs and startups are eligible to apply. Online application can be filled up to Aug. 11 (till 11.59 pm). The application fee of Rs. 500 can be paid online / SBI branches through SBI-Collect. For details, visit: <https://www.cftri.res.in/PDF/SDP-29072021.pdf>

Those who successfully complete the programme will be issued with e-Certificates, according to Dr. Parigi Ramesh Kumar, Head, I&P Department, CFTRI.

Published in:

[Starofmysore](https://www.starofmysore.com)

Agro-based Industry Set to Bloom in India's Most Volatile Region as Kashmir Farmers Turn to Lavender

CSIR-IIIM

07th August, 2021



It's early August and India's Jammu and Kashmir is covered in swarms of fragrant purple flowers. On the hilly slopes of the valley, lavender is ready for harvest. Despite early doubts, more than 1,000 farmers in the region have given up their traditional crops and introduced the "purple revolution" in Union Territory.

A decade ago, 43-year-old Bharat Bhushan used to cultivate maize, like most farmers of Khillani village in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district. In 2010, unaware of what fate had in store for him, Bhushan attended a programme by the Council of Scientific and Industrial

Research (CSIR) and the Indian Institute Of Integrative Medicine, Jammu (IIIM-Jammu) in which farmers were encouraged to move to lavender cultivation.

CSIR-IIIM Jammu wanted to popularise aromatic crops such as lavender, which is native to European countries, among agriculturists across India to increase the income of small and marginal farmers. After much hesitation, Bhushan started producing lavender - and it wasn't easy. But soon his life changed.

"After the CSIR-IIIM Programme in 2010, I was curious so I started doing the cultivation on a small scale. Other farmers didn't pay much heed then. In the first year I didn't get much profit but after the second year, it gave us benefits much higher than our traditional crops. Then, every year the profits just kept rising. It was unbelievable. After three years, the profit had quadrupled and after this I planted lavender in my entire land," Bharat Bhushan told Sputnik.

In 2016, the Indian Government launched Aroma Mission to boost the cultivation of plants such as lavender which have aromatic medicinal properties, and this allowed Bhushan's hard work to bear fruits. In the same year, Bharat also managed to speak with Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a live video conference session which he says inspired him.

"Earlier, people from my village used to ridicule me, and even my family was unsupportive," Bhushan said, adding that more than 1,000 farmers have followed his lead in cultivating the medicinal plant. He also won the prestigious 'Innovative Farmer Award' from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute by devoting 62 acres of land to aromatic plant - in particular, lavender - cultivation in 2020.

"I have the same 1 to 2 acres of land and there are farmers who have big farms but they grow maize and I make four times more profit than them. I have two nurseries now. I have my own oil distillation plant. We get high demand for our oils from Delhi, Mumbai and Uttar Pradesh,

among others. We are also growing other aromatic plants such as rosemary and geranium but on a small level. I feel extremely proud of myself and happy too," Bhushan said.

He also said he earns more than \$5,000 annually from his farm but earns almost double from his nurseries. "I have taken the land for the nurseries on lease and I earn more than \$13,000 annually because of lavender. I have also provided employment opportunities to the women of our village. Now I am working on my own range of lavender-based products such as handmade soaps, room fresheners, incense sticks, etc," Bhushan added.

Several industry insiders told Sputnik that a litre of oil extracted from the flowers is worth more than \$130 and it is mostly used in the aroma industry. Meanwhile, the residue after oil extraction is used to make agarbattis (incense sticks) and soaps.

The farmers of the valley feel as if they have struck gold. They explained that once this easy-to-cultivate lavender is planted, there is no need to do anything for the next 15 or 16 years other than putting manure on it once in a while. Another bonus is that this crop cannot be attacked by monkeys or rodents. After the plant blooms, the flowers are harvested and the plant is ready to grow again in the next season. With little investment, this cash crop cultivation can easily give farmers \$4,000 per hectare annually.

Scope for Agri-based Industry

The scenic valley which was previously known for its apple orchards, walnuts, mulberries, saffron, Chinar and Pine trees, roses, and even tulips, is now increasingly a "purple" landscape. Lavender is not just an ornamental plant - it is an economically viable perennial shrub.

Around 220km away from Bhushan's Doda district, Shaheen Shahdad in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district is growing "purple gold" along with apples in her orchard. She lives in Srinagar and travels 55km every day to work at her farms.

"I started lavender cultivation in 2013. I was in apple farming and it occurred to me that I should explore lavender too. I did everything on my own and in the past seven or eight years the journey has been really good. I train everyone on my own. Some years we get good profits and some years we get less profit but yes the output is constant. I have five hectares and I have allotted half each to lavender and apple," Shahdad told Sputnik.

Several farmers and horticulturists told Sputnik that Kashmir has the potential to grow the top 10 aromatic crops such as rose, lavender, rosemary, Geranium, clary sage, mint, and among these, rose and lavender are having prime importance in the global market. Rose and lavender can be grown in karewas [inter-mountain areas] of Kashmir where there is a lack of irrigation. Interestingly, the quality of oil extracted from Kashmir-based lavender is excellent as agro-climatic conditions of the region are highly suitable for quality production and yield.

According to government reports, around 686 hectares are being used for the cultivation of aromatic crops in Kashmir with a turnover of \$94,000. There is an increasing demand for Aromatherapy across the world, especially for its therapeutic value. Lavender in Kashmir flowers in the last week of June and continues until the end of July. Though there is later flowering in the month of November it is not viable for lavender oil. The flowers during that period are collected, dried, and sold directly.

As demand and profits continue to rise, local entrepreneurs are also jumping in and helping the farmers in their cultivation and oil processing by providing technical support and quality planting material. Moreover, other than providing technical support, CSIR and IIIM have given free essential oil distillation facilities to the farmers of Bhadarwah and it has led to the production of more than 800 litres of lavender oil worth more than \$107,500 from 2018 to 2020. Statistically, the world's total production of essential oils is estimated at between 100,000 and 110,000 tonnes, and India stands third with a share of around 16 to 17 percent.

Published in:

[Sputniknews](https://sputniknews.com)

CSIR-CFTRI

07th August, 2021

CFTRI to host two-day webinar on Food Processing Unit



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Published in:

The Hindu, Star Of Mysore, Deccan Herald, Times Of India

CSIR-CFTRI

07th August, 2021

CFTRI to host two-day webinar on Food Processing Unit

ಆನ್‌ಲೈನ್ ತರಬೇತಿ

ಮೈಸೂರು: ಕೇಂದ್ರೀಯ ಆಹಾರ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನ ಮತ್ತು ಸಂಶೋಧನಾ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ (ಸಿಎಫ್‌ಟಿಆರ್‌ಐ) ವತಿಯಿಂದ 'ಆಹಾರ ಸಂಸ್ಕರಣೆ ಯಂತ್ರಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಘಟಕಗಳ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಚರಣೆ: ಸಮಗ್ರ ನೋಟ' ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಆ.17 ಮತ್ತು 18 ರಂದು ಆನ್‌ಲೈನ್ ತರಬೇತಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಗಾರ ಆಯೋಜಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

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Published in:

Prajavani

Telangana Governor calls for self-reliance in APIs, KSMs

CSIR-IICT

06th August, 2021

Telangana Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan on Thursday stressed the need for achieving self-reliance in Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) and Key Starting Materials (KSM) in the pharmaceutical sector. Expressing concern over India's dependence on other countries for APIs and KSMs, she called for self-reliance in these areas so as to live up to "our image as the pharma capital of the world".



"The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised the need to achieve self-reliance in the pharmacy sector and reduce our dependence on other countries during the crisis," she said.

The Governor was addressing the 78th CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT) Foundation Day celebrations in a virtual mode from Puducherry, where she is holding the additional charge as Lieutenant Governor.

Soundararajan said that science and technology play a crucial role in realising the goal of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'.

Stating that research and innovation are vital for the country's progress, prosperity and sustainable development, she called upon the scientists to lead the country's march towards self-reliance.

She also exhorted the scientists to increase the number of patent applications and trademark filings from the country.

“In order to create a knowledge-based economy and emerge as a knowledge superpower, we need to promote collaborative and multi-disciplinary research and get the maximum number of intellectual property rights,” she added.

Soundararajan also stated that the proposed National Research Fund (NRF) with a massive outlay of Rs 50,000 crore, as envisaged in the National Education Policy-2020, will give a major fillip to research in the country.

She lauded the efforts of CSIR-IICT for its proactive role in the development of indigenous vaccines, drugs, and other initiatives during the Covid pandemic.

“The 78th Foundation Day celebrations must serve as an occasion to reflect the past journey of the institution and re-strategise its future plans to emerge as the institute of global excellence in the field of chemistry and chemical technologies,” she said.

‘Scaling up surveillance, vaccination key to limiting third wave impact’

CSIR-CCMB

06th August, 2021

Stepping-up surveillance, vaccination and following protocols would hold the key to the severity of the third wave of COVID-19 pandemic in the country, director of CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) Vinay K. Nandicoori said on Friday.

Stating that there was no reason to give a go-by to the basic safety protocols — maintaining social distancing and wearing mask — he said they were increasingly relevant even now when the size of population not vaccinated and without antibodies was coming down, increasing the possibility of infection among the remaining sections.

Speaking at a FICCI webinar on ‘COVID-19: Vaccination & The Next Wave’, he said that changes in receptor binding, immune-escape mutations and potential to escape diagnostics would make the third wave possible. He, however, said that the intensity of the third wave could be reduced by not allowing super spreader events — cultural, religious, entertainment, sports/games, social gatherings such as weddings, political events — to prevent and slow down the virus transmission.

He suggested that models integrating detection for test and trace, sequencing for variants of concern, sero-surveys, vaccination effectiveness surveys and viral load in environment would be needed to monitor and forecast outbreaks.

Subodh Kandamuthan, director and professor of Centre for Health Care Management at ASCI, underscored the need to test continuously since new Delta variants were a cause of concern. He also emphasised the need for private sector collaboration at all levels of care — surveillance, testing, diagnostics and treatment.

Opening up economy does not mean giving a go-by to COVID norms as both lives and livelihoods were important. He said the proportion of healthcare budget has not really increased either at the Centre and in States, and the governments were required to focus on it to prevent pandemics in future.

Stating that over 90 lakh population was susceptible to infection in Telangana as they were either not vaccinated so far or have no infection/antibodies, Officer on Special Duty to Chief Minister Gangadhar Taduri said the impact of third could be much lesser and shorter as a sero-survey conducted by the CCMB had found that 63% population of the State had developed antibodies.

Subscribing to the view that the length of third wave could be shorter, Raches Ella, clinical project lead at Bharat Biotech, said tweaking the vaccine strategy would hold the key to mitigating the pandemic in the days to come as the virus would keep tweaking itself. He felt that combination of intra-muscular and intranasal vaccine may lead to enhanced efficacy.

Oncologist Hari Menon and paediatrician K. Bhasker Reddy were among those who spoke at the webinar.

Published in:

[Thehindu](https://www.thehindu.com)

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