



CCMB and VITM launch Gene-Health Connect, a mobile science exhibition to explain genes and genetic diseases

Hyderabad, 8th May 2023: On the occasion of World Thalassemia Day, CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), in collaboration with NCSM-Visvesvaraya Industrial and Technological Museum (VITM), Bangalore, launched a mobile science exhibition – Gene-Health Connect in Hyderabad. The Hon'ble Governor of Telangana and Lt Governor of Puducherry, Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan, was the Chief Guest at the event.

The exhibition is set in a bus with 20 exhibits that will go around Science, medical, and pharmacy colleges and high schools in the states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh in the coming seven months. Dr. N Kalaiselvi, Director General, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), inaugurated it online. The Telangana Social Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society is one of the vital venue partners in Telangana for hosting the exhibition across all districts of Telangana.



Front row, from left to right: Ms K Sadhana, Director, VITM, Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan, Hon'ble Governor of Telangana and Lt Governor of Puducherry, Dr Vinay K Nandicoori, Director, CSIR-CCMB

"The exhibition aims to educate young people on genetic diseases and how they can be managed and prevented," said Dr. Somdatta Karak, Science Communication and Public Outreach Officer at CSIR-CCMB. 7-9 cr Indians are estimated to suffer from genetic diseases. Earlier studies from CCMB had suggested that in-breeding in small communities propagates

many of these diseases. "We have made the exhibition for young people to understand how genes function and look at genetic diseases more objectively," she added.

"We hope to remove the social stigma attached to genetic testing. Timely genetic testing can prevent many genetic diseases today, while research is underway to make such tests more effective. Young people of India have to start discussing these more openly," said Dr Vinay K Nandicoori, Director, CSIR-CCMB.

"VITM, Bangalore, has been playing a key role in bringing Science from research labs to the public through various interactive models and exhibits. The mobile science exhibition on Gene-Health Connect brings people the knowledge of genes and genetic disorders through hands-on exhibits which all can easily understand," said Ms. Sadhana Attavar, Director, VITM.

This exhibition is facilitated by an MoU between CSIR-Jigyasa, CSIR's flagship student-centered science outreach initiative, and the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM). "This is a great opportunity for research institutes such as CCMB to take the research that is going on in labs to the public, especially the youth. The coming together of CSIR and NCSM is a harbinger of more ambitious and exciting initiatives in this direction," said Dr. Geetha Vani Rayasam, Head CSIR-Human Resource Development Group, and CSIR-Jigyasa initiative.

About CSIR

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) under Ministry of Science & Technology, Govt of India is known for its cutting edge R&D knowledge base in diverse S&T areas, is a contemporary R&D organization. CSIR has a dynamic network of 37 national laboratories, 39 outreach centres, 1 Innovation Complexes, and three units with a pan-India presence.

About CCMB

The Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology is a premier life science research institute under CSIR. It addresses fundamental questions in biology and seeks to develop technologies of societal relevance.

About NCSM

The National Council of Science Museums (NCSM), an autonomous body under the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India, operates a large network of 26 Science Museums & Centres in the country. The main activity of the Council is to popularize science, promote scientific temper and develop creative/innovative outlook in young adults and students by several out of school activities.

About VITM

Visvesvaraya Industrial & Technological Museum (VITM) is the southern headquarters of National Council of Science Museums, an autonomous body under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India and is known for its hands-on exhibits. It attracts about 1 million visitors every year. The museum houses seven permanent exhibitions on different scientific themes and three attractions: a working model of dinosaur and a replica of the Wright Brothers' Flyer-I and high-quality outreach programme Science on a Sphere. The museum has a digital 3D theatre and reaches out to the masses in the interior parts of Karnataka through a Mobile Exhibition Bus.