



INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH

Department of Health Research – Ministry Health & Family Welfare
Government of India

Media report (23 November to 30 November)

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CSIR researching on cannabis for treating cancer, epilepsy

November 23,2018/Business Standard

Health research body to conduct trials on Zika vaccine developed by Hyd's Bharat Biotech

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November 29, 2018/Swarajya magazine

CSIR researching on cannabis for treating cancer, epilepsy

November 23,2018/Business Standard

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is doing a research on the medicinal use of cannabis for treating diseases like cancer, epilepsy and sickle cell anaemia. "We have got license from the Jammu and Kashmir government for conducting the research programme. We have already started it and will soon meet the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for approval of usage of cannabis as drugs for trial on humans," Ram Vishwakarma, Director, CSIR-IIIM (Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine) told the media here on Friday.

In April 2017, the Centre and the Ministry of Health and Welfare issued a research licence to grow cannabis to the CSIR-IIIM in collaboration with Bombay Hemp Company (BOHECO). To carry ahead the research programme on a larger scale, CSIR has also joined hands with **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** and Department of Biotechnology (DBT), under Ministry of Science and Technology. "CSIR will primarily conduct the research part while ICMR will provide medical experts. These sort of research projects require good funding and therefore the finance part will be taken care of by DBT," he added.

Health research body to conduct trials on Zika vaccine developed by Hyd's Bharat Biotech

November 23,2018/The News Minute

Earlier this year, a Zika virus was reported in parts of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. Following this, the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** will be conducting phase II trials on a vaccine for Zika developed by the Hyderabad-based vaccine manufacturer, Bharat Biotech. The vaccine developed in Hyderabad is being called ZIKAVAC. An earlier government press release states, "The first thing is to be prepared for the worst," also adding that it hoped to announce the arrival of ZIKAVAC to the world as early as possible.

Vaccine's trial phase

"Vaccines need to undergo certain tests, which are a bit unlike tests other pharmaceutical products are subject to," explains Sreenath RN, from Karnataka Antibiotics and Pharmaceuticals Limited's (KAPL) Research and Development department. "We are introducing a vaccine to help improve its immunity against a disease. There are certain trials and tests we must subject these vaccines to, in order to ensure the effectiveness of the vaccines." There are three phases of trials for a vaccine. The first phase is conducted on healthy volunteers to determine the safety of the vaccine. The second is done to assess the efficacy of the vaccine and to take note of all possible side-effects. In the third phase of trials, vaccines are tested on patients to assess the efficacy, safety and effectiveness of the same.

The ICMR will be taking up phase II trials of the Zika virus vaccine in order to determine if it is safe to administer and to determine its side effects.

[ICMR releases antimicrobial stewardship guidelines](#)

November 23,2018/Bio Spectrum India



Continuing the capacity building initiative of **Indian Council of Medical Research** on Antimicrobial Stewardship Programs, ICMR organized AMSP training; having more than 150 participants from various hospitals and medical colleges.

ICMR had organized four such workshops last year in which 150 health care staff from 32 medical colleges and hospitals were trained. Almost all the hospitals who participated in the workshop have initiated AMSP activities. The current workshop was held in partnership with Pfizer under the ICMR-Pfizer partnership on AMR in order to help in the expansion of the ongoing initiatives of ICMR in the areas of stewardship, surveillance and awareness on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) to other levels of health care. As the world Antibiotic Awareness Week 2018 is observed every year in November, ICMR has released Antimicrobial Stewardship Guidelines, to mark the World Antibiotic Awareness Week with the aim to provide guidance to Indian hospitals to set up structure and process of Antimicrobial Stewardship Programs (AMSP). The audience for this document is hospital administrators and clinicians. With very few new antibiotics in the pipeline, it is important to use the existing drugs judiciously. Since inappropriate use of antibiotics is rampant in India, there is an urgent need to improve antibiotic use in hospitals, which can be achieved through implementation of good AMS Programs.

[Lung cancer fast turning into epidemic in India](#)

November 23,2018/Bio Spectrum India

Data from **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** suggests that lung cancer is fast turning into an epidemic in India. It is a high-mortality cancer due to late stage at diagnosis and poor access to affordable healthcare, and today accounts for higher number of deaths in the country than colorectal cancer, prostate cancer and breast cancer. This was stated recently by oncologists from Vikram Hospital, Bengaluru, who were speaking at a workshop to create awareness about lung cancer in Bengaluru. Worldwide, November is observed as the lung cancer awareness month. Said Dr. Niti Raizada, Sr. Consultant Medical Oncologist and Hemato-oncologist, Vikram Hospital, Bengaluru: "Only 15 percent of cases of lung cancer are curable at the time of diagnosis. Patients with lung cancer present themselves for diagnosis at a much later stage than other cancers due to the nature of the disease. Early on, people with lung cancer have no symptoms or vague symptoms. In fact, if lung cancer is detected by chest X-ray, it is already too late for the patient. The only effective method for screening lung cancer in early stages is the Low Dose Helical Lung CT, where high-resolution images pick up early lung lesions."

[CSIR researching on cannabis for treating cancer, epilepsy](#)

November 23,2018/Outlook India

New Delhi, Nov 23 The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is doing a research on the medicinal use of cannabis for treating diseases like cancer, epilepsy and sickle cell anaemia. "We have got license from the Jammu and Kashmir government for conducting the research programme. We have already started it and will soon meet the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for approval of usage of cannabis as drugs for trial on humans," Ram Vishwakarma, Director, CSIR-IIIM (Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine) told the media here on

Friday. In April 2017, the Centre and the Ministry of Health and Welfare issued a research licence to grow cannabis to the CSIR-IIIM in collaboration with Bombay Hemp Company (BOHECO). To carry ahead the research programme on a larger scale, CSIR has also joined hands with **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** and Department of Biotechnology (DBT), under Ministry of Science and Technology.



[Shillong: Demanding illegal gratification NEHU Prof lands in CBI dragnet](#)

November 24,2018/Northeast Now

The Head of the Department of Biomedical Engineering of the North Eastern Hill University (NEHU) based in Shillong has landed in the dragnet of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). According to media report, the Head of the Department of Biomedical Engineering of NEHU, Assistant Professor Dr. Dinesh Bhatia has been arrested by the sleuths of CBI on charges of demanding illegal gratification, stated a report published on Saturday by *Northeast Live*.

The news has shocked the people who are associated with medical and engineering research as Dr Bhatia has been honoured with three awards – International Young Biomedical Scientist, **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)**, Government of India, 2014-15; BOYSCAST, Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, 2011-12 and INAE Fellowship by Indian National Academy of Engineering (INAE), Government of India, 2011. As per report, Assistant Professor Bhatia was arrested on charges of a written complaint filed by one of his students, who is pursuing Ph.D under him. According to the report, the illegal gratification amounting to Rs 40,000 is the proceeds of fake bills sanctioned by Dr Bhatia and it was transferred to the bank account of the complainant.

[Gastric Cancer Therapy Market Research, Growth Opportunities, Analysis and Forecasts Report 2018-2023](#)

November 24,2018/Post Herald

The global gastric cancer therapy market is expected to register a CAGR of 13.0% during the forecast period (2018 – 2023). Asia Pacific dominates the market, due to the growing incidence of gastric cancer in that region.

Growing Incidence of Gastric Cancer

According to a report published by **Indian Council of Medical Research** in 2014, gastric cancer is the fourth leading cancer in the world, accounting for 736,000 deaths. Around 1 million new cases of gastric cancer and 0.7 million deaths due to gastric cancer are reported every year. Age-standardized incidence rates are approximately twice as high in men as in women. Presently, gastric cancer is more common in Asia, than in the United States or Europe. Notably, 42% of cases occur in China alone. Thus, increasing incidence of gastric cancer, coupled with strong drug pipeline, and introduction of novel therapies for metastatic stomach cancer, across the world, are likely to drive the market for gastric cancer therapy.

[Nipah outbreak in Kerala Index case infected from bats, others from hospitals: Study](#)

November 25,2018/The Indian Express

A comprehensive study on the Nipah virus outbreak in Kerala has found that only the index case was infected in the community from fruit bats, but all other remaining cases were due to the transmission of the virus in three hospitals in

district. The research report, titled 'Outbreak Investigation of Nipah Virus Disease in Kerala', was recently published in the Journal of Infectious Diseases, brought out by Infectious Diseases Society of America. The study, done by Dr G Arunkumar of Manipal Centre for Virus Research, was supported by the **Indian Council of Medical Research** under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The outbreak of the Nipah virus, a highly fatal emerging zoonotic virus, was reported in Kozhikode district during May-June this year. There had been 23 suspected cases of the disease. However, the laboratory could only confirm 18 cases, apart from the index case. The outbreak had 17 reported deaths. The samples of the index case, 27-year-old Muhammed Sabith, were not sent for testing for Nipah virus.

[Find the facts and figures of the Kerala Nipah virus here](#)

November 25, 2018/The Health site

The outbreak of the highly fatal emerging zoonotic Nipah virus in Kozhikode district of Kerala during May-June this year has confirmed 18 cases other than the index cases already. According to the census, it was found out that only the index cases were carrying the infection. The remaining cases were the result of the transmission of the virus in 3 hospitals in Kozhikode district.

The Journal of Infectious Diseases by Infectious Diseases Society of America recently published the research report, titled 'Outbreak Investigation of Nipah Virus Disease in Kerala'. **Indian Council of Medical Research** under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare supported the study done by Dr G Arunkumar of Manipal Centre for Virus Research. 17 deaths have already been reported due to this outbreak. According to the report, the outbreaks severity rate in Kozhikode was as high as 91 per cent. WHO has categorized the severity rate of Nipah in the estimated range between 40 to 75 per cent. According to the WHO reports human transmission pattern of the virus is consistent with that of two earlier outbreaks in West Bengal – Siliguri (2001) and Nadia (2007). "Only the index case was infected in the community. All remaining cases were due to nosocomial (taking place in a hospital or acquired in a hospital) transmission in 3 different hospitals," said WHO.

[Antibiotic overuse in dentistry, ENT](#)

November 26, 2018/Deccan Chronicle

Overuse of antibiotics by specialised professionals like dentists, skin specialists and ENT specialists has been reviewed by the **Indian Council of Medical Research**, which said that its overuse was very high in these specialities and must be curtailed. The ICMR has been checking the growing antimicrobial resistance in the country by collecting cultures to identify offending micro-organisms, use of early diagnostic kits and it has also been checking whether quantifying therapy has been used in medication. This is being done from data collected from corporate hospitals, diagnostic laboratories where a peer-review of the processes at hospitals are being evaluated. In this, they have found that there is high antibiotic use in dental practice for conditions like caries, gingivitis, pulpitis and chronic inflammation. The ICMR review has observed that there are different and varied ranges of antibiotics, which are prescribed by dentists to prevent and manage infections. Similarly, ENT doctors are found to prescribe antibiotics for upper respiratory tract infections, rhino pharyngitis, tonsillitis and otitis media.

The ICMR in its guidelines has found that for upper respiratory tract infections which are a viral infection, antibiotics are not required. Yet, 75 per cent of antibiotics are prescribed for this condition every year. Despite the fact that there is little or no benefit of antibiotic use in this condition.



[Doctors blame rise in lung cancer fatalities on late diagnosis](#)

November 26, 2018/The Times of India

The incidence of lung cancer, which today accounts for a higher number of fatalities than colorectal, prostate and breast cancers, is on the rise in Bengaluru, oncologists and onco-surgeons said, citing **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** data. Speaking at an event organized in the city on Friday as part of the ongoing lung cancer awareness month, doctors pointed out how late diagnosis continues to be one of the primary reasons for the high number of fatalities associated with the disease. “ICMR data shows incidence of lung cancer is growing in Bengaluru, which stands third in the country in terms of the number of cases. Smoking is the single largest contributor to lung cancer. Passive smoking, exposure to carcinogenic toxins like asbestos and radon, radiation and air pollutants are the other causes, besides a small percentage of genetic cancer. In addition to smoking, exposure to pollutants like PM 2.5 is a high-risk factor for lung cancer,” said Dr Niti Raizada, senior consultant medical oncologist and hemato-oncologist at Vikram Hospital.

[Now, an oral test to detect HIV, NARI study to assess accuracy](#)

November 28, 2018/The Indian Express

On the lines of the home-based pregnancy test kit, scientists at the National AIDS Research Institute (NARI) are undertaking a study to assess the accuracy of an oral saliva test for HIV infection. “The HIV oral saliva self-test is an indigenous one and we are validating how good these tests are,” Dr Samiran Panda, Director of NARI, told The Indian Express. The easy-to-use and cost-effective test will help increase HIV screening rates and also enable early diagnosis, he added.

The **Indian Council of Medical Research’s** scientific committee has given the go-ahead to NARI for the project. It is like a pregnancy test kit and the confirmatory diagnosis is done later. But the important aspect of the pregnancy test kit is that the control is in the woman’s hand. Likewise, people, who still feel there is a stigma attached to being detected with HIV, will find it easier to conduct the initial self-test, Dr Panda added. “These tests are available in the US and France and what we are doing at NARI is to examine the performance of an indigenously developed oral saliva test for HIV infection. At the same time, qualitative studies will be undertaken to find out the acceptability rate among people. This study will take at least three months to complete,” he said.

Prevention of new HIV infections continues to be the mainstay of India’s national AIDS response. By the end of 2017, there were an estimated 21.40 lakh people living with HIV. The HIV incidence per 1,000 uninfected people is estimated to have declined from 0.64 in 1995 to 0.07 in 2017.

CARE-Ing For Research: UGC To Set Up A Committee To Deal With Fresh Publications



November 29, 2018/Swarajya magazine

The UGC has constituted a committee to review the current guidelines on the use of journals in PhD approvals and recommend a new system to promote quality in research. The committee will be headed by former director of Indian Institute of Science Padmanabhan Balam. The UGC Vice-Chairman Bhushan Patwardhan said that CARE would be operational within the next three months. “Members of CARE will prepare lists of quality journals in their respective disciplines within a defined timeframe. These lists will be critically analysed and curated for quality by a special cell at the entrusted institution using defined criteria,” Patwardhan said. Patwardhan added that CARE will be established in a Category-A University and will be under the leadership of the UGC Vice-Chairman. It will have representatives of around 20 statutory bodies, which will include All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), National Council for Educational Training and Research (NCERT) and **Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR)**.

With regards,

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