

**Press release on the occasion of
Signing of MoU between NIMS and CDFD
and
Inauguration of “Medical Genetics Unit” at Millennium Block, NIMS**

- The Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics (CDFD), Hyderabad is an autonomous institute of Department of Biotechnology, Govt. of India carrying our Research and Development activities in frontier areas of Biology.
- Diagnostics Division at CDFD is providing state of the art facilities for diagnosis and research of Genetic Disorders, including congenital malformations, Down’s syndrome, Thalessemia etc.
- The Nizam’s Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS), Hyderabad a University of Andhra Pradesh State Government is a centre of excellence involved in patient care, training and research activities.
- It is recognized that the activities of the Diagnostics Division at CDFD should be extended in close association with NIMS to provide holistic patient care and thus a Memorandum of Understanding is signed between NIMS and CDFD for establishment of a state of the art “Medical Genetics Unit”.
- The objective of the Unit is to provide services, training students and conducting research in the field of Medical Genetics. The services will be provided in the areas of Clinical Genetics, Cytogenetics, Molecular Genetics, Biochemical Genetics and Fetal medicine.
- The Unit will provide high end services in diagnosis and counseling for children and families with genetic disorders, in Andhra Pradesh and South India, where such disorders are more prevalent partly



because of high incidence of consanguineous marriages (marriages within relation).

- In Andhra Pradesh (with about 14,44,000 live births per year) every year 30,000 – 40,000 are born with congenital malformations ; 1444 with Down's Syndrome; 534 with Thalassemia; 250 Sickle Cell Anemia and 500 with various amino acid disorders. Thalassemia is a common blood disorder and the Thalassemia and Sickle cell Society of Hyderabad has about 1000 children enrolled for regular blood transfusion. Thus a large number of children and families with Genetic Disorders can be benefited from the services and counseling of this Unit.
- Cytogenetic services will help in diagnosis of disorders like Down syndrome which are associated with mental retardation.
- Molecular genetics services will help in diagnosis of diseases like muscular dystrophies and Thalassemia.
- Biochemical genetics services will help in diagnosis of metabolic disorders which lead to mental retardation and early death in children.
- The services in fetal medicine will be aimed at prevention of common birth defects occurring in newborns and conducting the procedures of amniocentesis and chorionic villus sampling for prenatal diagnosis of various disorders.
- It is envisaged to upgrade the Unit to the level of "Department", which will be the first of its kind in South India and only the second in the country and has plan to offer DM program in Medical Genetics
- The only other centre in India which is presently offering a DM degree in Medical Genetics is Sanjay Gandhi Postgraduate Institute of Medical Sciences at Lucknow which produces just two trained doctors in the field of "Medical Genetics".
- Research being an important component, the MoU specifically targets for at least one collaborative research project by the end of second year of its signing
- NIMS will create and fill three clinical faculty positions at different levels

- Hon'ble Union Minister of S & T and Earth Sciences, Shri Kapil Sibal in his May 2008 letter to Hon'ble Chief Minister of AP, Shri Y S Rajasekhara Reddy envisaged that the entire cost of establishment and operating the Unit including staff salaries, will be borne by Department of Biotechnology through CDFD for the first five years and is likely to be extended for another five years if things progress well
- The MoU stands out as an excellent example of co-ordination and co-operation between institutes of State and Central Government in an area of high technology for public services.

