



## PRESS RELEASE

Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)'s budgetary allowance has increased by 4-fold in the past 10 years, showcasing our commitment towards Health Research: Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Hon'ble Union Minister

*The Council has made remarkable progress in tackling health issues of national priority and has initiated inter-departmental coordination to promote meaningful and impactful research*

**New Delhi, March 2, 2024:** Today, ICMR convened the Governing Council Meeting to engage in discussions on its recent contributions, explore the initiatives spearheaded by the Council, and outline the strategic roadmap for the future of medical research. The meeting was chaired by Hon'ble Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya. He lauded ICMR's key advancements and initiatives propelling medical research and development in the country. He also emphasized that Government of India's commitment coupled with ICMR's relentless efforts, will position India on the global stage as a leader in medical research and development. The key achievements highlighted in the meeting were:

1. **4-Fold Increase in Investment:** Government of India has increased its investment in Medical Research and Development by 4-fold over the last decade.
2. **Wide-reaching Impact:** Through recently launched National Health Research Program, a novel initiative to conduct solution oriented mission mode research in 12 priority areas, ICMR has extended their coverage to over 100 districts nationwide.
3. **Interdepartmental Collaborations:** ICMR initiated interdepartmental collaboration with prominent institutions such as NITI Aayog, CDSCO, CSIR, IITs, DBT, NIPERs, ICAR, DWCD and others. This has resulted in joint initiatives, including the National One Health Mission, AYUSH-ICMR trials, AcSIR-ICMR Faculty of Medical Research, Paalna Scheme and ICMR-National Cancer Grid Clinical trials for various cancers.
4. **Nurturing the innovation ecosystem of the country:** As part of our commitment to nurturing the innovation ecosystem of our country, ICMR established centers of excellence at 7 IITs for product development and 5 ICMR-Centers for Advanced Research (CAR) dedicated to benchtop testing, pre-clinical and clinical evaluation, and validation. This initiative aims to bolster the Make in India medtech sector while promoting AI-based health solutions. Additionally, the MedTech Mitra initiative, led by ICMR under the guidance of NITI Aayog and in partnership with Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), is set to provide crucial support to innovators, facilitating the development of affordable and accessible indigenous medical devices through strategic handholding, clinical evaluation, regulatory facilitation, and product uptake guidance, with further enhancements underway.
5. **Workforce Strengthening:** In coherence with the Hon'ble Prime Minister's Mission Recruitment and Rozgar Mela initiatives, ICMR has successfully filled over 1200 vacancies in the Scientific, Technical, and Administrative Cadres within the last year.

Talking about the initiatives that ICMR would be undertaking in the future, Dr. Rajiv Bahl, Secretary, DHR & DG, ICMR particularly highlighted the “First in the World Challenge’ a unique initiative by ICMR which aims to develop biomedical products on knowledge that is first in the world. Detailing the challenge, Dr. Bahl stated ‘The challenge will fund Indian Scientists with excellent ideas to conduct high-risk and high-reward research. Ideas would be funded through an innovative selection mechanism and this will help build the confidence of Indian biomedical researchers’

Hon’ble Minister of State, Dr. Bharati Pravin Pawar, Vice-President of the Governing Council, commended ICMR's progressive efforts and emphasized the importance of collaboration with other departments to promote targeted research. She highlighted the need for AI-based health solutions to reach remote areas and called for the global relevance and competitiveness of the Indian Journal of Medical Research.

Hon’ble Union Minister, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, expressed satisfaction with the growth being witnessed by ICMR’s research advancements and urged the Council to keep adapting to changing times for India to meet global expectations in medical innovation. He praised the recently launched MedTech Mitra initiative, which aims to support the private sector with development of affordable indigenous medical devices. Hon’ble minister also stressed on leveraging our traditional knowledge by a collaboration of ICMR-DBT-AYUSH and Institutions of National Importance (INIs), emphasizing the critical importance of collaborations between government and private sector and supported the entrepreneurship policy for academic and research institutions.

In this golden era of India, where the next generation will reap rewards, Hon’ble Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya assured that Government of India is fully dedicated and committed to accelerate the research and innovation.

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**About ICMR:** *The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), New Delhi, is the apex body in India for the formulation, coordination and promotion of biomedical research. It is one of the oldest medical research bodies in the world. ICMR’s research priorities align with the National health priorities. These efforts are undertaken with a view to reduce the total burden of disease and to promote health and well-being of the population. ICMR promotes biomedical research in the country through intramural as well as extramural research. Visit us at <https://www.icmr.gov.in/>*

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