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DCGI approves India's first CRISPR COVID-19 test

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The Tata CRISPR (Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats) test, powered by CSIR-IGIB (*Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology*) FELUDA, has received regulatory approvals from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for commercial launch, as per ICMR guidelines, meeting high quality benchmarks with 96% sensitivity and 98% specificity for detecting the novel coronavirus.

This test uses an indigenously developed, cutting-edge CRISPR technology for detection of the genomic sequence of SARS-CoV-2 virus. CRISPR is a genome editing technology to diagnosing diseases.

The Tata CRISPR test is the world's first diagnostic test to deploy a specially adapted Cas9 protein to successfully detect the virus causing Covid-19.

This marks a significant achievement for the Indian scientific community, moving from R&D to a high-accuracy, scalable and reliable test in less than 100 days.

The Tata CRISPR test achieves accuracy levels oftraditional RT-PCR tests, with quicker turnaround time, less expensive equipment, and better ease of use. Moreover, CRISPR is a futuristic technology that can also be configured for detection of multiple other pathogens in the future.

The effort is the result of a fruitful collaboration between the scientific community and industry. The Tata Group has worked closely with CSIR-IGIB and ICMR to create a high-quality test that will help the nation ramp up Covid-19 testing quickly and economically, with a 'Made in India' product that is safe, reliable, affordable, and accessible.