

Unique challenges in vaccine development: Dr Rajat Goyal

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The DIA's three-day 8th Annual Conference on October 24, 2013, at the NIMHANS Convention Center, Bangalore, hosted a post-lunch session on '*Unique Challenges in Vaccine Development*', presented by Dr Rajat Goyal, Country Director, IAVI (The International AIDS Vaccine Initiative) India.

Dr Goyal said that if we are treading on traditional pathways in developing vaccines for certain diseases like cancer, TB, malaria and HIV, it is going to be a 'financial nightmare' and 'scientifically challenging'.

Talking about the significant issues that exist in the R&D of vaccines, Dr Goyal added, "The proof of concept has to be well established before we enter into humans.... The efficacy of the drug has to translate into effectivity."

He further emphasized on the importance of using technology in the development of vaccines. He expressed, "If you are using technology to study human immunology, then you will also be able to use the same technology to understand disease physiology and disease pathology."

Speaking about the government's role in the area of vaccine development, Dr Goyal added, "If we need to see the vaccines of the future, we need to encourage all stakeholders, right from discovery and development, till evaluation. The government has to help and sustain the efforts by being ready to invest at risk. Though the demand is high, the future will be bright."

Dr Goyal concluded his presentation by saying, "India recognizes the challenges in vaccine research.... If we want to raise the bar, we need to use our manufacturing expertise."