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Cabinet okays establishment of National Cancer Institute

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The union cabinet on December 26, 2013 approved the proposal for setting up of National Cancer Institute at a cost of Rs.2035 crore. NCI will be set up in the Jhajjar campus of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) New Delhi located in Badhsa village, Jhajjar, Haryana. The project is estimated to be completed in 45 months.

This is a landmark step in the arena of cancer research in the country and shall lessen the deficit of tertiary cancer care in the Northern region. Cancer is emerging as a major public health concern in India, where every year 11 lakhs new cases are diagnosed, with a mortality rate of 5.5 lakhs per year. There has been a lag of cancer treatment facilities in India, compared to WHO standard; which requires one radiotherapy machine per million population. India at present has 0.41 machines per million population. Hence, setting up of this institute will herald a new chapter in the government initiative against cancer.

NCI will operate on the lines of NCI, USA and DKFZ, Germany as a nodal center for indigenous research, promotive, preventive and curative aspects of care and human resource development. This institute is aimed to plan, conduct and coordinate research on cancers which are more specific to India; like tobacco related cancers, cancer of the uterine cervix, gall bladder cancer and liver cancers. The focus will be on understanding, analyzing the cause and genesis of the above cancers. This will further translate the knowledge gained to develop feasible strategies to improve cancer care services by improvement in detection, diagnosis, treatment and quality of life of patients.

The proposed institute will broadly have clinical division, research divisions, and disease management groups (DMGs). These DMGs will go in to the details of all issues pertaining to management of various cancers, site wise, besides other facilities. NCI will have 710 beds for different facilities viz. Surgical Oncology, Radiation Oncology, Medical Oncology, Anesthesia and palliative care, Nuclear Medicine etc. It will have a Tissue Repository which is the first of its kind in India.

HSCC (India) Ltd, a public sector enterprise under the administrative control of the Health & Family Welfare Ministry has been appointed as Project Consultant by AIIMS New Delhi. The Project Consultant is responsible for concept, detailed design & engineering, contracting, project management and medical equipment procurement, installations and commissioning.