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The R&D center was inaugurated by Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad, Honorable Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.

This initiative is a part of Baxter's global strategy of building its R&D collaborations.

A workforce comprising of 100 scientists and experts is expected to do R&D at this center, focusing on product development, analytical and pre-clinical solutions.

In his speech, Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad commented, "There are several opportunities available for producing immunomodulators for the treatment of immune-deficient diseases, cancer and other non-communicable diseases (NCDs) by the application of modern biotechnology and nanotechnology."

Talking about the country's regulatory mechanism, he said, "At the government level, we are working towards improving regulatory processes. We should have a transparent regulatory mechanism but not at the cost of new innovations. We do not want to kill innovation. We want innovations to happen in our country."

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He further stated, "I assure that the ethical and regulatory mechanism is designed in the best interest of patients and also the pharmaceutical companies, who undertake clinical trials. We are in the process of making a well-defined and transparent regulatory mechanism so that the processes become easier to follow and implement."

The Minister also stated that he is confident that all stakeholders will work together for the growth of the BT and pharmaceutical industry in the country by creating strong partnerships nationally and internationally.

Recalling India's achievements in the last few months in the area of vaccine development, he opined, "I'm extremely happy to inform you that during the last few months, we have launched several indigenous products which has been immensely beneficial to our country. The vaccine for the Japanese Encephalitis (JE) is the result of public-private partnership (PPP) between National Institute of Virology and Bharat BiotechÂ in October 2013."

Back in 2009, when theÂ H1N1 Swine flu struck the country, India had to import vaccines and testing reagents from the US.

"I'm proud of our scientists that within a year's time, India developed and produced its own vaccine for this flu and it has proven far more effective than the one imported from the US," he said.

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He also added that earlier the country had to import equipments for the detection of cervical cancer, costing anywhere between 8-10 Lakh.

"Now, because of the ministry of health and research, it only costs 8-10 thousand. Early imports could only be used inside hospitals. But the new equipments can be used in the field as well," he commented.

When asked about clinical trials in the country, Shri Azad responded saying, "I think we need to strike a balance between the ministry and industry. We often hear from the industry that more than half of clinical trials in the country have taken a back step. Most trials are being carried out outside India now. At the same time, we need to see new innovations. Having done at the ministry level and going through the observations made by the Supreme Court, NGOs and the parliament, I think we will have to accommodate all viewpoints."

Talking about the international scrutiny by foreign regulatory bodies on Indian pharma companies, Shri Azad added, "We need to be very careful. Internationally, the volume and the type of pharma companies that have entered India, and the amount of medicines and vaccines that we export causes fear in the developed markets that India might overtake their entire markets."

The inauguration was also accompanied by distinguished guests including Shri U T Khader, Minister of health and Family Welfare, Government of Karnataka; Shri S R Patil, Minister of IT, BT & ST, Government of Karnataka; Shri Keshav Desiraju, Secretary, Department of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India; Shri M Madan Gopal, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of Karnataka; and Shri Srivatsa Krishna, Secretary, Department of IT, BT & ST, Government of Karnataka.

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