

Indian science and biomedical system are maturing, says DBT chief

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"This social innovation partnership showcases how Indian science and biomedical system is maturing. We have added to our know-how and capacity in ways that will pay dividends for the development of future solutions," said Dr K VijayRaghvan, secretary, DBT while referring to the success of rotavirus vaccine project. He was speaking at the two-day international symposium on "Rotavirus Vaccines For India- The Evidence And The Promise" that began in New Delhi on May 14, 2013.

The two-day long symposium, a joint venture of DBT, Department of Health Research/Indian Council for Medical Research and Indian Academy of Paediatrics discussed the important topic including ROTAVAC - a new rotavirus vaccine; Rotavirus Disease in India; Licensed rotavirus vaccines ; global experience of rotavirus vaccines and recommendations for future efforts.

Dr Vijayraghwan highlighted the long and unique road of this vaccine development project - an innovative international model of collaboration across agencies, sectors, continents, and cultures. He said rotavirus is the most severe and lethal cause of childhood diarrhoea and kills around 100,000 Indian children each year and to combat it Indian and international researchers and the public and private sectors joined together to combat a terrible killer and develop this rotavirus vaccine from an Indian strain by an Indian company, and tested by Indian investigators in an effort led by the Indian government.

He said our job has been to do the research and development of the innovative solutions and we have had help from global scientists and friends, and the result is a world-class vaccine for India's children and for the first time, we have taken a vaccine from the earliest discovery through every stage of development. Also, this entire research effort has met strict international standards ethics and quality. And from here, the health ministry will take this forward and make the decision about licensure and introduction. He specially thanked Dr MK Bhan, former secretary of DBT for having a tireless stint in fostering the social innovation partnership and ensuring the highest standards for the vaccine.