

India and UK team up to drive scientific and cultural boundaries

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A series of joint India-UK research initiatives worth more than £80 million were announced by Indian Union Minister of Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, Dr Harsh Vardhan and UK Science Minister, Jo Johnson.

The investments were announced during the India-UK Tech Summit being held in New Delhi and attended by Indian and UK Prime Ministers Narendra Modi and Theresa May. The TECH Summit has brought together British science and technology experts and businesses to India to show the best of what the UK has to offer.

Supported by The Newton-Bhabha Fund, Research Councils UK, and Indian funding partners, the joint research will address major global challenges including healthcare, energy and food security.

Jo Johnson, UK Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation said "The joint research programmes announced today show the depth and breadth of the relationship that exists between India and UK. They will increase our collective knowledge, improve the lives of ordinary citizens and help tackle some of the major infrastructure and environmental challenges that lie ahead. Research has to be international and collaborative in its focus because the problems we face do not recognise borders."

Dr Harsh Vardhan, Minister for Science and Technology highlighted that Narendra Modi, Prime Minister, India had declared that 2016 would be the Indo-UK year. He stressed that the presence of two prime ministers in the inauguration of the Tech Summit spells out the resolve of the two countries to take their partnership to the greatest heights with science as a crucial tool to alleviate the sufferings of each and every individual.

"Possibilities of collaborations are extraordinary and they need to grow rapidly to boost quality science education and research in the new and upcoming institutions of excellence. Quality would entail scaling up opportunities of young scientists in these institutions to interact with scientists from UK through workshops and seminars, international level training in diagnosis, analysis and interpretation and exposing scientists from UK to the diversity of challenges that India offers which

can inspire basic science," Professor K VijayRaghavan, Secretary DBT pointed out at a panel discussion at the summit.

Professor Philip Nelson, Chair, RCUK Executive Group and CEO, Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) commented "International research collaborations that draw on the talents of academics across the world, are vital for us to tackle the big global challenges. Cooperation improves understanding of different cultures and ways of working. The UK's Research Councils will use the calls and projects announced today to build a prosperous, cleaner and healthier future."