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S&T Minister pitches for scaling up indigenous insulin production

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Minister flags shortage of biosimilar insulin, highlights scope for domestic manufacturing



The President-elect of the "International Diabetes Federation" (IDF) Dr Niti Pal, recently met Union Minister of Science Technology (S&T) Dr Jitendra Singh, who is also a renowned professor of medicine and diabetes.

The meeting underscored the importance of strengthening India's capabilities in insulin manufacturing, particularly in terms of biosimilar insulin and continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) devices. The discussion focused on the growing global concerns over the future availability of insulin.

The Minister noted that globally, insulin production is currently concentrated among a limited number of companies, making supply chains unsafe and affordability remains a constant challenge, especially for type 1 diabetics who are dependent on lifelong insulin therapy.

Dr Pal noted the rapid expansion of low-cost equipment from countries such as China, which offers a significant price advantage over Western products, and warned that these manufacturers are already gaining substantial market share.

Dr Jitendra Singh observed that Indian companies have the technical capacity to develop comparable equipment, including CGM, and scaling up production from them will require strong industry participation and targeted support. He pointed out that efforts are underway to develop affordable monitoring technologies in the domestic ecosystem.

Both sides discussed possibilities for deeper collaboration between Indian researchers, industry stakeholders and international partners, such as in the areas of clinical trials, technology development and financing models, etc. Dr Jitendra Singh suggested that during Dr Pal's proposed next visit to India, a stakeholder meeting is expected to be convened in July to bring together stakeholders and explore avenues for scaling up manufacturing and global reach.