

Supporting Facilities

Biostatistical and epidemiological studies were conducted at Council's National Institute of Epidemiology (NIE), Chennai and Institute for Research in Medical Statistics (IRMS), New Delhi as during the past.

The Council co-ordinates collaboration in biomedical research between India and other countries/international agencies. During 2003-04 various international meetings were organized and visits of scientists were arranged under joint projects and bilateral programmes.

Advice and assistance on intellectual property rights issues is being provided to ICMR's scientists by an IPR Cell in the Council. Besides this, training programmes/workshops are conducted by all the ICMR institutes in diverse areas for the benefit of biomedical scientists, doctors, technicians and students.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EPIDEMIOLOGY (NIE), CHENNAI

Field Epidemiology Training

At the Institute two-year field Epidemiology Training Programme (FETP) leading to Master of Applied Epidemiology (MAE) is ongoing since 2001. Four batches are currently attending the programme. Training on basic concepts of epidemiology and biostatistics was imparted to them during the first contact session of three months from January 2004. All the scholars of the 3rd cohort successfully completed the second contact session at NIE and are on field assignments. All the six scholars of the 2nd cohort completed their course requirements and submitted their bound volumes and dissertations. Two scholars from the first cohort have completed all the course requirements including viva-voce examination for the MAE-FETP course.

Outbreak Investigations

The NIE was involved in the investigation of an outbreak of cholera among inmates of a care

Centre in Thirumullaivayil, Chennai in September 2003.

Clinical Trial for Diabetes Mellitus

A multicentric flexible dose open trial is ongoing at Chennai, Cuttack, Kottayam and New Delhi to assess the effect of *Vijayasar* on patients with type 2 diabetes uncontrolled by allopathic oral hypoglycemic drugs and in those who opted for *Vijayasar* treatment.

Clinical Trial for Chronic Hepatitis C

Study is ongoing to assess the effect of combination therapies of interferon-glycyrrhizin and interferon-ribavirin on chronic hepatitis C in Indian patients.

Other objectives of the study include evaluation of side-effects / toxicity of the trial drugs, cost effectiveness of therapies and role of factors like genotype, viral load, cost factor *etc.* in deciding the outcome of therapy.

The study is continuing at nine centres-Chandigarh, New Delhi (3 centres), NOIDA, Lucknow, Kolkata, Mumbai and Hyderabad. Total duration of the trial is three years. The intake to the trial is expected to be completed in 1½ years. The follow up of all patients is ongoing.

Leprosy Vaccine Trial

The NIE is the international co-ordinating centre for the multicentric trial to assess the efficacy and effectiveness of 6 month MDT for all types of leprosy. The trial is being conducted at four centres in India and one centre in China with the objective of closely monitoring response in terms of an acceptable cumulative level of 5% relapse rate at the end of five years.

Psycho-social Challenges faced by HIV Positive Persons

Study is ongoing at NIE to understand the impact of HIV positive status, personally, emotionally and socially on the HIV infected

Supporting Facilities



Usage and Acceptability of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy

The Department of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy of MOHFW entrusted the study on usage and acceptability of Indian systems of medicine and homoeopathy to IRMS. The study covered 35 districts spread over 19 states consisting of high and low utilization areas. From 16 major states, two districts have been selected whereas one district each was covered from two states viz. Manipur and Tripura. It was observed that 33% sick persons availed ISM & H in normal ailments whereas only 14% availed it for serious ailments. The major reason for the non preference was slow progress of the treatment and non availability of the practitioners. Traditional healers were consulted mainly for bone setting, dogbite, snakebite and jaundice. Most of the households suggested opening new government dispensaries.

ICMR LIBRARY NETWORK

The facilities and infrastructure of the Council's library and information network are being modernized/ upgraded. For optimal utilization of journals subscribed by all ICMR libraries, the Council has subscribed the JCCC (J- Gate Custom Content for Consortia), an e-journal gateway-cum-database. The Union Catalogue of Journals in ICMR libraries has been compiled by the Council for the better utilization of journal resources available in ICMR libraries for the benefit of scientists. Manual of procedures for management of libraries and information centres has been prepared to streamline the procedures in ICMR library and information centres.

INDO-FOREIGN COLLABORATION

The ICMR coordinates international collaboration in biomedical research between India and other countries/international agencies. During the year 2003-04, many international meetings between scientists from India and France, Germany, USA and Russia were facilitated (with financial support). A total of 36 exchange visits of scientists to and from India

were arranged by the Council under various joint collaborative projects / programmes.

During the year, a number of meetings of Health Ministry's Screening Committee (HMSC) were organized, wherein 55 projects for international collaboration / assistance were approved by the Indian side.

Under new initiatives undertaken by the Council during the year 2003-2004 ICMR International Fellowships were established for young and senior biomedical Indian scientists as well as for scientists from developing countries. With the view of interaction and exchange of scientific information between Indians and persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) from various countries, a Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC-Overseas) was constituted.

The activities relating to the WHO biennium programme under country budget for the biennium 2002-2003 were coordinated and processed.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

A total of nine patents have been filed at the Indian Patent Office and one patent was filed at the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) during the period under report. One patent on anti-malarial drug, titled, "A new tissue schizontocidal and gametocidal drug in the treatment of malaria" is likely to be granted by the Indian Patent Office. With the assistance of WHO the IPR Unit organised an Expert Consultation on IPR & WTO Issues and discussed the proposed negotiations at Cancun (Mexico) Ministerial meeting of the WTO. The final reports of three WHO supported projects on IPR and WTO issues are being compiled.

Steps have been initiated to establish the Regulatory Authority for Medical Devices (IMDRA) in the country.

BIOMEDICAL ETHICS

Attempts are being made to develop an accreditation system for ethical review in different



medical institutions of the country. Curriculum is being developed in medical bioethics for medical schools and universities and preparation of teaching material for training programmes is ongoing. During the year under report training workshops were conducted for researchers, sponsors and policymakers in the field of biomedical ethics.

TRAINING PROGRAMMES

Various institutes of the Council continued to provide referral services in their field of speciality such as viral diseases, nutrition, occupational health, haematology, pathology, *etc.* Training programmes and workshops were also organized by them in their areas of expertise during the year under report.

