

The Inter-Ministerial Central Team visited DBT-CDFD situated in Uppal, Hyderabad, Telangana, on 1st May 2020 afternoon. The five-member team was led by Sri. Arun Baroka, Addl. Secretary, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Govt. of India. Dr Debashis Mitra, Director, DBT-CDFD briefed the team about the actions taken by the institute to combat the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Mitra informed the visitors that CDFD is conducting RT-PCR based diagnostics of nasopharyngeal samples received from different districts in Telangana. We are at present testing samples for the presence of both the E gene, which is present in all coronaviruses, and the SARS-CoV-2-specific RdRP gene based on the kit made available to us by the state. The Telangana government has generously supported our effort with a timely supply of testing kits and PPEs. CDFD has the capacity to test 150-200 individual samples per day, and is ready to undertake testing of pooled samples as well. We are also gearing up to take part in an inter-institutional collaborative effort initiated by DBT to sequence Indian isolates of SARS-CoV-2 virus. Dr M D Bashyam, Dr Ashwin Dalal, Dr Rashna Bhandari, and Dr. R. Harinarayanan are actively involved in the COVID-19 testing activities at CDFD. The inter-ministerial team members visited the COVID-19 diagnostics lab, where Dr. Mitra and our volunteers explained our testing protocols to them.

Some photos of the visit are provided below.

Visit of Inter-Ministerial Central Team to DBT-CDFD.

