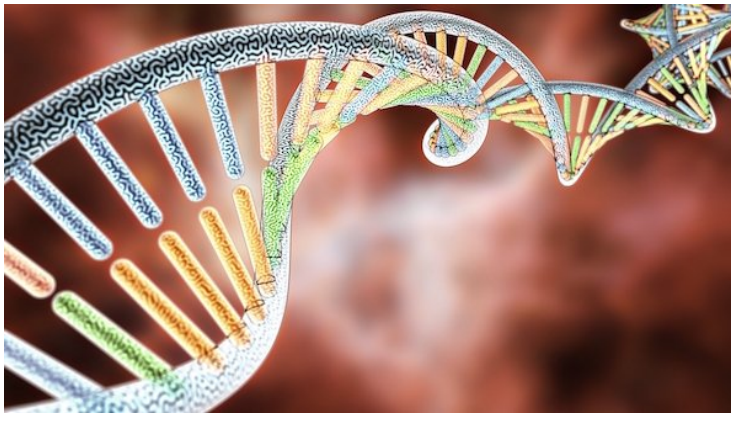
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Vice President calls for fast-tracking of genome sequencing of new COVID-19 variants

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VP urges international partnership to study developing a universal vaccine for various variants



The Vice President (VP) of India, M Venkaiah Naidu has called for fast-tracking of genome sequencing of new COVID-19 variants to speed up finding suitable vaccines and drugs.

Naidu visited CCMB's LaCONES (Laboratory for the Conservation of Endangered Species) facility soon after his arrival in Hyderabad. He witnessed a presentation by Scientist-in-charge of LaCONES, Dr. Karthikeyan Vasudevan and visited National Wildlife Genetic Resource Bank, Assisted Reproduction Lab and animal cages at the facility.

Addressing scientists and research scholars, he observed that sequencing, as an adjunctive tool, plays a critical role in identifying the emergence of new viral mutations and thus helps combat the spread of COVID-19.

He also stressed the need for strengthening international collaborations by research institutions to study the feasibility of developing a universal vaccine that could neutralize various SARS-CoV-2 variants.

Pointing out that the easy transmissibility of Coronavirus poses many challenges, he said the way in which it might infect new hosts or other species will be an important area of research.