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University of Salford, CSIR-IGIB and ORDI host glaucoma awareness and advocacy workshop

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Event highlighted the need for early genetic screening to prevent childhood blindness due to glaucoma

The University of Salford (UK), in collaboration with CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (CSIR-IGIB) and the Organization for Rare Diseases India (ORDI), hosted a national workshop titled “Towards Equitable and Early Genetic Care for Glaucoma” in New Delhi on 30th June.

Premas Life Sciences and Shroff Eye Hospital were the event partners. The event brought together leading clinicians, scientists, genetic counsellors, policy advocates, non-profit charities and media representatives to spotlight the urgent need for early genetic diagnosis in managing inherited forms of glaucoma in India.

The workshop opened with a welcome address by the Director, CSIR-IGIB, highlighting the need for such events and its alignment with IGIB’s mission. The event also featured presentations from notable experts including Prof. Arijit Mukhopadhyay (University of Salford), Prof. B.K. Thelma (University of Delhi), Shri Prasanna Shirol (ORDI) and senior ophthalmologists from across India. Dr Debjani Saha from Premas Lifesciences presented its plans to develop a genetic testing panel specifically targeted for childhood glaucoma.

Glaucoma is the leading cause of irreversible blindness globally and affects nearly 1–2% of India’s population. In inherited cases, children begin losing their vision early in life, often without any visible symptom. Early detection through genetic testing and counselling can enable timely interventions at very early stages of the disease, potentially preventing complete blindness. However, India currently lacks a structured policy or insurance support for genetic screening in eye care.

The day concluded with a roundtable on policy and advocacy, aiming to draft a national action plan for equitable, genetics-informed glaucoma care. Participants called for collaboration among government bodies, medical institutions, and civil society to make genetic screening accessible to all.