

Day 2 of Bangalore India BIO dominated by sessions on Agribiotechnology

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The second day of the 16th edition of Bangalore India BIO was dotted with thought provoking sessions with key influencers from the industry. The day was dedicated to deliberations on Agribiotechnology that explored the nuances of Food, Feed, Fuel & Fiber Security, Biofuels, and included sessions on Biotechnology in healthcare such as Regenerative Medicine, Internet of Things, and Synthetic Biology.

The keynote speech during the inaugural was made by the Guest of Honour- Smt. Matia Chowdhury, Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Peoples Republic of Bangladesh and was attended by progressive farmers who travelled to be part of the on-going discussion.

Lauding the efforts of the State Government, Smt. Matia Chowdhury iterated that "The Government of Karnataka has played a key role in the development of biotech in the state. In Bangladesh, agriculture plays an important role in minimizing hunger and removing poverty. The lands are sinking at an alarming rate due to urbanization, natural disasters and the huge and increasing population. We have to follow science and technology which will improve standards of living. The opportunities in biotech are enormous and multi-faceted. Bangladesh's growth in biotech is largely based on research and collaborations with a university. The revolution was started with Hybrid and GM varieties of crops. BT brinjal was introduced as pesticides on this crops are found to be more than 100% compared to others. Farmers are self-sufficient and don't rely on seed companies. Biotech ensures food security, health & nutrition, livelihood improvement, conservation of environment and poverty alleviation"

She concluded the keynote saying "Last part of the 20th century has seen info technology, communication technology and biotechnology. We will conserve the nature but not be conservative".

Chief Guest, Krishna Byre Gowda, Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture for State, Government of Karnataka in his speech said "In

the last few years the Government of Karnataka has tied up with consortiums and has also signed MOUs where Karnataka will fund research and development of drought and disease resistant crops. The state is also funding non-GM biotech research on Ragi, jowar, groundnut etc. He emphasized on the need for private and public collaborations for growth and development of biotechnology. Democracy should not be reason for not debating meaningfully on Biotech, rather it should facilitate the debate. ".

The dais was also graced by noted dignitaries from the government of Karnataka such as Ms. V. Manjula, IAS, Principal Secretary, Department of Information, Technology, Biotechnology and Science & Technology who spoke about what Karnataka looks forward to in the areas of research and added that the value of research comes through the application and not for the benefit of the researcher.

On the occasion Latha Krishnarao, Additional Chief Secretary and Development Commissioner commented saying-"Unless a farmer does not see the whole community accepting a new idea, he will not do it himself. If a crop fails, the farmer will be destroyed as no one takes the responsibility to safeguard the farmer in case an experiment fails. Extensive work on this has to be done by government, agencies, research institutes etc. Are we doing the research on what the farmer wants or just going ahead based on assumptions?" She emphasized that while India is self-sufficient in production of crops, storage and distribution channels have to be improved, in order to ensure equitable distribution and availability.

They inaugural dignitaries also included experts in the field of Agribiotechnology such as Dr. Paresh Verma, Managing Director, Research Shriram Bio seeds Genetics India Ltd. and Dr. K. K. Narayanan, Managing Director, Metahelix Life Sciences Ltd.

The day was power packed with 3 sessions on Agribiotechnology: 1. Agribiotechnology for Food, Feed, Fuel & Fiber Security, 2. Agribiotechnology - Panel Discussion, 3. Biofuels as a Viable / Feasible alternative in India. Between sessions, the Farmer community attending the session also interacted with government representatives. An HR workshop was also organized by The Biotech Finishing Schools, followed by a Valedictory Function.

The session on Bio-healthcare had sessions on 1. Regenerative Medicine, Synthetic Biology and the final session focusing on Internet of Things in Healthcare.

The second day of the conference saw a conglomeration of best brains in the industry in both India and abroad. The sessions focused on sharing thoughts, insights, best practices and case studies from across the world. The day ended on a rather high note building just the right kind of ambience for the final day of the conference.