



Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Australian Prime Minister Mr Malcolm Turnbull inaugurate the TERI-Deakin Nanobiotechnology Centre

TERI Deakin Nanobiotechnology Centre Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Inaugurates Centre

INDIAN Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Australian Prime Minister Mr Malcolm Turnbull inaugurated the TERI Deakin Nanobiotechnology Centre (TDNBC), a joint venture between The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and Deakin University, Australia.

With nanotechnology enabling building of unique materials, nanobiotechnology holds the promise of extending the application of these nanomaterials to agriculture and food.

The TERI Deakin Nanobiotechnology Centre (TDNBC) aims to pursue research for providing water purification devices for rural communities without electricity, treating seeds with biologicals and nanofertilisers and pesticides to reduce the chemical footprint, and converting waste into useful biologically synthesised agrochemicals.

“The cooperation in the field of education and research is the most important field of engagement between

India and Australia,” Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi said while digitally inaugurating the TERI Deakin Nanobiotechnology Centre on 10 March 2017 from the Hyderabad House, New Delhi.

He further said, “TERI-Deakin Nanobiotechnology Research Centre is a classic example of the kind of cutting edge research being done by the two countries. The \$100 million Australia-India Strategic Research Fund



Australian Training & Education Minister inaugurating the Researcher's Residential block at TDNBC; he is accompanied by Prof. Ashutosh Sharma, Secretary, Department of Science & Technology, Government of India and Prof. Jane den Hollander, VC Deakin University, Australia

is for collaborative research in areas such as nanotechnology, agriculture, food security, smart cities, etc. Our joint research has entered the phase of field trials and this outstanding science cooperation is firmly rooted in tangible outcomes, that is, to improve the lives of millions.”

Australian Prime Minister Mr Malcolm Turnbull said, “The TERI Deakin Nanobiotechnology Research Centre will bring up to 100 researchers together to solve some of the world’s biggest problems from developing biofuels to early detection of crop diseases.”

The TERI Deakin Nano Biotechnology Centre (TDNBC) has been established at the sprawling campus of the TERI University in Gwal Pahari, Gurgaon, Haryana. Conforming to the Indian government’s requirements for a green building, the TDNBC is rated as a five-star GRIHA building. Spread over five acres of land, the Centre houses high-end equipment like Nano particle analyser (XETA sizer), Laser scanning microscope (Confocal), Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM), and Transmission Electron Microscope (TEM).

On 11 March 2017, Senator Simon Birmingham, Australian Education and Training Minister, led a high-level delegation visit to the TERI Deakin

Nanobiotechnology Centre (TDNBC). He was accompanied by Prof. Ashutosh Sharma, Secretary, Department of Science & Technology, Government of India; Prof. Jane den Hollander, VC Deakin University; Dr. Ajay Mathur, Director General, TERI, and Dr. Alok Adholeya, Director, TDNBC.

While addressing the gathering, Senator Simon Birmingham said, “The TERI Deakin Nano Biotechnology Centre facility is not incredible because we are commissioning bricks and mortar, it’s incredible because of the brains, the students, the knowledge that is embedded within the facility, and the potential that they (students) are going to realise in so many different ways.”

Under the programme, each student is provided with a full tuition fee waiver from Deakin University up to an amount of approximately AU \$ 100,000 for a period of three years. During the programme, the students travel to Deakin University, Australia, for a period of six to eight months for their PhD to work closely with their Deakin supervisor.

Senator Birmingham also awarded a three-year tuition fee waiver scholarship to 11 Indian students, worth AU \$ 1.1 million.

Elaborating on the scholarship programme, Prof. Jane den Hollander, VC Deakin University said, “The

three-year scholarship programme is predominantly designed to equip the best of the talent with advanced research facilities. Under this programme, Deakin University and TERI will provide joint supervision to the students. TDNBC envisions meeting the demand for a global, skilled workforce in nanobiotechnology.”

Prof. Den Hollander further added that the Centre aims to undertake research into global issues such as food security for a growing world population, sustainable agricultural practices and environmental sustainability. It is extremely satisfying to think of the hugely positive implications coming out of this research, she said.

Prof. Ashutosh Sharma, Secretary, Department of Science & Technology, Government of India suggested that the Centre could also work on designing smartphone-based sensors for farmers.

Elaborating on the future milestones of the Centre, Dr. Ajay Mathur, Director General, TERI, said, “Within five years, the Centre aims to have a number of researchers, including PhD students, enrolled at Deakin. With its cutting edge technology at the disposal of these bright minds, this Centre will help India make a mark on the global map for building new capabilities and bringing new innovations in the field of science and technology.”

Hasan Jawaid Khan