Presidential Oration

DIAGNOSTICS FOR PARASITIC DISEASES IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD: CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS

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Diagnostics have the potential to save hundreds of thousands of lives each year by detecting disease in its early stages. Unfortunately, health care providers in developing countries lack basic diagnostic tools and therefore have to import from developed nations. Less than 5% of annual spending on research and development (R&D) is allocated to diagnostics.

Improved in vitro diagnostic products, manufactured within the country will save billions. There is an urgent need for new technologies such as, simpler instruments based on the adaptation of existing detection platforms, improved sample preservation and management and development of new detection technologies. Risk and cost-sharing collaborations between donors, industry, and the public sector will be fundamental to advancing diagnostic development in our country.

Patent is an exclusive and monopoly rightto use the patented invention. By patenting more diagnostic technologies and licensing the kits in India will reduce the unnecessary expenses on importing diagnostic kits. Currently only a few parasitic diagnostic kits are manufactured in India. In countries like India the diagnostic services in parasitic diseases has been a neglected part of health care, often lacking quantity and quality or even non-existing at all. There is a large scope for development of kits for malaria, leishmaniasis, toxoplasmosis, filariasis, cystic echinococcosis, cysticercosis ,amoebiasis, etc. Investment in the development of affordable diagnostic tools is urgently needed to further our ability to control a variety of diseases that form a major threat to humanity.