

## **DBT-CDFD starts testing COVID-19 samples from Telangana**

The Department of Biotechnology's Hyderabad-based Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics (DBT-CDFD) has started testing COVID-19 samples from Telangana State on 18th April after due approval from DBT and ICMR. It has so far tested 526 COVID – 19 nasopharyngeal swab samples.

The institute has been nominated by Office of Director, Medical Education, Govt of Telangana along with CSIR-CCMB and ESIC as a centre for pooling of samples from selected districts of Telangana with less than 2% prevalence of COVID positive cases. The districts are Janagaon, Wanaparthi, Rajanna Sircilla, Nagarkurnool, Mahabubabaad, Peddapally, Siddipet, Yadadri, Mulugu, Mancheriyal, Warangal Rural and Narayanpet.

Subsequent to an advisory issued by ICMR on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2020, notifying that it has no objection to initiation of COVID-19 testing in laboratories operating under the Department of Biotechnology, CDFD had re-organised the infrastructure to create a designated COVID-19 testing laboratory, procured testing kits and personal protective equipment, and trained the manpower. Senior scientists- Drs. Ashwin Dalal, Murali Bashyam, Rashna Bhandari and Harinarayanan are supervising and providing leadership to the task with support from the staff and students. Volunteers were trained at CSIR-CCMB and Osmania Medical College Koti, Hyderabad to conduct RNA preparation and RT-PCR analysis of samples received from different regions of Telangana.

