

QBRI team attends World Stem Cell Summit in US

A delegation from Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI) made a big impression by attending its first World Stem Cell Summit in San Diego, California, US, earlier this month.

Two scientists presented research posters and executive director Dr Abdelali Haoudi addressed a panel discussion on "Strategic Partnerships for Successful Research, Commercialisation and Economic Development - An International Perspective."

QBRI, a member of Qatar Foundation Research and Development made many new contacts for collaboration and recruitment at its exhibition booth and was the only institute from the Gulf region invited to give a panel presentation.

Dr Prasanna Kolatkar, a senior scientist with QBRI, and Dr Essam Abdelalim, a



Dr Haoudi addressing the World Stem Cell Summit in the US recently.

post-doctoral researcher, both had their posters accepted for the event, which drew more than 1,100 attendees from 40 countries. The posters discussed the molecular mechanisms behind the functions of different stem cells.

"This is the first time QBRI has presented outcomes of its research at a

major stem cell conference," said Dr Haoudi. "It demonstrates that QBRI is becoming a productive member of the international stem cell community, and really producing research with global impact."

"QBRI is taking an integrated approach to biomedical research," Dr Haoudi told an audience of about 150 in his panel discussion.

"For example, we are currently combining stem cell research and genomic medicine to address diabetes, and we are bringing together stem cell research and biomedical engineering to address cancer."

Dr Haoudi went on to describe the partnerships QBRI has formed with entities inside Qatar - including The Supreme Council of Health, Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar, Hamad Medical Corporation, Sidra

Medical and Research Centre, and Qatar Biobank - to conduct basic biomedical research, translational research, and clinical trials in Qatar.

In addition, QBRI works with international entities such as the James Baker Institute for Public Policy at Rice University to develop stem cell policy, and in order to train the next generation of biomedical researchers through the Qatar Science Leadership Programme, QBRI works with Cambridge University, Oxford University, Imperial College London and Harvard University.

"The end goal of our multidisciplinary, integrated approach is to develop personalised medicine that will improve the health of individuals by addressing their unique genetic and systemic makeup," said Dr Haoudi.

Embassy urges Indian citizens to obtain machine-readable passports

Indian citizens holding handwritten passports or passports with 20-year validity beyond November 24, 2015 should apply for the re-issue of their passports and obtain machine-readable passports (MRP) from the embassy before the deadline ends, the Indian embassy said yesterday.

The International Civ-

il Aviation Organisation (ICAO) has set a deadline of November 24, 2015 for globally phasing out all non-Machine Readable Passports. From November 25, 2015 onwards, foreign governments may deny visa or entry to any person travelling with a non-MRP passport.

All handwritten passports with pasted photos, earlier

issued by Government of India, are considered non-MRP passports. All 20-year validity passports will also fall in this category.

The Government of India started issuing MRP passports since 2001 and all new Indian passports are ICAO-compliant MRP passports, added the mission statement.

The absence of possess-

ing new MRP passports before the deadline would avoid any inconvenience in obtaining foreign visa or immigration problem.

Further details on passport services could be had on the passport website (www.passportindia.gov.in) or the National Call Centre (toll free number 1800-258-1800) may be accessed.



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