



Maharashtra forest department played a significant role in vaccine development in India: DG ICMR Balram Bhargav

16th November 2021

The Maharashtra Forest Department played a significant role in vaccine development in India, said Director General of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Balram Bhargav.

He was speaking on the occasion of the book publication named, 'Going viral: the making of Covaxin inside story'.

Bhargav said, "The journey started when ICMR accredited National Institute of Virology (NIV) lab started its research regarding vaccine development. About 20 monkeys contributed to developing the Covaxin vaccine. The research had reached the level where it can develop antibodies to the animal. To move ahead, it was necessary to take the trials on monkeys as their body structure is the same as the human body. Therefore it was decided that trials will be conducted on monkeys belonging to the Rhesus Macaque species.

During the lockdown, monkeys were returned to the deep forest as there was food scarcity. Therefore forest department officials searched thousands of square kilometres of forest and then finally found the monkeys in Nagpur. After testing on these monkeys, the vaccine was developed. So there was a significant contribution from the Maharashtra forest department in developing the vaccine."

In this book DG Bhargav elaborated the challenges in front of Indian scientists for developing medicines for Coronavirus, creating a lab network to develop the vaccine, diagnosis, treatment new technologies up to serosurvey.

Source: <https://www.puneekarnews.in/maharashtra-forest-department-played-a-significant-role-in-vaccine-development-in-india-dg-icmr-balram-bhargav/>