

One day workshop for Nicobarese tribal farmers on Foldscope Microscopy jointly organized by ICAR-NIBSM and ICAR-CIARI at Harminder Bay, A&N Island

ICAR - National Institute of Biotic Stress Management, Raipur organised a day workshop on "Role of Foldscope Microscopy in minimising the risk of zoonotic diseases, field level diagnosis of plant diseases and ensure the personal hygiene of tribal farmers" in collaboration with ICAR - Central Island Agricultural Research Institute, Port Blair. The said event was conducted at Harminder Bay, Hut bay on 20.03.2019 under the DBT sponsored Foldscope Project. The other collaborators of the workshop were Department of Biotechnology (DBT), New Delhi and Foldscope Instruments Inc. and Prakash Lab (Stanford University), Stanford, California, USA.

Smt. Kitri Hilton, First Captain, Tribal Council, Harminder Bay as Chief Guest on the occasion expressed happiness on the introduction of the novel and frugal technology among the tribal people. Further, she wished to disseminated the Foldscope technology to other remote Island farmers also. Shri Festus, Secretary, Tribal Council appreciated and requested the visiting team to provide the Foldscope to the group members during their next visit, so as to make use the technology effectively to meet out the objective.

Dr Pankaj Kaushal, Joint Director (Research), ICAR-NIBSM explained the multifaceted use of Foldscope microcopy in agriculture with special reference to biotic stress management at field level.

Dr. S.K. Zamir Ahmed, Principal Scientist and In-charge, Social Science Section, ICAR –CIARI, Port Blair dwelt in length on the usages of the Instrument which is low cost and also user friendly.

Dr. P. Mooventhan, Scientist and Principal Investigator of the DBT sponsored Foldscope project demonstrated the Foldscope and its working mechanism in the diagnosis and observation of microorganism and other samples. It was followed by the hands-on training to the tribal farmers.

Altogether 51 Nicobarese tribal farmers including 31 females participated in the workshop which was followed by field visit to the farmers field. Dr. S.K. Zamir Ahmed and Dr. R. Jaya Kumaravaradan of ICAR-CIARI, Port Blair along with Dr. P. Mooventhan, PI and Dr. Mamta Choudhary, Co-PI of ICAR-NIBSM, Raipur coordinated the conduct of the programme.

Note: Foldscope is an ultra-affordable, paper microscope weighs only 8 grams. Designed to be extremely portable, durable, and to give optical quality similar to conventional research microscopes (magnification of 140X and 2-micron resolution), Foldscope brings hands-on microscopy to new places. The magnification power is enough to enable the spotting of organisms such as *Leishmania donovani* and *Escherichia coli*, as well as malarial parasites. A Foldscope can be printed on a standard A4 sheet of paper and assembled in seven minutes. It is part of the "frugal science" movement of DBT, Gol which aims to make cheap and easy tools available for scientific use in the developing world.





