

Workshop Report

Biosafety Issues in Research and Laboratory Functions

On 29th May 2023, a one-day workshop on "Biosafety Issues in Research and Laboratory Functions" was conducted at the ICAR – National Institute of Biotic Stress Management, Raipur. The objective of the workshop was to address critical aspects of biosafety and provide the participants with a comprehensive understanding of the principles and practices required to maintain a safe working environment in research and laboratory settings. The event brought together researchers, laboratory personnel, and biosafety professionals to share knowledge, exchange experiences, and promote best practices in biosafety management.

The workshop began with an inaugural session in which Dr P. Kaushal, Chairman, Institute Biosafety Committee (IBSC) and Joint Director (Research) pointed up the significance of biosafety in research and laboratory functions and briefed about the workshop. The inaugural lecture delivered by Dr Neeti Sanan-Mishra from the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, New Delhi, focused on the different biosafety levels and their corresponding containment measures. Participants were introduced to the principles and elements of biosafety, emphasizing the importance of risk assessment, hazard identification, and the implementation of appropriate containment measures. Special Guest of the inaugural session, Dr M.C. Sharma, Former Director, ICAR – IVRI, Izatnagar, highlighted the importance of biosafety in veterinary research. Chairman of the session, Dr P.K. Ghosh, Director and VC, ICAR – NIBSM, Raipur, stressed the development of biosafety data on the new molecules used in the field and laboratory research. On this occasion, a "Biosafety Manual for safe laboratory & field practices" was released by the dignitaries.

In the technical session lectures were delivered on GAPs, GLPs and relevant First aid procedures. The resource persons emphasized the importance of selecting and wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to minimize exposure to biological agents. Good laboratory practices, including proper handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials, were also talked about. Participants learned how to identify potential hazards, assess risks associated with specific laboratory procedures, and implement control measures to minimize those risks. Case studies and practical examples illustrated the risk assessment process. A lecture on first aid in laboratory hazards focused on equipping participants with the knowledge and skills to handle laboratory accidents and incidents. Participants further learned about the importance of developing emergency response plans, conducting drills, and ensuring the availability of appropriate safety equipment.

In a valedictory session, Dr P.K. Ghosh emphasized the significance of fostering a solid biosafety culture, within research and laboratory environments, through such workshops and training programs. The coordinator of the workshop, Dr Lalit Kharbikar, highlighted the role of leadership in promoting and persisting a culture of safety and expressed gratitude towards all those involved in organizing this workshop.

The one-day workshop on biosafety provided participants with valuable insights and practical knowledge to implement effective biosafety measures in their respective laboratories. The interactive nature of the workshop facilitated active engagement and encouraged participants to share their experiences and challenges. The discussions and knowledge-sharing among participants enriched the learning experience and promoted a collective approach to biosafety practices.

Glimpses of a one-day workshop on "Biosafety Issues in Research and Laboratory Functions" conducted at the ICAR – National Institute of Biotic Stress Management, Raipur.

