

Press Release Note
'MoU SIGNING CEREMONY'
FOR
'IAEA'S RAY'S OF HOPE INITIATIVE - ANCHOR CENTRE'
BETWEEN
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
&
Tata Memorial Centre (A Grant In-Aid Institution Under Department of Atomic
Energy, Govt. Of India)

IAEA Delegation: Mr Rafael Mariano Grossi, Director General, IAEA

Date: 20th March 2025

Venue: Rustum Choksi Auditorium, Tata Memorial Centre, Mumbai, India

Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) visited Tata Memorial Centre (TMC) on Thursday, 20th March 2025 at 11:00 AM for the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) recognizing Tata Memorial Centre as an "**Anchor Centre**" for the IAEA Initiative – "**Rays of Hope.**" **H.E Mr Shambu S. Kumaran**, Ambassador of India to Republic of Austria, Montenegro, Holy See and Permanent Representative to the International Organizations in Vienna, **Dr A K Mohanty**, Secretary DAE & Chairman Atomic Energy Commission, **Dr Sudeep Gupta**, Director TMC and others welcomed DG IAEA. Dr. Umesh Mahantshetty, Director Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital & Research Centre, TMC, Visakhapatnam presented a brief history of TMC, recent developments including development of affordable comprehensive cancer care services across India (2 in Punjab, 2 in Varanasi, 1 each in Guwahati and Visakhapatnam), state-of-the art facilities at ACTREC including Proton therapy Unit, Hematolymphoid block and expansion of surgical OT's & Services, contribution of TMC towards IAEA activities since 1981.

H.E, Mr. Kumaran briefed about India's commitment towards IAEA activities including IAEA's Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT- launched in 2004). India actively collaborated for IAEA's PACT by donating radiotherapy machines like the Bhabhatron to several developing countries including Mongolia, Sri Lanka, and Madagascar. Experts from Tata Memorial Centre has been serving as global experts in the IAEA impACT missions for at least 8 countries so far.

Secretary DAE & Chairman AEC, Dr. Ajit Kumar Mohanty emphasized and highlighted the DAE support, commitment and efforts towards facilitating the use of Nuclear power for peace through several initiatives with IAEA including advanced cancer care through TMC.

Director TMC, Dr. Sudeep Gupta highlighted on the ongoing efforts of TMC for International Collaborations, contributions of TMC towards IAEA activities including Expert missions, Quality Assurance programs like QUATRO, Training / fellowship programs for Member States (Africa-10; Middle East-11; Bangladesh-10; Mauritius-10 & Others - Philippines, Mongolia etc.), Co-ordinated Research Programs (CRP's), Regional Training Courses (once annually since 1992) and developing technical documents related to radiation safety and treatments for common cancers since 1981. Through National Cancer Grid Vishwam– Cancer Care Connect (NCG-3C), launched during 63rd General Conference of IAEA 2019, to include Low and Middle Income countries (LMIC's) and Member states for wider collaboration, TMC has contributed expertise to Cancer hospitals and Institutions globally. IAEA has in the past two years funded participants for the CReDO workshop organized by the NCG - these have been on protocols related to radiation oncology, radiology and nuclear medicine from LMICs.

DG IAEA, Mr. Grossi addressed the meeting emphasizing the contribution of IAEA towards 'Cancer Care for All' through the '**Ray's of Hope**' Program. Launched in 2022 RoH is aimed at assisting LMICs with their urgent needs to introduce and improve radiation medicine capacities and to build the cancer care workforce. Through RoH initiative IAEA will identify & define **Anchor Centers** – cancer centres which have shown resilience through decades of experience working with the IAEA to support their respective region said DG IAEA. The Anchor Centres will train fellows, organize training courses for healthcare providers, participate in IAEA Coordinated Research Projects, promote networking, and provide experts and mentorship to other radiotherapy and medical imaging centres in the neighbouring LMIC's.

Through the RoH initiative, IAEA intends to support equipment, training, research/innovation, and the activities through the Regional Anchor Centres to maximize the delivery of high impact interventions to cancer patients in LMIC's.

DG IAEA acknowledged and appreciated the contribution of TMC towards IAEA activities and was happy to declare TMC as one of the important Anchor Centre for Asia Pacific and African regions. DG IAEA visited the facilities in the Hospital Campus including Homi Bhabha Block – specific Disease Management Clinics, Clinical Research Secretariat (CRS) and Institutional Ethics Committee (IEC) departments.