

# Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)

November 24, 2020

## In news

Recently, the Union Home Minister inaugurated a mobile COVID-19 RT-PCR Lab ICMR in New Delhi, jointly developed by Spice Health and the ICMR .

## About ICMR

- It is the apex body in India for the formulation, coordination and promotion of biomedical research, is one of the oldest medical research bodies in the world.
- In 1911, the Government of India set up the Indian Research Fund Association (IRFA) with the specific objective of sponsoring and coordinating medical research in the country.
- After independence, several important changes were made in the organisation and the activities of the IRFA.
- It was redesignated the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in 1949, considerably expanding the scope of functions (with Dr. C.G. Pandit as its first Director).
- First meeting of the Governing Body of the Indian Research Fund Association (IRFA) was held on November 15, 1911 (at the Plague Laboratory, Bombay, under the Chairmanship of Sir Harcourt Butler).
- The Governing Body of the Council is presided over by the Union Health Minister. It is assisted in scientific and technical matters by a Scientific Advisory Board comprising eminent experts in different biomedical disciplines.
- Funding: The ICMR is funded by the Government of India through the Department of Health Research, Ministry of

Health & Family Welfare.

- The Council promotes biomedical research in the country through intramural as well as extramural research.

### Role of ICMR in research

The Council's research priorities coincide with the National health priorities such as control and management of communicable diseases, fertility control, maternal and child health, control of nutritional disorders, developing alternative strategies for health care delivery, containment within safety limits of environmental and occupational health problems; research on major non-communicable diseases like cancer, cardiovascular diseases, blindness, diabetes and other metabolic and haematological disorders; mental health research and drug research (including traditional remedies). All these efforts are undertaken with a view to reduce the total burden of disease and to promote health and well-being of the population.