



**JOINT PRESS RELEASE
BY APBIONET AND THE STATE GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA**

APBioNet signs umbrella MoU with the State Government of Andhra Pradesh to Collaborate on Research and Training in Bioinformatics

December 27th, 2002. SINGAPORE.

At the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Singapore, the Asia Pacific Bioinformatics Network (APBioNet) established a memorandum of understanding with the State Government of Andhra Pradesh, India, to establish research and training collaborations in bioinformatics, which is a major focus of the biotechnology policy of the Vision 2020 masterplan of the Indian state.

Representing the President of APBioNet, Vice President Shoba Ranganathan signed the document on behalf of APBioNet with B.P.Acharya, the Andhra Pradesh Secretary for Industries and Commerce, witnessed by His Excellency, the Honorable Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Mr N Chandrababu Naidu, who led an official delegation to Singapore, where the APBioNet Secretariat is currently based.

"We are pleased to be working at the level of the State Government of Andhra Pradesh to provide the facilitation for greater cooperation amongst research institutions in Andhra Pradesh and APBioNet members," said Professor S Subbiah, President of APBioNet, who is currently based in California.

This MoU included potential collaborative projects such as the participation of the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) and the EMBnet node at the Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics (CDFC) in various APBioNet projects including the APBioNet-APAN BioMirrors database project, the APBioGrid, the APBioNet-Cray-Lion-KOOPrime testbed, and the APBioNet-S* Alliance collaboration on the extension of mirror S* sites of online education material on bioinformatics.

"In a forthcoming project on creating a biocomputing starter resource kit, to be funded by an international agency, APBioNet welcomes as much participation from all our members and other interested groups," said Shoba Ranganathan. "As such, we are very pleased to learn of the strong interest in Andhra Pradesh to be actively involved in such projects. This MoU will open new doors for greater cooperation and will be particularly helpful since we already know of the tremendous groundswell of interest in bioinformatics in India. For instance, a significant

percentage of our global S* Alliance bioinformatics online course participants are from India." added Dr Ranganathan, who is also the newly elected chairperson of the S* Life Science Informatics Alliance.

"I am happy that the proactive Vision 2020 policy of Andhra Pradesh, formulated after wide-ranging consultations with eminent scientists and pioneers in the biotech industry, has led to this MoU with APBioNet to help project Andhra Pradesh as the premier Biotech State of India," said the Honorable Chief Minister, N. Chandrababu Naidu. "Bioinformatics is not new to us in India, but we need to keep up with the latest progress in such a rapidly changing field. APBioNet, being the oldest and largest bioinformatics organisation in the Asia Pacific, is very well connected globally, and has many outstanding international projects which we can tap into," he added.

Said Bibhu Prasad Acharya, the Andhra Pradesh Secretary for Industries and Commerce, "We have witnessed a number of bioinformatics collaborations between organisations in Andhra Pradesh with world class institutions worldwide such as the recent one with between University of Hyderabad and the San Diego Supercomputing Centre (SDSC). This APBioNet MoU will open many new doors for our research organisations to carry out world-class research in bioinformatics."

"Since the founding of APBioNet in 1998, we have been working hard to reach out to every level of the research and education community. This MoU represents a new milestone for APBioNet. We are now moving to the level of state government and to policies which affect organisations in entire states," added the Founding Secretariat of APBioNet, Dr Tan Tin Wee. "We are therefore committed to make this tie-up with Andhra Pradesh a success."

Media Contacts

Ravi Bangar
Deputy High Commissioner
High Commission of India
Singapore
Email: ihcdhc@pacific.net.sg
Tel: +65 62382521/62382511
Fax: +65 67326909

Dr Tan Tin Wee
APBioNet secretariat
Email: sec@apbionet.org
Tel: +(65)-9664-0347