

Heartiest Congratulations !!! This is a wonderful piece of news, but also adds a lot more responsibility to the Biotechnology community as a whole. This is a best possible beginning, but when the celebrations are over, the country will also keep an eye on how well we have really been able to translate the genome sequencing to something which practically helps the farmers and the industry. I understand we are still far from that goal, but something must be in the pipeline that can be delivered in not too distant future.

It is also a great opportunity to use this enthusiasm and the very positive commitment of the Government to promote the research infrastructure development in the country, so we have the facilities in Bangladesh to undertake similar projects in future or at least continue the ongoing project within the country. The need for the development of the infrastructure and the supportive administration for Biotechnology research are issues that we had been advocating for the last couple of years. This included preparing the position paper and holding conferences etc. as you all know. The recent NIB ordinance (although does not agree with all that we had suggested) is still a result of these efforts. Now that the Government and the news media have both been drawn in and well convinced, there has never been a better opportunity for the Biotechnologist community of Bangladesh (all credit to the wonderful team work and the leadership of Jute genome project). But I also see this as an opportunity we should be able to fully use to make further advance in biotechnology research and infrastructure development within Bangladesh. When the current celebrations are over, we should perhaps look into these issue more realistically including a fresh look at the original proposals we put forward for promoting Biotechnology in Bangladesh, and whether we can use this opportunity to persuade the government to reconsider the original Biotechnology proposal. Perhaps Dr. Ahmed Azad and others who were very closely associated with these issues (and later seemed to have given up out of frustrations), would like to revisit these issues and possibilities. Once again, besides the scientific achievements all credits to the investigators and leadership of the Jute genome project for so successfully bringing in the biotechnology issue to the attention of the government and the news media. Where do we go from here?

Finally Thanks again to Zeba, Haseena apa, Mr. Mahbub Zaman, Dr. Maksudal Alam, and others for making a wonderful opportunity and for the very supportive role of the Government.

Best regards

Shah Faruque

N.B. Has the Jute genome sequence been published or submitted? Or are there reasons for not publishing? just curious.