One more institute of CSIR started whole-genome sequencing of coronavirus

One more institute of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has started whole-genome sequencing of novel coronavirus. Chandigarh-based Institute of Microbial Technology (IMTech) has taken up the task of large-scale genome sequencing of the virus. Earlier, the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology and the Institute of Genomic and Integrated Biology had started working on it.

The complete genome sequence information will enable researchers to gain insights about the origins of the virus, the different types of strains circulating in India and how it has spread across the length and breadth of the country. He said, the genomic resource obtained from this sequencing will also allow identification of new targets for diagnosis and drugs for COVID-19.

The whole-genome sequencing is a method used to determine the complete DNA sequence of a specific organism’s genome. As the Institute is known for its specialization in microbial and genomic research, CSIR-IMTech will perform sequencing of the SARS-Cov-2 RNA genome isolated from clinical samples.

So far, 9000 samples have been sequenced internationally as per Global Initiative on Sharing All Influenza Data (GISAID) - a public platform started by the WHO in 2008 for countries to share genome sequences.