

Enhanced Research Fellowships

The Department of Science and Technology has issued a notification which signals a substantial increase in the emoluments for Research Fellows and Asso-

ciates working on R&D programs funded by Central Government Departments and Agencies. The revised fellowships are shown below:

This enhancement will be effective from 1 April 2002 and will benefit project staff, research students and post-doctoral fellows across the country.

Junior Research Fellow (JRF)/Senior Research Fellow (SRF)			
		JRF 1st and 2nd year	JRF (subsequent years/SRF)
A	Graduate degree in engineering disciplines and post-graduate degree in science disciplines	Rs 8000 (existing Rs 5000)	Rs 9000 (existing Rs 5600)
B	In medical and engineering subjects MBBS/BDS/MVSc/M Pharma/ME, M Tech and BE/B Tech, BVSc, B Pharma or equivalent with 2 years experience	Rs 9500 (existing Rs 6000)	Rs 10,000 (existing Rs 6400)

Research Associates

Essential qualifications: In Science, Medical and Engineering subjects (Ph D/MD/MDS and MVSc/M Pharm/ME/M Tech with 3 years research/teaching/design and development experience)

		Existing	Revised pay
i	RA-I	8000	11,000
ii	RA-II	8800	11,500
iii	RA-III	10,500	12,000

China promotes traditional medicine

In an effort to promote traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) in the global market, the Chinese Government launched a special project on modernization and industrialization of TCM in 1999. Since then the government has invested 550 million yuan (US\$ 66 million) on modernization of TCM, says a report in *China Daily*. Another US\$ 1.2 billion, collected from society, has also been used for research in improving the quality of production and modernization of technology. In 2000, the total turnover of the TCM industry in China was \$5.86 billion, 24 times that of 1984.

The domination of the sector by state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and small- and medium-sized businesses and the industry's symbiotic link to the sources of its raw materials in the agricultural sector pose particular problems for the successful reform and modernization of the TCM sector. However, the pace of reform is likely to quicken, as Chinese TCM manufacturers focus increasingly

on the opportunities in the world market presented by entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO). Tough regulatory climates, in particular in the US, have frustrated attempts by Chinese TCM exporters to enter the more lucrative Western markets. The level of investment required to prove the safety and efficacy of their drugs remains beyond the means of most Chinese TCM companies, says Timothy Pang of World Markets Research Centre. Right now both Japan and South Korea are doing better than China in the international market.

The work of proving the efficacy and safety to TCMs has already begun but still faces credibility problems in the Western scientific world due to different standards of scientific proof in China and the West. The large number of clinical studies on herbal medicines carried out by researchers in China are greeted with skepticism abroad.

Merck & Co., Pfizer, and Johnson & Johnson are among overseas companies

showing interest in setting up joint ventures in China. Already many French companies have set up 20 joint ventures.

The government has attached great importance to TCM research. A new herbal medicine for osteoporosis has been developed; research on this medicine has cost the government US\$ 72,000. The Qihuang Medicine Science and Technology Investment Co. Ltd is investing US\$ 8.4 million on this medicine.

China will host the International Conference on the Modernization of TCM in Chengdu, the capital of the Sichuan Province in south-west China during 3-5 November 2002. Sichuan, China's largest producer of TCM herbs, boasts of more than 5,000 herbs. China hopes to make inroads into western markets by combining Chinese and Western medicine.

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