

Cornavirus pioneers lauded by Nature magazine

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Singapore: The editor of Nature Medicine has acknowledged Lindsley F Kimball Research Institute, which is located at NYBC's Laboratory of Viral Immunology, in the August 2013 edition.

The institute has particularly received recognition due to Dr Shibo Jiang and Dr Lanying Du, who are among the pioneers that led to the development of vaccine against Middle East Respiratory Syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV).

MERS-CoV is a novel coronavirus causing outbreaks of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)-like illness in the Middle East and Europe. As of August 13, 2013, the World Health Organization (WHO) had been informed of 94 confirmed cases of MERS-CoV infection, including 47 deaths. Due of its human-to-human transmissibility and high mortality rate (50 percent).

Dr Jiang said that, "Based on our previous experience in developing SARS vaccines, we identified the receptor-binding domain and major neutralizing epitope that can be used for developing an anti-MERS vaccine."

He also added, "Further development of this vaccine candidate for prevention of MERS-CoV infection and halting the spread of this deadly virus is urgently needed, and we appreciate the citation in Nature Medicine."