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## Two lines of light "Indian" to Synchrotron

*Inaugurated the new stations thanks to the New Delhi government. Possible applications in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology*  
**Luca Saviano**

October 21, 2016  

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Do not go down in history for the imagination of their names, although their use in the coming years could lead to important results in the field of new materials, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology. They are called Xpress and XRD2 and are the two new beamlines that, yesterday afternoon, were inaugurated at the research center Elettra Synchrotron Trieste, within the Area Science Park. The opening of these two experimental stations was made possible thanks to the intervention of the Indian government, through the Department of Science and Technology in New Delhi. The work has cost around € 16 million, half of which were made available just by the Asian republic. The access of Indian researchers in Elettra also was funded jointly with the Ministry of Business rsteri and International Collaboration Italian, the Maeci, as part of the Executive Program for major projects Italy-India.

The two new beamlines will have two uses distinct. The Xpress experimental station has been constructed to study the structure of materials under high-pressure conditions, using the technique of X-ray diffraction of samples

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subjected to the action of diamond presses that can exert higher pressures to 500 thousand atmospheres. In this way the researchers will be able to assess the possibility of synthesizing new superconducting materials, harder and more resistant. This beamline will also be applied in other areas, such as mineralogy and geophysics.

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The XRD2 experimental station, however, is devoted to the determination of the three-dimensional structure of proteins and biological macromolecules, with applications that range from biology to medicine and pharmaceutical biotechnology.

With these two new arrivals go up to twenty-eight of synchrotron beamlines. Worldwide there are only about seventy of these light sources, thirty in Europe. That of Basovizza is considered the latest generation and is one of the few in the world to ensure the performance of the highest level.

The construction of most of these lines of light, however, was only possible thanks to funding granted by other nations, the result of specific multi-year agreements. It is a system that has allowed over forty countries around the world to use a light source, that of Electra, that is 10 billion times more brilliant than conventional X-rays. A power which in the case of the free-electron laser is called Fermi in turn 10 billion times larger than the same storage ring Electra. "We get a thousand of collaboration proposals each year - said proudly Alfonso Franciosi, president and CEO of Elettra Synchrotron Trieste - but only the most advanced, about half can get the "light time "at our facility" .

The inauguration of the two new lines of light - which was attended by the Mayor Roberto Dipiazza, the Regional Minister for University and Research, Loredana Panariti, the head of unit for Scientific and Technological Cooperation of Maeci Fabrizio Nicoletti and Secretary of the Department of Science and technology in New Delhi Ashutosh Sharma - took place within a context of established collaboration, begun in 1998, between Electra and various Indian research groups. The two new experimental stations, in fact, will be operating with two different teams, composed Italian and Indian researchers, who will take advantage of the Mauritian Polentarutti guide for XRD2 and Andrea Lausi, for Xpress. All this will take place under the sign of an international character that has become a hallmark of the Trieste scientific landscape.

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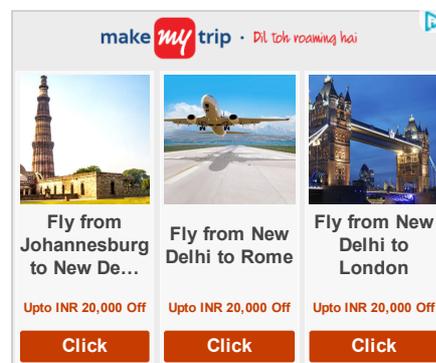
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