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## Avesthagen in pact with Affymetrix

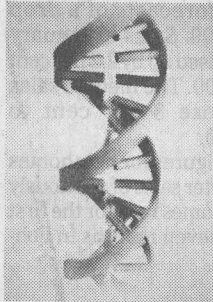
BS REPORTER  
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**A**vesthagen, a Bangalore-based systems biology company, has signed an agreement with California-based Affymetrix for microarray (studying how large number of genes interact with each other) technology to be used in the Parsi genome project or Avesta Genome Project.

As per the agreement, Avesthagen plans to use Affymetrix's microarray technology to study 60,000 Parsi individuals and explore the genetic basis of their longevity. It

(study of gene expression at the RNA level). The genotyping phase of the project, which began on October 5, 2007, consists of 10,000 samples in the first year.

All the genetic information for the Avesta Genome Project is being collected following informed consent. Data confidentiality is being maintained in accordance with the Indian Council of Medical Research guidelines. The company, by mid-2008, expects to perform expression profiling and transcript mapping experiments across a subset of the samples. The project is



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is also aimed at creating a genetic, genealogical and medical database of the Parsi-Zoroastrian population.

"Working closely with Affymetrix gives us access to latest technology and some of the prominent genetic researchers," said Viloo Morawala-Patell, founder, chairperson and MD of Avesthagen.

"We believe that the combination of the Affymetrix technology and our team of scientists will yield interesting findings to benefit people around the world," she added.

The Avesta Genome Project has been initiated on systems biology approach, which encompasses genotyping (describes the genetic constitution of an individual), expression profiling and transcriptomics

expected to be completed before 2013.

Spinco Biotech, a distributor of instrumentation and reagents for the biotech industry, will supply the Affymetrix microarray technology and provide technical support to Avesthagen.

Commenting on the agreement, Kevin King, president, Affymetrix said: "The Avesta Genome Project is a key example of a community uniting to accelerate research for the common diseases affecting one another. Affymetrix looks forward to a long-term relationship with the Avesthagen team as it develops the Parsi database and then looks to create more effective diagnostics and personalised treatments for patients."