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Happy Tidings

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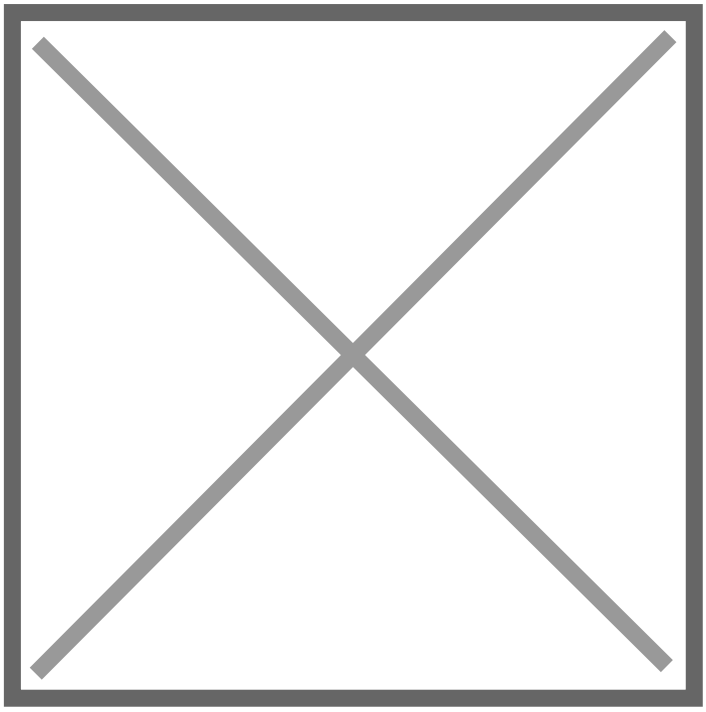
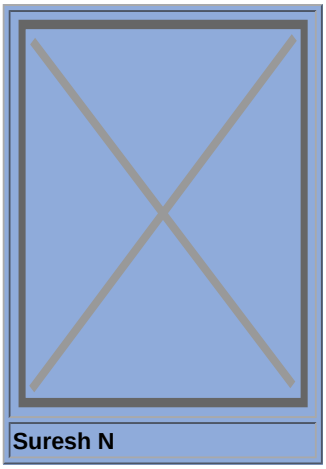




Suresh N

My inaugural edit launching BioSpectrum in March 2003 was titled, Ã¢â?¬Å?Joining The Mainstream.Ã¢â?¬? After Palaniappan Chidambaram's latest Union budget, I could confidently say that biotechnology has indeed joined the mainstream of Indian economy.

The finance minister, reflecting Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh's views, has termed biotech, along with pharma as the Ã¢â?¬Å?sunriseÃ¢â?¬? sector and offered many incentives and showered goodies to make it a more happening industry.

In fact, in the budget speech, biotechnology has been mentioned specifically more times than software or information technology. In fact, going out of the way, Chidambaram said: Ã¢â?¬Å?In biotechnology, the industry has the potential to be a global leader supplying novel technologies and products to the health and agriculture sectors. The government will provide a stable policy environment and necessary incentives to help the two industries (biotech and pharma) become world leaders.Ã¢â?¬? Could the industry have asked for more at this juncture?

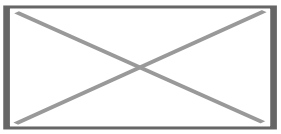
In the last issue, BioSpectrum had proposed a biotech agenda for Mr Chidambaram. And his response through the budget speech is in the following pages in the report, Ã¢â?¬Å?Chidambaram's BioBudget Thrills Industry.Ã¢â?¬?

Two years is not a very long time in the life of a fledgling magazine. But these years have gone by very fast, even as we try to keep up with the frenetic pace of allround growth in the biotechnology business. The BioSpectrum team has learnt a lot from interacting with the industry leaders and the readers. Incorporating most of these suggestions, the magazine has been redesigned to give it the look and feel of an international business publication.

This occasion of the second anniversary has also come in handy to make the industry leaders to look into the future and visualize the industry's status in 2010. Leading the list of dozen Guest Columnists in this issue is the Prime Minister himself. In this special article, he has spelt out his government's agenda for biotechnology and other technology sectors. He has clearly singled out biotechnology as one of the sectors for priority in public policy and the results of these actions are likely be felt in the next few years.

Since assuming charge in May 2004 as the Minister for Science & Technology, Kapil Sibal has focused a lot attention to put biotech on a growth path along with DBT Secretary Dr M K Bhan, who also completed an action-packed first year in office on March 1. In between coordinating setting up the country's tsunami warning network and visiting India's farthest scientific stations in the frozen continent of Antarctica, Sibal outlined his priorities for the biotechnology sector in an exclusive interview with BioSpectrum.

BioSpectrum was launched with the aim to become the most natural forum for exchange of all views and informed debate about the needs and deeds of the biotech industry for decades to come. In the last 24 months, the magazine has tried to live up to its mandate with a pro-active approach to highlighting industry issues, create a forum for lively discussions on key topics and act as the most highly sought-after source for information on Indian biotechnology. The journey has only begun. Together, I am sure, we all can create an everlasting industry to benefit millions of our citizen who desperately need the fruits of this technology.



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