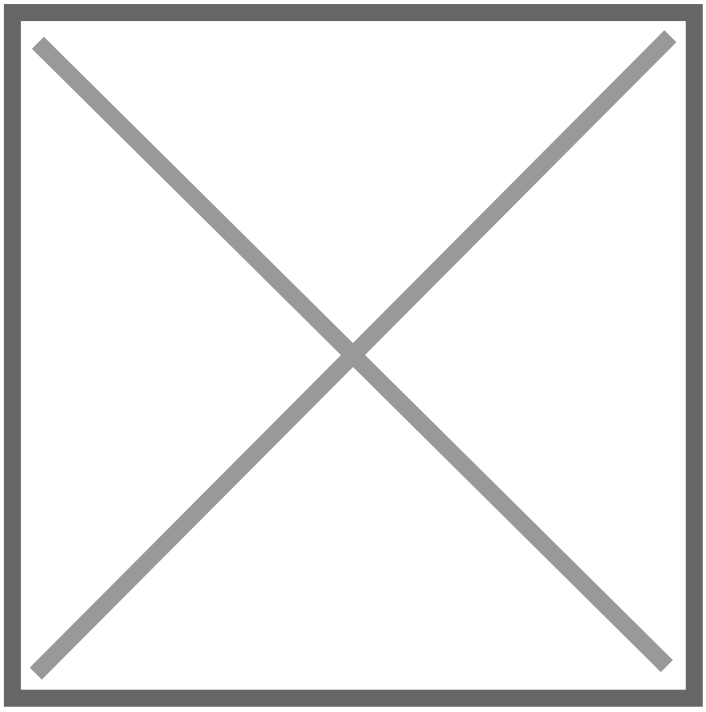
BioSpect
the business of Bi
24 years of leveraging the business of Bio
www.biospectrumindia.co

Biomedical research on track in India

09 January 2012 | News



On a strategic tour of India to improve collaborations between research institutes in India and the National Institute of Health (NIH), US, Dr Francis Collins, director, NIH, spoke about the impact NIH funding has had on research in India and how it intends to expand its presence in India. He said, Ã¢â?¬Å?Currently there are around 260 projects operating on active research grants from NIH, in India. This is an exciting time in biomedical research where we are able to make use of the deluge of research findings in the molecular basis of any disease. Speaking about the impact of induced pluripotent stem cells on biomedical research he said, Ã¢â?¬Å?In the last six years, major advances have been made in stem cell research using iPS. Over 20 disease models have been created using iPS which will aid to further research on small molecules for the treatment of diseases ranging from Parkinsons to schizophrenia.Ã¢â?¬?

Karnataka to have a nanotech park

Karnataka recently proposed to establish a state-of-the-art nano park near Bangalore International Airport. The proposed park will have a nano incubation center, science and technology-based business incubator to incubate early stage entrepreneurial ventures, infrastructure and support systems that are necessary for business incubation centers, nanotechnology industrial cluster with world class facilities, centers of excellence for nanotech professional education to develop domain expertise.

Another important step taken by the Karnataka Government is that it provided about an acre of land for setting up of a Ã¢â?¬Å?Nano LabÃ¢â?¬? by the Jawaharlal Nehru Center for Advanced Scientific Research in the neighboring premises of Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Rural Energy and Development at Jakkur. The institute is being established with funding from Government of India under the Nano Mission at an estimated cost of 1,000 million, for which the Government of Karnataka has already allocated 14 acres on Tumkur Road for this institute.

Genotypic certified by Ion Torrent

Genotypic Technology has become the first certified service provider for Ion Torrent's PGM in India. Under Ion Torrent's new service provider program, CSP certification means that the organization has been trained and tested by Ion Torrent to produce high quality sequence data. Work done at Genotypic is acknowledged and cited in over 200 publications. Their 11,000 square feet genomics facility comprising microarray, next generation sequencing and bioinformatics facilities are located in Bangalore, India.

Genotypic is an ISO 9001:2008 accredited company and its business processes run on a cloud-based enterprise resource and planning (ERP) by SAP. Genotypic is also an Agilent-certified microarray service provider, the first in India. Set up in 1998, it commenced business operations in 2000. It has over 500 clients in India and as many worldwide. The Ion Torrent platform is a fast, simple, scalable and cost-effective next generation DNA sequencing platform, which harnesses the power of semi-conductor technology for converting DNA sequence information into digital output.

Distance between people, science still wide, says Dr Bhan

Dr M K Bhan, secretary, Department of Biotechnology, Government of India, while addressing the delegates at the 5th annual

Indian MedTech summit (held from December 5-6, 2011 at New Delhi), stressed on the increased role of medical technologies to bridge the existing gap and making healthcare accessible to poor and needy.

Dr Bhan said, Ã¢â?¬Å?The model of healthcare in India currently is unsustainable. The distance between the science and people is much wider. I feel that the foundation must be right and the healthcare must be based on the basic requirements of people. Therefore, healthcare has to be made affordable and accessible with the help of technology.

The summit started with the opening remarks from Prof Balram Bhargava, executive director, India, Stanford-India Biodesign. The chief guest was Prof R C Deka, director, AIIMS, New Delhi.

Dr Francis Collins, director, National Institute of Health, US, spoke on harnessing technology for global health solutions. Among the other speakers in the inaugural session, was Dr Robert Pettigrew, director, National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering, NIH, USA.

The other sessions had the participation of Dr Paul Yock, director, Stanford Design; Dr Rajiv Doshi, executive director, US, Stanford-India Biodesign; and lot many prominent researchers and company heads.

During the 2nd day of the summit, a US-India Grand Challenge on advances in healthcare through affordable technologies was also held.

Govt, CRAMS industry to resolve issues

At a Contract Research and Manufacturing Services (CRAMS) conference, organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), New Delhi, representatives from both government and industry agreed to form a joint committee to mitigate the issues.

The one day conference offered a great platform for industry and government representatives to deliberate on bottlenecks and chalk out future strategies. The conference had three sessions on overview of CRAMS in India, contract research opportunities and regulatory and policy interventions, respectively. The conference saw the participation of representatives of various companies and prominent persons from the government and the CRAMS industry.

Govt to double pharma exports by 2014

To tackle the intense competition from various countries such as China and Brazil, the Indian government plans to put in place strategies to increase pharma exports in a major way.

According to Mr Jyotiraditya M Scindia, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Government of India, Ã¢â?¬Å?Government has already prepared strategies to double the pharma exports to $25 billion by 2013-14, including increase in the share of India's pharma exports to China.

The minister while speaking in Parliament, revealed that Indian pharmaceutical exporters are facing intense competition in international markets from China, particularly in the bulk drugs sector. He added that the competition in formulations is also increasing gradually from China and Brazilian companies in Latin American countries.

As per UN COMTRADE data, in the year 2010, the Indian exports in bulk drugs stood at ₹5,402 crore ($1034.04 million) whereas formulations, were ₹31,835 crore ($6093.22 million).

In comparison to this, China's figures were ₹31,559 crore ($6040.26 million) in bulk exports and ₹23,308 crore ($4461.17 million) in formulations. At the same time, Brazil had ₹429.86 crore ($82.27 million) worth bulk exports and ₹6,635 crore ($1270.40 million) in case of formulations.

Eppendorf center gets ISO accreditation

Eppendorf India's Pipette Calibration Center in Chennai, has received ISO 17025:2005 accreditation from the National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL). The center can now calibrate any make of piston stroke pipette and issue certificate as per the guidelines of the NABL. This certification of ISO/IEC 17025:2005 is given under the category 'mechanical (volume)' based on the methods recommended in ISO 8655. Eppendorf India's receipt of this accreditation from NABL is the first-of-its-kind in the industry for piston stroke pipette. Customers across the country can now calibrate their micro pipettes (fixed, adjustable-volume, mechanical and electronic) and dispensers at the state-of-the-art facility.

Bangalore to have a biopharma park

Ozonegroup, a leading property developer from Bangalore,Â launched 'Jeevitham', a state-of-the-art pharma and biotech industrial cluster being developed on a sprawling 330 acres in Chikaballapur, North Bangalore. The project, christened as

Ã¢â?¬Å?JeevithamÃ¢â?¬? meaning Ã¢â?¬Å?caring for lifeÃ¢â?¬?, is being developed with the patronage of Karnataka Pharmaceutical Association.

The cost of the project is estimated to be ₹2,000 crore and Ozonegroup plans to invest about ₹500 crore in the project. The companies to be housed in the park will invest the rest of the money. The park would also house allied industries like printing and packaging industry, analytical labs and R&D facilities.

Jeevitham offers pharma companies an enabling environment with world-class facilities at their door step like water, power, effluent treatment, sewage treatment, waste water recycling and reuse, solid waste management, 24X7 security services and wide tree lined roads for easy movement of container traffic in the midst of a pollen-free environment.

Jeevitham cluster is also integrated with amenities like ready-to-use 3,00,000 sq ft warehousing facilities, truck terminal, weigh bridges, business center, hotel, amphitheatre, central park, residential quarters with club house and gym, convenience shopping, bank and C&F offices. Jeevitham would be developed in two phases. Phase 1, of about 275 acres, will be ready for operations by the end of 2013. However, allotment to the industries shall begin by the third quarter of 2012.

Genaxy introduces magnetic bead purification kits

Genaxy Scientific has introduced new magnetic bead kits, 'The AxyPrep Mag', from Axygen Biosciences, a division of Axygen, US, in the India market. Axygen Magnetic beads are approximately of one micro meter in size with magnetite coating. These cores are encapsulated by non-styrene polymer surface. Also called 'The Mighty Beads' because of its size, the yield is said to automatically remain consistent.

The product utilizes a unique paramagnetic bead-based chemistry for the purification and clean-up of nucleic acids compatible with a variety of genomics downstream applications such as DNA sequencing, genotyping and gene expression. The range includes AxyPrep Mag DyeClean, AxyPrep Mag PCR Normalizer Kit, AxyPrep Mag, FragmentSelect Kits and AxyPrep Mag PCR Clean-up.

Thermo Fisher introduces centrifuge for blood banking

Thermo Fisher Scientific has introduced centrifuge for large-volume blood banking and bioprocessing. Thermo Scientific Sorvall RC 12BP plus centrifuge is a large-capacity, high-throughput floor standing centrifuge for blood banking and bioprocessing applications. With a maximum capacity of 12 L, the centrifuge can process up to 12 blood bag systems (up to 500 mL) or six 2,000 mL Thermo Scientific Nalgene bio-bottles. Run-to-run reproducibility is ensured by the accumulated centrifugal effect function, which automatically compensates for any variations in acceleration due to full or partial rotor loading.

Precise control of acceleration and deceleration rates ensures that sample integrity is retained even during delicate low-speed pelleting applications.

Monsanto awaits NBA nod for onion

Monsanto, Mumbai, applied to the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) to use two varieties of Indian onions for potential hybridization and is now awaiting clearance from the authority. Monsanto submitted an application on June 28, 2011, in formÃ¢â?¬â??I for access to two pairs of CMS lines MS 48 and MS 65, male sterile lines and fertile maintainer lines of onions (25g each), developed by the Indian Institute of Horticulture Research, ICAR, Bangalore.

Speaking on the issue in Parliament, Minister of State for Environment and Forests, Ms Jayanthi Natarajan, said, Ã¢â?¬Å?The relevance of GEAC does not arise in this case, since the applicant is not seeking permission from the National Biodiversity Authority for large-scale field trials and commercialization.Ã¢â?¬?

WHO approval for Mylan drug

Mylan Laboratories has received approval for three antiretroviral (ARV) therapies used to treat HIV/AIDS under the World Health Organization's requalification of Medicines Programme. These products include Atazanavir capsule, Ritonavir tablet and Tenofovir Disoproxil Fumarate and Lamivudine tablet, which is a co-packaged product, for a once-daily treatment for patients who have developed resistance to standard first-line ARVs or Ã¢â?¬Å?second-line-in-a-boxÃ¢â?¬?. Approximately one-third of HIV/AIDS patients in developing countries depend on a Mylan ARV product.

Stemade launches stem cell banking

Stemade Biotech, India's first player in dental stem cell banking, launched its operations in Chandigarh after its successful launch in New Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad, Chennai and Bangalore.

Founder and managing director Mr Shailesh Gadre said, Ã¢â?¬Å?The cord blood banking market, where the opportunity is

available only at birth, is currently poised at a range of ₹80,000 to ₹100,000. However, with dental stem cell, the market is positioned five times more than that. Therefore, we are quite optimistic about reaching one lakh registration by 2013Ã¢â?¬?.

Tussle over Crofelemer

Glenmark had entered into a strategic partnership with California-based Napo pharmaceuticals during July 2005. This enabled Glenmark to get exclusive license to develop and commercialize Crofelemer for India and several other markets. Recently, Napo terminated the agreement on grounds of failure to commercialize Crofelemer.

Glenmark had exclusive rights to develop, register and commercialize Crofelemer in over 140 countries, including Japan and China. Glenmark in a statement issued on December 13 said Napo had no right to terminate the collaboration agreement and that it was seeking a declaration from an arbitration panel that Napo's claims were unfounded.

Transgene to sell tech for $5 mn

Transgene Biotek sold the technology for recombinant human erythropoietin (rh-EPO) to TSS EXPORT GmbH FZE, one of the group companies of the TSS Group for ₹26.12 crore ($5 million). The technology transfer and sale is expected to be completed during a period of approximately five to six months.

Speaking about the transaction, Dr K K Rao, MD, Transgene Biotek said, Ã¢â?¬Å?This transaction fulfills the pledge we made earlier this year to focus on revenue generation whilst monetizing the sale of underutilized bio-generic drug assets.Ã¢â?¬?

Bt brinjal heads to Bangladesh

It is likely that the variety of Bt brinjal developed in India by Mahyco along with research institutes like UAS, Dharwad and Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Combatore, will be released in neighbouring countries, such as Bangladesh and Phillipines, before India. Dr Usha Barwale Zehr, chief technology officer, Mahyco, hinted at this recently.

Mahyco's technology has been licensed to these countries and is currently in advanced stages of field trials. In February 2010 , the then environment minister, Mr Jairam Ramesh, announced that after deliberations with the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) a moratorium be imposed on the release of Bt brinjal in India.