

Promising Enterprises

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BioSpectrum *puts together a set of companies that have established their presence in the last one year or so. These companies have just started operations and are expected to make significant contributions to the biotech sector in the coming years.*

Actis Biologics

Sanjeev Saxena, CEO

California-based Actis Biologics Inc.'s Indian arm, Actis Biologics Pvt Ltd, a joint venture with entrepreneurs in India, is focused on target discovery of new molecules through collaborations and/or internal research or to in-license promising targets, then add value to the targets by accelerating the progression through the biopharmaceutical product life cycle while reducing costs by a significant margin. The Indian arm will be its hub for clinical research and development activities. Actis Biologics Pvt Ltd has incorporated under it ventures like Kohinoor Biotech to focus on a Ribozyme tech platform; Aum Life Sciences to focus on development of various Recombinant proteins and MABs; Mercury Biotech for development of genetherapy-based products; and Deep Biotech for the development of various immunotherapies using a novel Cytokine. Actis Biologics Inc., which was founded by Sanjay Saxena, an NRI, and Dave Toman, a molecular biologist and former scientist of Aventis as well as MD Anderson, has over 40 patents to its name.

(AMRI)

Dr Prasad S Raje, MD

Albany Molecular Research Inc. (AMRI) is a chemistry-based drug discovery, development and manufacturing company,

focusing on small molecule prescription drugs. AMRI recently announced the signing of a definitive agreement to acquire from the Runwal Group the assets of Ariane Orgachem Pvt Ltd in Aurangabad and Ferico Laboratories Ltd in Navi Mumbai. AMRI also obtained additional land in Aurangabad and plans to invest approximately \$15 million to expand and upgrade its manufacturing capabilities over the next three years. AMRI's research center, Albany Molecular Research Hyderabad Research Centre Pvt Ltd. (AMRHRC), is located in Hyderabad and provides custom synthesis of scaffolds and building blocks, besides preparation of reference standards. A second laboratory for preparing larger amounts of pharmaceutical intermediates, starting materials and other compounds is also operational.

EI DuPont India

Balvinder Singh Kalsi, President and CEO

DuPont will locate its first plant biotech research center outside the US at the DuPont Knowledge Center, in Hyderabad, India. Twenty DuPont crop genetics scientists have already begun working out of leased facilities near the site where the new Rs 100 crore DuPont Knowledge Center is to be built. By year-end, DuPont expects the number of crop genetics scientists on site to grow to nearly 100 as part of its \$100 million reinvestment plan to increase its speed-to-market for new seed products. The plan includes adding more than 400 positions, mainly in research and development, at Pioneer.

The new DuPont R&D center, the DuPont Knowledge Center, will be set up on 15 acres of land in the ICICI Knowledge Park in Hyderabad and is expected to accommodate more than 300 scientists and other employees. The Center is expected to be built and operational in less than 15 months.

Aptuit Laurus

Dr Satyanarayana Chaba, CEO

Aptuit Inc. and Laurus Labs Ltd announced the formation of a new contract drug development company, Aptuit Laurus, in June this year. The JV will combine Aptuit's global offerings in drug development with Laurus' R&D and manufacturing expertise and newly built state-of-the-art facilities. The combined company will provide integrated services, technologies and manufacturing capabilities that span the entire drug development continuum.

The new entity, Aptuit Laurus Private Limited, is based in Hyderabad with additional facilities in Visakhapatnam and Bangalore. Aptuit Laurus will initially provide services in early-stage drug discovery, medicinal chemistry, lead optimization, process development, scale-up and process optimization, safety and hazard assessment, formulation development and analytical chemistry.

Aptuit has committed to invest approximately \$100 million over the next four years to build upon Aptuit Laurus' development, manufacturing and informatics capabilities.

BioCin

Sanaa Ansari, CEO

BioCin is a new Hyderabad-based company engaged in the manufacture of a range of high quality PCR reagents and tools for molecular biology research. BioCin's products are claimed to offer high throughput, speed, better sensitivity and yield offering a complete solution to PCR optimization. The company plans to develop a range of recombinant bio-pharmaceuticals through proprietary rDNA technology that will make a revolutionary impact in the area of human healthcare by enabling production of safe, pure and effective rDNA expression products.

Evotec-RSIL

Irfan Bandukwalla, Director

Evotec-RSIL Ltd is a joint venture between Evotec AG and Research Support International Ltd (RSIL), a subsidiary of DIL Ltd for the design, synthesis and management of compound libraries. The joint venture combines Evotec's expertise in library design, synthesis, analysis, purification and project management with RSIL's science expertise. Evotec-RSIL Ltd has its facilities located in Thane. It has core expertise in high throughput synthesis of lead finding libraries, parallel synthesis of focused libraries, profiling of virtual libraries using proprietary software to select compounds for synthesis, in silico ADMET tools for compound selection and high throughput analysis of customer libraries.

"Both RSIL and Evotec have an excellent and well established understanding and track record of providing services to the global pharmaceutical industry. Through our complimentary skills our customers will derive added values," said RSIL director, Irfan Bandukwalla.

Frontier Tissueline

Dr KM Cherian

Frontier Tissueline is the bioscience unit of Frontier Lifeline Hospitals, Chennai, which was set up at TICEL Bio Park, Taramani, Chennai in July 2006. This unit undertakes advanced research in tissue engineering and biological cardiovascular implants. It also focuses on research and applications in stem cell, the making of viable scaffolds of autografts and umbilical cord blood storage. It also has capabilities in bioinformatics and computational biology. Frontier Tissueline has rare

capabilities for the assessment of cardiac arrhythmias and electrophysiological studies and clinical application of stem cells for failing hearts in infants and adults. The research is funded by the Department of Science and Technology and Department of Biotechnology which suggested the entire idea of tissue engineering.

Green Signal Bio Pharma

P Sundarapariipooran, director

GSBPL is the vaccines manufacturing arm of Chennai-based Green Signal. Established in 2005, GSBPL, besides manufacturing, has also set up a R&D laboratory at TICEL Park, Chennai for carrying out clinical trials and pilot projects in seed development, vaccine manufacturing etc. The company plans manufacturing all kinds of vaccines, namely, Tetanus Toxoid, BCG, measles, DPT, and rabies. It also offers consultation on the growth and purification of proteins, lipids and carbohydrates; and on the drug susceptibility testing on bacteria and virus used for vaccine manufacture. The Wistar Institute licensed rubella seed stock developed at Wistar to two companies for commercialization and distribution of rubella vaccine in developing countries and Green Signal Bio Pharma Ltd is one them which will develop the vaccine for India.

Huclin Research Ltd

Dr Mahalingam Vasudevan, Executive Director

Huclin Research Ltd (HRL) is a newly formed independent contract research organization (CRO) located in TICEL Biopark, Chennai. HRL provides a full array of clinical and analytical research services. Huclin has invested over Rs 7 crore for the bio-analytical and clinical beds at Tichel Bio-Park, the infrastructure facility for biotechnology R&D companies. Huclin also has plans to invest Rs 15 crore to develop trial centers across the country.

The company has facilities to conduct clinical trial services, including design and conduct of Phase I to IV studies, protocol design and development, optimizing clinical trial design and patient population, designing case record form and development of patient information leaflets and quality of life forms, the release said. It will also provide project management services such as pharmacovigilance, safety reporting, post-marketing surveillance, site management activities, and statistical analysis.

i3 Research

i3 Research is a full-service CRO focused on oncology, central nervous system, and respiratory and infectious diseases. i3 Research provides specialized CRO services in all phases of research, all over the world, and has recently entered India. In India, i3 provides clinical research and data services offerings for India-specific and global trials. In addition to project management, monitoring, regulatory and quality assurance services, its data services offerings include data entry and programming, data management, biostatistics and statistical programming.

INC GVK BIO

Hyderabad-based INC GVK BIO is a joint venture between North Carolina based INC Research), a therapeutically focused contract research organization with a trusted process for delivering reliable results and operating in 23 locations worldwide and GVK Biosciences (GVK BIO), a premier contract research organization, providing an integrated platform of research services across the pharma R&D value chain. The joint venture gives INC Research the capability to run full service, Phase I-IV clinical trials in India for its pharma and biotech customers, utilizing clinical research resources at GVK that are fully dedicated to INC GVK Bio India projects. The joint venture provided an opportunity for GVK BIO to gain access to INC Research's global reach while leveraging on its India-based clinical research capabilities.

Operon Bio-Tech

Ilanahai S, MD

Operon Bio-Tech Pvt Ltd, a group company of Cetex Petrochemicals Ltd, is focused on biotech R&D and manufacturing. Cetex is the largest manufacturer of Methyl Ethyl Ketone (MEK) and Secondary Butyl Alcohol (SBA) in India. The company proposes to grow significantly into specialty and fine chemicals with strategic tie-ups with leading players. It's embarking on newer areas of research providing testing service to biotech, biopharmaceutical, food and other agricultural products. Its R&D division has very eminent scientist and expertise to discover and develop new innovative technology.

Its diagnostic division has the capabilities to developed new molecular based diagnostic kits and reagents for human and veterinary diseases. It also planning for PCR and ELISA based diagnostics.

LAXAI AVANTI Life Sciences

Vamsi Maddipatla, CEO

Integrated R&D outsourcing platform is a unique offering from LAXAI to enable BioPharma companies to establish, realize and scale their R&D efforts in India with close to zero capital investment. The company was incorporated in 2006. LAXAI AVANTI Life Sciences Pvt, Ltd. in India provides integrated drug R&D outsourcing platform with capabilities ranging from discovery to regulatory submissions backed by data management. LAXAI AVANTI Life Sciences is promoted by the LAXAI and the AVANTI group, one of India's reputed publicly listed corporations. Its presence in USA, Europe and India has helped to enhance the productivity and efficiency of BioPharma R&D programs globally to unprecedented levels of cost-

effectiveness and quality by bringing together global expertise with the talent and the India advantage. The company is currently servicing its customers from its labs in ICICI Knowledge Park at Genome Valley. The data management and biostatistics centers are in Ameerpet and Somajiguda which is about a 100 seater center. It also has a training program in place to create talent required to service our customers.

Premium Phytoceuticals

Dr G Prakash, Director

Premium Phytoceuticals Private Ltd is a contract research and manufacturing organization specializing in the field of natural products. Promoted by Dr G Prakash with over three decades of academic and industrial experience in R&D and manufacturing aspects in the broad field of phytoceuticals comprising of the high value APIs in the field of anticancers, antimalarials, dietary supplements includes standardized extracts , nutraceuticals, food ingredients , food colorants, spice oleoresins, essential oils and flavor ingredients. The company also undertakes preparation of reference standards, working standards, markers, process development and analytical method development. Premium Phytoceuticals is also involved in contract manufacturing services, regulatory support, marketing support and knowledge process outsourcing.

Rheoscience â€™ India

Dr. Swaminathan Subramaniam, Head, India Operations and Director, Business Development

Rheoscience develops innovative therapeutics for diabetes, obesity and other serious metabolic disorders. Built around a selected group of leading metabolic diseases researchers from Novo Nordisk, the University of Copenhagen and the Center for Clinical and Basic Research (CCBR), Rheoscience is targeting areas of significant unmet medical needs. Rheoscience's lead product is the oral anti-diabetic drug Balaglitazone, which is in Phase III clinical trials for the treatment of type 2 diabetes, a disease that affects approximately 6 percent of the global adult population aged 20-79 years. Balaglitazone is being co-developed with Dr Reddy's Laboratories in India.

"Our Indian presence will not only enable us to tap into Indian strengths in innovation, but will also allow us to use the capabilities of Indian contract research organizations for conducting effective R&D programs on behalf of biopharmaceutical companies that wish to take advantage of these resources but do not have the reach to do so effectively," said Dr Philip Just Larsen, CEO.