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"In last 5 years, Telangana has received more than Rs 25,000 Cr investment in Life Sciences"

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Hyderabad is making rapid strides in indigenous medical innovations with the government offering complementary support to these innovators and companies as they scale. Shakthi Nagappan, Director of Life Sciences, Government of Telangana, and Chief Executive Officer of BioAsia 2023 talks to BioSpectrum about how Telangana is consolidating its position as the Life Sciences hub of Asia



How is the life sciences sector growing in Telangana, particularly in terms of indigenous medtech innovations?

The life sciences sector in Telangana has been witnessing consistent growth and the state has been consolidating its position as the "Life Sciences hub of Asia". In the last 5 years, the state of Telangana has received more than Rs 25,000 crore in investment with the proposed employment of more than 130,000 people in life sciences.

The government of Telangana launched Medical Devices Park in 2017, which has now become the country’s largest medtech R&D, innovation, and manufacturing cluster and continues to be the destination of choice for leading medtech companies. It is now home to Asia's largest stent manufacturing facility with a capacity of a million stents and 1.25 million balloon catheters. Moreover, 50 companies are setting up their R&D and manufacturing facilities in the park with an overall investment commitment of around Rs 1,500 crore and total direct employment of around 7,000. In addition, marquee companies like Medtronic, B-Braun, etc. have also invested in the sector.

We have taken a holistic approach to promote the medtech sector - innovation, scale-up, and manufacturing. We now have a network of more than 20 innovation and incubation centres in Hyderabad focused on medtech and life sciences. In addition, the government has also established the country’s largest prototyping centre called T-Works to support design and development activities and medtech remains one of the key areas of focus within T-Works.

In addition, Hyderabad has numerous companies with expertise in plastics, precision engineering, electronics, etc., all of which are vital for medical device innovators and manufacturers.

What are the major highlights of the upcoming BioAsia 2023 event which is taking place in Hyderabad?

BioAsia is in its 20th year now and has gained significant stature and prestige over the years, establishing itself as Asia's largest life sciences conference. The event has immensely benefitted from its participant history including the likes of several Nobel Prize winners, Lasker Awardees, Pulitzer Prize Winners, eminent global leaders like Bill Gates (Chair, Gates Foundation), Satya Nadella (CEO, Microsoft), Alex Gorsky (Executive Chairman, J&J), Dr Vas Narasimhan (CEO, Novartis), among others. It attracts more than 2000 global leaders from more than 50 countries every year.

Befitting the success of the event over the years, the 20th event is being planned on a grand scale with the theme of “Advancing for ONE: Shaping the next generation of humanised healthcare” and will be held between February 24 to 26, 2023 in Hyderabad.

The event will feature insightful sessions and discussions on disruptive technologies in healthcare, the accessibility and affordability of healthcare for all, supply chain constraints with the current geopolitical uncertainties, R&D, and Technology, among others. Over the course of the three days, prominent industry leaders, distinguished scientists, researchers, and entrepreneurs will come together to discuss humanizing healthcare and will hold constructive discussions on how cross-sectional ecosystems can be integrated, how disruptive technologies can be best utilized, and how we can drive quality healthcare with accessibility and affordability at the forefront in the near future.

What is in store for the startup sector at BioAsia 2023?

Over the years, BioAsia has had startups as an integral part of the event and a dedicated platform called “Startup Stage” was also introduced in its 17th edition. This provides a unique opportunity to the most promising startups across India to interact with industry leaders, academia and investors worldwide. About 100 shortlisted startups will be showcased at the event and the top startups will also get podium time at the event.

Are you planning to make any major announcements at the event, especially in terms of new launches or investments?

In its journey of 20 years, the conference has hosted over 20,000 B2B, B2R, and R2R meetings. These meetings have led to strategic business deals, making Telangana the life sciences capital of the world. During this journey, 250+ Lols, Bilateral Cooperation agreements, and MoUs were signed and 30+ knowledge papers and policy recommendations were also implemented. We are confident that BioAsia will continue to be the platform for a variety of key partnerships and investments in this edition.

This year, the Government of Telangana State has partnered with the Department of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) with the objective to promote the MSME Sector. This annual flagship event will bring key awareness to MSME organisations across the state and will showcase India as a global life science destination. A dedicated MSME Pavilion will be installed at the tradeshow with 60 companies from the MSME Sector covering medical devices, pharmaceuticals, and allied industries.