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"We are seeing excellent growth in India, China"

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-Dr Poonam Taneja, director, Global LCM Sales, and Asia and Latin America Distributor Sales, MDS Analytical Technologies

US-based MDS Analytical Technologies is a leading global supplier of life sciences tools that comprises two main channel brands, MDS Sciex and Molecular Devices. MDS Sciex offers proven market leadership in mass spectrometry and Molecular Devices sets the standard for high-performance bioanalytical measurement systems.

The company has recently entered into an agreement to sell MDS Analytical Technologies to Danaher Corporation. Dr Poonam Taneja shares with BioSpectrum the company's progress in the last one year and plans for 2010, and beyond.

How do you rate your business performance in the fiscal year 2009, especially given the difficult economic environment?

We have had high double digit growth in revenue last year with Molecular Devices products in India. Spinco Biotech is the exclusive distributor for all Molecular Devices products for India. Spinco Biotech for the second year in succession has proved to be a valuable channel partner particularly for our multimode microplate readers, electrophysiology systems, and drug discovery systems. A major part of this growth came from CROs and Indian pharma companies for our drug screening technology platforms.

How does Molecular Devices plan to sustain and exceed such enviable growth rates?

As pharma companies in India continue to invest in novel drug discovery programs, we expect to see a growing need for highend drug discovery technologies. We believe researchers in India will adopt high content cellular imaging systems given the research progressing in these areas and our successes in rest of the world. This technology provides scientists with information on how potential therapeutics effect cells and cellular processes. Moreover, as government funding expands, we expect the revenue from microplate readers and washers to bring in additional level of growth.

What changes can we expect for Molecular Devices once the acquisition by Danaher Corporation is completed?

As you are aware, Danaher Corporation has agreed to purchase Molecular Devices from MDS. Danaher, based in Washington, US, is a successful, publiclytraded company with more than 50,000 employees, over \$12 billion (about Rs

56,000 crore) revenue in 2008, and comprises of four market segments: medical technologies, professional instrumentation, industrial technologies, and tools and components. Danaher sees this acquisition as a logical extension of its long-term strategy to expand its presence in the life sciences instrumentation markets. They are excited about the Molecular Devices technologies, the people and the opportunity to build an even stronger and more successful business.

Danaher has a reputation for acquiring solid companies in attractive markets, with strong brands and bright futures, and they have made over 50 successful acquisitions since 2002. It is their intention to further the capabilities of the Molecular Devices instruments by fostering the innovation of new products.

What new products will Molecular Devices be launching in 2010?

Molecular Devices will continue to offer innovative solutions for life sciences research and drug discovery. We have had several new product enhancements throughout the previous year. Recently, we expanded our SpectraMax Microplate Reader platform with the launch of the faster throughput SpectraMax L Luminometer and the new upgradeable SpectraMax M3 and M4 multimode readers.

Which technologies will be most exciting for the research market in India?

All of our leading technologies such as microplate multi-mode readers and washers, high-end technologies including Flipr Tetra for drug discovery screening, the high content live cell screening systems for cell-based assays and automated electrophysiology systems for ion channel screening, are directly relevant to the rapidly expanding biotechnology, research, and clinical markets in India.

Describe your progress in the drug discovery market in India?

We have several drug discovery systems installed in various pharma companies throughout India, and have additional forthcoming purchase orders from government laboratories, biotechnology and pharma companies. Our distributor partner, Spinco Biotech, has been successful in selling and supporting our drug discovery systems such as FlexStation, Flipr Tetra, Threshold and Multi-mode Micro Plate readers.

What fuels the market for drug discovery products in India?

Most of the growth for drug discovery products in India is from CROs and pharma/ biotech industries from their domestic and international projects for the drug discovery program. Investors worldwide are recognizing the need for investing in this growing economy.

Which countries in Asia are providing better growth rate for Molecular Devices?

We are seeing an excellent growth throughout Asia, especially in India and China. We have instrument demonstration facilities in India, China, Singapore and Australia, and provide hands-on applications workshops and seminars throughout Asia Pacific for all of our products. We have established a regional team of Molecular Devices technical and service specialists to ensure that we are providing complete support to our customers. We see India as a high growth market. We view the entire Asia Pacific as the growth market.

We have established a regional dedicated team of Molecular Devices technical and service specialists to work with our distributor partners and support the customers in India. We regularly conduct technical hands-on workshops, user meetings and research seminars throughout this region. Our ongoing collaborations with customers in India have further facilitated our understanding of their research applications and needs.

For this year, what is the company's strategy for growth?

Molecular Devices will continue the company to grow, both organically through development of innovative products and, acquisition and licensing of novel technologies.

Jahanara Parveen in Bangalore