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• There is a lack of integration between chemistry and application within the pharma API segment •

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Soujanya Life Sciences, part of Navi Mumbai-based Soujanya Group, is building a future-ready platform at the intersection of chemistry, biology, and advanced manufacturing. With over four decades of expertise in complex chemical processes, the company is expanding into high-value pharmaceutical intermediates, specialty excipients, and CDMO partnerships for global pharma innovators. The group is also investing in next-generation areas such as probiotic fermentation, intelligent enzyme design, and advanced lipid & ester technologies that power modern drug delivery systems and nutraceutical innovation. During an exclusive conversation with BioSpectrum, Jashan Bhumkar, Director, Soujanya Group spoke about the company's future plans, and his insights on strengthening India's role in the evolving pharmaceutical ecosystem.



2025–26 has been a significant year for Soujanya, can you walk us through the most impactful innovations and platform developments?

2025–26 has really been a transformative year for us, in terms of building depth and expanding capability. We've taken Soujanya from being known purely as a colour and dispersion company to now standing on three clear pillars: Colour, Care, and Cure.

On the Life Sciences side specifically, three things stand out:

- High-purity excipients platform: We've started manufacturing USP/NF-grade materials like CCTG, Maleic Acid, and other specialty materials with a strong focus on consistency, documentation, and global compliance.
- CDMO readiness: We've built a lab and pilot setup that can actually take molecules from concept to commercial scale, this includes complex intermediates, niche chemistries and process optimisation work.
- Biology integration: We've initiated our journey into probiotics and postbiotic systems, especially focusing on stability, delivery formats, and real-world applicability.

What excites me most is that all of this is not siloed. We're combining physics, chemistry and biology, that is, dispersion science, organic chemistry, and now biology, which opens up a very different kind of problem-solving capability.

You mentioned building capabilities in high-purity excipients and future-ready APIs—what gaps in the pharma ecosystem are you aiming to address?

There are a few very clear gaps we see:

- Consistency and reliability in excipients- A lot of materials are labelled as pharmacopeia grade, but batch-to-batch performance varies. Another problem is posed by impurities for formulators. Our control on impurities is specific, intentional and granular.
- Speed and flexibility in development- Large CDMOs are strong at scale, but not always agile when it comes to early-stage or mid-scale requirements.
- Lack of integration between chemistry and application- Many suppliers stop at "here's the molecule." We're trying to go one step ahead: how does it behave in a formulation? How does it improve stability, bioavailability, or shelf life?

So our approach is simple: Be technically strong, at the same time also application-aware.

How is your CDMO platform differentiated when it comes to complex chemistry, green processes, and enzymatic transformations?

We're building our CDMO platform with a slightly different mindset.

- On complex chemistry, we're comfortable working with multi-step intermediates, purification challenges, and tight impurity

profiles, building on the discipline that already exists in our colour and specialty chemicals background.

- On green chemistry, we're actively exploring process intensification, temperature reduction, solvent reduction, and alternate reaction pathways, not just because it's sustainable, but because it often improves economics as well.
- On enzymatic transformations, we're early, but intentional. We see this as a long-term differentiator, especially for chiral selective reactions where traditional chemistry struggles.

The key difference is, we're not retrofitting green chemistry into old systems. We're building with it in mind from day one.

How do you see the convergence of chemistry and biology shaping the future of drug development and nutraceuticals in India?

I think this is where the next big shift will happen. Chemistry gave us scale and structure. Biology brings precision and adaptability.

In India, we've been traditionally strong in chemistry: APIs, generics, intermediates. But the next wave will come from:

- Microbiome-based solutions
- Biologically active formulations
- Hybrid systems combining chemical stability with biological function

For example, even something as simple as a probiotic, its real challenge is not the strain, but stability, delivery, and survival. That's where chemistry comes back into play. So, the future is not chemistry or biology. It's chemistry enabling biology to work in the real world.

How central is green chemistry and sustainability to your R&D and manufacturing approach?

For us, sustainability is not a checkbox, it's becoming a design principle. We're building new facilities, new processes, and new product lines right now. That gives us the advantage of not being locked into legacy systems.

So we're asking questions early:

- Can this process run with less solvent?
- Can we reduce energy intensity?
- Can we design a safer, cleaner route from the beginning?

That said, we're also practical. Sustainability has to make technical and economic sense, only then it scales.

What steps are you taking to transition toward more environmentally responsible and scalable solutions?

A few concrete steps:

- Water-based and low-VOC systems across our coatings and colour platforms
- Process optimisation to reduce waste and improve yields- full alignment with SDGs in terms of water and electricity usage, with aggressive reduction targets
- Exploring bio-based and enzymatic routes for select chemistries
- Green building and infrastructure planning at our new JNPT SEZ facility

We're also aligning ourselves with global benchmarks like EcoVadis, which helps bring structure and accountability to sustainability efforts.

What are the key priorities for Soujanya Life Sciences over the next 3–5 years?

1. Scale the excipients business globally- Build trust with large pharma and nutraceutical companies.
2. Win meaningful CDMO mandates- Not just disparate projects, we want to be part of core molecule journeys.
3. Build a credible biology platform- Starting with probiotics, and then expanding into more advanced systems.
4. Regulatory and quality depth- DMFs, global audits, and building a reputation that stands internationally.
5. Integrated problem-solving- This is the big one, bringing together chemistry, formulation, and biology to solve real customer problems.

At the end of the day, we don't want to be just another supplier. We want to be a partner that actually improves outcomes for our customers, and eventually for patients.