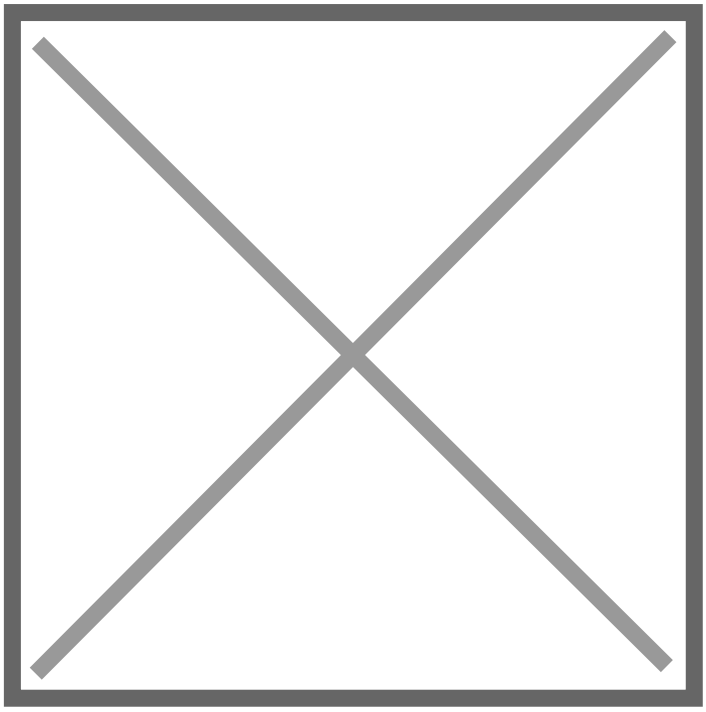
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More biotech tie-ups

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On October 5, 2012, The Association of Biotechnology Led Enterprises (ABLE) and the US-based Washington Biotechnology and Biomedical Association (WBBA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) toward deep and wide-ranging cooperation in the field of biotechnology. This agreement will provide ABLE and WBBA members the opportunities to co-operate and invest in the State of Washington and in India. Elaborating further on the MoU, Dr PM Murali, president, ABLE, said, Ã¢â?¬Å?The collaboration aims to achieve breakthrough discoveries and provide affordable solutions in biomedicine, agriculture, and energy.Ã¢â?¬?

Ã¢â?¬Å?We see India as the growth engine of tomorrow and one of the fastest growing economies in the world. The collaboration with ABLE is significant to facilitate best of research in biotechnology from both the countries,Ã¢â?¬? said Chris Rivera, president, WBBA. He listed out personalized medicine, bioinformatics, and agribiotech as the potential areas of cooperation. Rivera highlighted the fact that Washington state has emerged as a great opportunity area for the biotechnology industry. Ã¢â?¬Å?Between the year 2001 to 2010, the jobs in the state grew 15.8 percent while the national job growth in US remained at average six percent,Ã¢â?¬? he added.

In a separate development, underlining its commitment to India, Fraunhofer inaugurated its representative office in Bangalore in October. Fraunhofer works with 30 of the 50 leading companies in India and, last year, Indian companies outsourced 1.3 million euros worth of research projects to various Fraunhofer institutes. Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft is one of the leading organizations for applied research in Europe and its research activities are conducted by 60 Fraunhofer Institutes at over 40 different locations throughout Germany. Prof. Hans Jorg Bullinger, Immediate Past President Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, reiterated Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft's commitment to working with Indian partners in pursuing long-term sustainability strategies that are unique to the Indian situation.

The passing month also saw yet another industry delegation visit India. An Israeli delegation visited Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Delhi, and Mumbai and held round-table conferences.

Collaborations, certainly, are a very important tenet for growth and development of biotech. More so in the context that today's research assumes global proposition and alliances are an integral part of the success script. India is now an important component of the global scheme of biotech initiatives and several leading biotech nations like the UK, the US, Israel, Japan, Australia, Canada, Sweden, Spain, Finland, Denmark, and Germany today are actively engaging and connecting with the Indian researchers and the vice versa. The step up for this activism is due to the proactive efforts of DBT, ABLE, FICCI, and CII (Indian side) and their counterparts from outside. It's a welcome move. We need more such initiatives and have to go beyond the realms of the soft agreements to produce concrete results that are beneficial to the society.