

Biosuppliers want govt's attention to pending issues

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The biosuppliers were eagerly looking at some announcement for hassle free business and rebates over import taxes of research products. Besides that, the funding allocations to research institutes were also expected to go up. But there has been no progress so far on these.

Echoing the common view, Dr Vishal G Warke, director R&D, Cell Culture and Immunology, Himedia Laboratories mentioned, "We are still waiting for the Modi government to release the funds for most of the research institutions in India, as the lack of funds and grants from the central government has adversely impacted our sector. Scientists are unable to buy a lot of reagents and products as they are still waiting for the funds to be disbursed."

However Dr Warke, like his other counterparts in the industry, hasn't lost hope yet. He optimistically adds further, "On the whole however, the mood is very encouraging and positive with the Modi government and we feel that things should improve dramatically in the next year, in the biotech sector."

As per Mr Praveen Gupta, founder and executive director, Premas Life Sciences, "Our crystal ball gazing and interviews with soothsayers in the field predicts a promising next year with respect to growth in the applied markets and service providers business where as academic funding might still remain a challenge."

The focus on non-adversarial, corruption-free and predictable policy regime is the core strength of the present government. As per critics, the first year's rule can be given full marks only in foreign policy and economics but a lot remains to be done for health, agriculture, education and science. While the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and Make in India surely are being appreciated as unique programmes but it will take a longtime to witness a visible change on ground.

"India's biotechnology industry is on the cusp of entering a new era as the government focuses its efforts in building a research ecosystem that would spur medical innovation. It will take some time and too early to speculate, remarked an

expert. This sums up the overall mood. Despite unmet expectations, industry seems to be hopeful of increased momentum over resolving specific issues of more regulatory clarity, business friendly environment and taxes. While the beginning has been good, this government surely has a lot to do and achieve. Perhaps industry will have to hold their horses for some more time.