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Global Pharma Leaders attend USIndia BioPharma Summit 2008
Indias Minister of Science & Technology exhorts US industry to invest in Indias Bio-

Pharma R&D offering to match their investments



Discovery panel- Drug Discovery and Collaborative Research Panel

India has become an attractive destination for clinical research and trials not just for the big global pharma companies but also for emerging Bio- Pharma companies. World class IP regime in compliance with TRIPS has made India an attractive destination for global healthcare and life sciences companies. India is becoming a global hub for innovation, drug discovery and collaborative research. Diverse genetic pool, large patient pool, drug naive population, competent medical professionals, high quality hospitals where trials can be undertaken and low cost of services have stimulated the flow of clinical research to India.

Indias biotechnology sector is experiencing accelerated growth in the last 4-5 years. It is already showing signs of becoming the engine that will drive socio-economic growth in the coming years. The biotech industry, traditionally strong in manufacturing and services is currently poised to enter the phase of discovery and innovation.



Globalization has favored the technology intensive industries in general and the biotech industry in particular. The biotechnology industry in India has almost doubled in size during 2005-07. The Indian biotech companies are progressively gaining global competence through strategic global alliances, mergers & acquisitions, investments and new product launches. Keeping in spirit with this trend, the summit theme has very rightly been set as Delivering Affordable Innovation through Cross Border Partnerships added Dr. M.K. Bhan, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology.



Dubbed as the Bio Pharma event in the world focused on US-India Life Sciences and Healthcare, the USA-India Chamber of Commerces annual US-India BioPharma Summit 2008 held at Hyatt Cambridge, Boston, MA on June 13th attracted over 350 senior bio, pharma, medical devices and healthcare professionals.

Prominent among them were Dr. William Chin, Vice President of Discovery Research at Eli Lilly, Jim Mullen, CEO of Biogen Idec, GV Prasad, CEO of Dr. Reddys Labs, Venkat Jasti, CEO of Suven, Josh Boger, CEO, Vertex Pharma and Chairman of BIO, Dr. Mark Powell, Senior Vice President and Worldwide head Pharma Development, Bristol Myers Squibb, Jeff Elton, Chief Operating Officer- Novartis Institutes of Biomedical Research and Rod MacKenzie, Sr. Vice President Worldwide Research- Pfizer and Barbara Yanni, Chief Licensing Officer, Merck & Co.



Leading investors like Frederick Frank of Lehman Brothers, Helmut Schuhsler of TVM Capital, Alexandria, OrbiMed, Fidelity, Morgan Stanley, Kliener Perkins participated. Senior academicians from Harvard Medical School, Boston University, MIT and Tufts Medical School were there in good strength. Over 40 leading and emerging companies from India also participated.



In his keynote address, Indias Minister for Science & Technology, Kapil Sibal vehemently put across the concept of an emerging intellectual property regime in India that would not only uphold the interests of indulging pharmaceutical companies but shall also match their investment on a 50:50 basis to built an environment to develop collaborative initiatives to mutual benefits in the field of agriculture, marine and health sciences. Sibal said the challenge was to develop highest quality drugs at the lowest cost. It is important to device different business models, as the current models do not work.



Sibal emphasized on novel discovery efforts to meet the need of locals that would pave the road for international success citing "Nano car" as the prototypical example for his three point mantra- accessibility, affordability and world-class quality. He described the ideology of scientific achievement across different nations as a symbiotic ecosystem and not delimited by geographical boundaries. With an open invitation to US companies to shred inhibitions and a promise to offer a congenial fertile environment encouraging public-private partnership, Mr. Sibal effectively conveyed the idea stimulating the minds of many corporate heads.

Dr. Surinder Singh, Drug Controller General of India in his keynote address talked about implementation of an advanced "e governance drug regulatory system in India". This electronic system, unique in itself is currently being developed with intense support from the Indian IT sector to suit the Indian context, following closer understanding of the functioning; of its equivalent counterparts in the world- WHO, Health Canada and FDA. This digitalized and interactive portal is being seen as a revolutionary change to centralize the regulatory system and running clinical trials in India ensuring transparency and accountability at all levels.



Dr. Singh emphasized on an inbuilt feature for spontaneous and random check by health inspectors to ensure the unmet need for quality and ethical standards that would be central to the system. On being questioned about the competence of panel deciding the fate of a drug, Dr Singh assured an impartial and independent panels integrating diverse expertise would be incorporated including academia, medicine, industry and government. Besides, answering to other questions Dr. Singh was optimistic about its success that is instrumental to eventually, convince investment even from the private sector. The central philosophy is aimed at cutting short delay for the entry of drugs through a centralized single register.



In his opening remarks, Karun Rishi, President of the USA-India Chamber of Commerce, said: "Innovation and funding innovation will get a big boost from this summit. Collaborative research and strategic alliances will be the key forces driving the business." He encouraged the US companies to expedite and expand their partnerships in India. In business, time is a crucial factor. Early starters will have an edge over their competitors. Urging Government of India to improve the infrastructure, Rishi said, "Infrastructure is a common issue limiting the growth of any industry. Sooner India creates world class roads, airports, buildings, 24x7 water supply and electricity the faster will be the economic impact not only on the industry but for the common man." He urged the Indian academic institutions to partner with the US biopharma industry to learn, share, expand capacity and commercialize innovation. Rishi's advice to the Indian industry was to approach globalization as a strategic priority, irrespective of the size of the company.



Kapil Sibal officially released Position Papers prepared by McKinsey & Company for the USA-India Chamber of Commerce. Titled Thought Starters to Spur US-India BioPharma Collaboration, the report suggested 10 ideas to take the US-India Life Sciences and healthcare business to the next level. Thought starters to drive the growth in the report are: Global Pharma Leaders attend US-India BioPharma Summit 2008 Indias Minister of Science & Technology exhorts US industry to invest in Indias Bio-Pharma R&D offering to match their investments.

Accelerate Indian acquisition of subscale US Pharma and Biotech companies; Enhance value of MNCs mature portfolio; Facilitate collaborative partnerships with Indian companies to improve market access for MNC drugs; Roll up subscale Indian companies or brands; Develop biologics capability in India; Substantially increase scale and quality of discovery innovation in India; Create large for-profit institutions to better train Indias biopharma talent; Maximize use of India as a base for R&D support services; Increase pharma research at Indian academic institutions and develop a drug from research to NDA for \$100 million.

McKinsey and Company conducted in depth interviews with senior policy makers, industry leaders and investors to prepare the report. During a lively discussion on 'Funding innovation and Cross Border M&A Trends, Frederick Frank, Vice Chairman of Lehman Brothers commented: Most pharma companies need to introduce more than 3 new products a year to

maintain growth. Given current pipeline and associated costs there is no chance of this happening. Said Frank: Biotech companies are good in research whereas pharma companies are good in manufacturing and marketing.

During discussions in the 'Drug Discovery and Collaborative Research panel, Dr. Chin of Eli Lilly emphasized that "Partners need to understand each other, share risk and reward. Commented Dr. Peter Muller of Vertex Pharma– "Collaborative research is not outsourcing but in sourcing of bright minds to solve the most complex problems."

Venkat Jasti CEO of Suven and Chairman Pharmexcil urged the Indian government to set up specific panels to expedite the application approval process. Academics institutions should speed up training of students in Chemistry and Biology as "disease is complex", added Jasti.

Kamal Nath, Indias Minister of Commerce & Industry stated that India is 'Partner of Choice in the life sciences area globally. The result-oriented work being done by the USA-India Chamber of Commerce to promote and facilitate biotechnology, pharmaceuticals and healthcare business and investments between the two countries is laudable.

USA-India Chamber of Commerce is actively encouraging emerging and innovation based US life science companies to forge strategic alliances with Indian companies. Collaborative research and strategic alliances will be the key forces driving the business growth in the 21st century said Karun Rishi. We are helping create an ecosystem where all stakeholders can bring their collective knowledge, ideas and energy to foster affordable innovation. USIndia BioPharma Summit organized annually by the Chamber is an ideal platform to learn, share and discuss for all the stakeholders: Industry, Investors, Academia and Policy Makers.

- BY HEMA FERNANDO

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