

"Our focus has been on nurturing an enabling environment for companies to flourish"

11 February 2019 | Interviews

Over the years, the BioAsia event has constantly evolved and transformed itself to be relevant to the needs of the industry.



BioAsia was originally instituted in 2004 as a platform for showcasing the capabilities of the State and the Country, and attracting investments in the biotechnology sector. The event has gained quite high recognition and has come to be recognized as a pre-eminent meeting in Asia for the life sciences sector. Over the years, the event has constantly evolved and transformed itself to be relevant to the needs of the industry. The event today serves as a platform for networking and policy advocacy in addition to investment promotion. The event has successfully attracted delegates from 92 Countries to the Country, helped organize over 15000 partnering meetings, facilitated investment announcement to the tune of about \$14 Billion etc. The event has also truly evolved to be more inclusive in its participants' profile, with the right balance between Multinational companies as well as domestic companies - fullfledged Generic companies, API manufacturers, CROs / CDMOs, biopharma players, devices and diagnostics companies.

In an interaction with BioSpectrum, Shakthi M. Nagappan, Director (Life Science and Pharma) at Government of Telangana shares the highlights of the coming BioAsia 2019.

Edited excerpts:

What are major highlights of the upcoming BioAsia 2019 event?

In recent years, the rapid application of digital and other technological advances to Life Sciences and healthcare is leading to exciting new applications. Traditional ways of doing Business are being challenged by new entrants. In this context, the 16th edition of BioAsia - BioAsia 2019 scheduled for February 25-27, 2019 will focus on re-imagining healthcare as a result of these new developments. Overarching theme will be Life Sciences 4.0 – Disrupt the Disruption and the event will deliberate on the ramifications for life sciences companies' market offerings, business models and the new capabilities needed as the disciplines of health care and technology merge to give rise to an exciting new area of "Digital Medicine". Over the three days event, life sciences and healthcare's most influential and forward-thinking leaders will descend at the prestigious convention, which will feature high-powered panel discussions, keynotes, roundtables, intense networking sessions and also exclusive first looks at dozens of cutting-edge technology innovations poised to transform healthcare.

How has been the response at the previous editions of BioAsia so far? Have you incorporated any major changes this time?

BioAsia was originally instituted by the Government in 2004 as a platform for showcasing the capabilities of the State & the Country, and attracting investments in the biotechnology sector. The event has gained quite high recognition and has come to be recognized as a pre-eminent meeting in Asia for the life sciences sector. Over the years, the event has constantly evolved and transformed itself to be relevant to the needs of the industry. The event today serves as a platform for networking and policy advocacy in addition to investment promotion. The event has successfully attracted delegates from 92 Countries to the Country, helped organize over 15000 partnering meetings, facilitated investment announcement to the tune of about USD 14 Bn, etc. The event has also truly evolved to be more inclusive in its participants' profile, with the right balance between Multinational companies as well as domestic companies - full-fledged Generic companies, API manufacturers, CROs / CDMOs, biopharma players, devices and diagnostics companies.

In line with our theme of "Disrupt the Disruption", we ourselves are disrupting the old model of BioAsia by adding an increased focus on Startups, to the impressive lineup of global researchers and Industry Leaders. 2019 event will have a dedicated platform called "Start-up Stage", which will feature promising start-ups working on pharma, bio-tech, life sciences, health-tech and med-tech sectors. We have received enthusiastic response from the VC/PE community and also the M&A teams of leading companies in the industry to actively participate in the event and we expect that over 75 promising start-ups will be showcased. In addition, the event will also feature a "Scientific Enablers Pavilion" with the objective of showcasing next-gen technologies / equipment, interactive product demos focused on new capabilities.

How is the Pharma city initiative coming along? What are the key objectives behind it?

Hyderabad Pharma City is a flagship initiative of the Government, envisaged in order to respond to the changing global

environment for pioneering pharmaceutical manufacturing investments and R&D, and consolidate the leadership position of Telangana as the pharma capital. Pharma City will be the world's largest integrated pharmaceutical cluster spread over 19000 acres on par with international standards. With concepts like Zero Liquid Discharge, common effluent treatment facility, regulatory enclave, 24/7 water and power supply, dedicated land for social infrastructure like housing, entertainment and commerce, among others, the cluster will create a new global benchmark for efficient and sustainable industrial clusters. The project is estimated to attract INR 64,000 Crores in investments, generating an annual export potential of INR 58,000 Crores including direct and indirect employment generation of 1.70 lakhs and 3.86 lakhs respectively.

How does the Telangana government intend to take the Life Sciences and Pharma sector ahead?

Lifesciences sector continues to be a focus sector for the State. The State is home to about 800 life sciences companies with a combined valuation of USD 50 Bn and the Government has set out an ambitious target of doubling the value in 10 years with creation of about 400,000 new jobs. There has been a concerted effort from the Government through a number of initiatives Hyderabad Pharma City, Genome Valley 2.0, Medical Devices Park, Biopharma Scale Up manufacturing facility, LS Infrastructure fund, among others. Our focus has been on nurturing an enabling environment and ecosystem for Lifesciences companies to flourish. Government is committed to building further on its leadership position in the sector and make Hyderabad as one of the most vibrant Life sciences hub in Asia and the world.