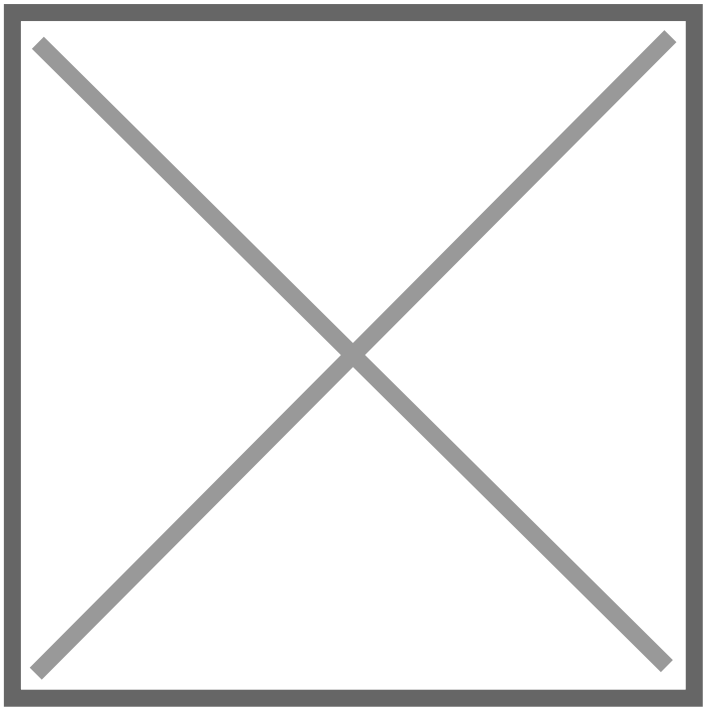
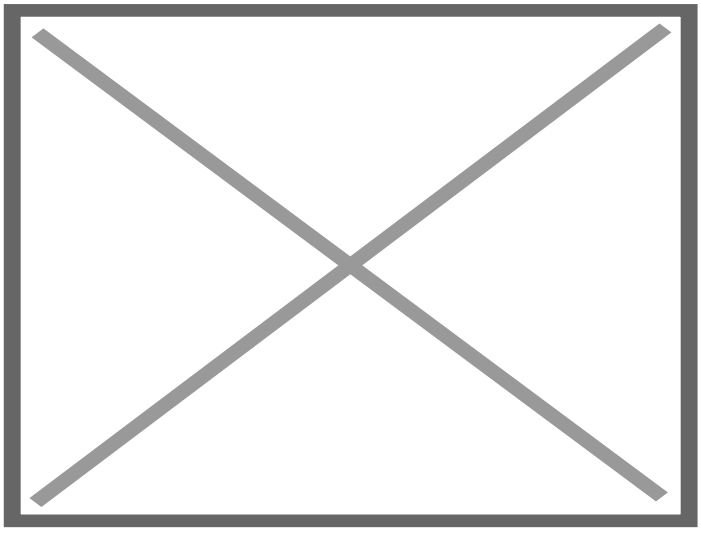
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Mission: Addressing space crunch with multi-deck shaker

15 March 2011 | News



With an objective to address the space issues in labs, Scigenics Biotech has designed a multi-deck shaker for researchers



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Given the fact that the space crunch has crept into almost all laboratories, using vertical space has become a necessity. Thinking on these lines, Chennai-based Scigenics Biotech came up with a project on the research, design and manufacturing of a multi-deck shaker. The idea is to provide the scientists with more area for cultivation within a small footprint. The project was initiated with the help of Small Business Innovation Research Initiative (SBIRI) funding under the aegis of the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India.

With the optional features on CO2 and humidity maintenance, the equipment caters to a wide range of applications involving microbial, plant and animal cell culture. Dynamically balancing four shakers on one frame is an engineering challenge, since smooth running of the equipment is essential for arriving at high cell density in the flasks. Therefore, the success of such products straightaway contributes to the benefit of the scientific community and thus uplifts the Indian industry to global standards.

Since its inception in early 1990s, Scigenics Biotech has been a pioneering entrepreneurial venture, in the manufacturing of bio-equipments under the brand name Orbitek. Headed by Mr S Gopal, managing director, and Ms S Neela, CEO and director, Scigenics focuses on manufacturing bio-equipments such as shakers, incubators, hybridization chambers, and plant growth chambers.

Ms S Neela, CEO and director, Scigenics Biotech, says, Ã¢â?¬Å?We attended a review meeting for BSIRI funding in May 2007 and by November 2007, the loan amounting to 55 percent of the project cost was sanctioned to us. That was the highest cheque value we have received so far. We were very happy with the trust and confidence shown on us. We felt more responsible and became more ambitious. SBIRI through DBT has helped us in keeping pace with the technology.Ã¢â?¬?

Industry Impact

According to the company, currently, there is no Indian manufacturer for multi-deck shaker with its specification. The developed product is expected to offer competitive pricing and reduced usage of floor space that will result in energy saving for customer. The response time, in terms of concept to product delivery, will be greatly reduced owing to high flexibility in parameter manipulations.

Way Forward

With the prototype testing and design validation in progress, the project is nearing completion and the commercial launch is expected in 2011. Because of the challenge from low price options, particularly from China and South Korea, Scigenics is upgrading to an extremely professional set up to take on global competition.

Rahul Koul in New Delhi