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â??Indiaâ??s regulatory system is developing well and is going to be at par with the best in the worldâ?•

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With an aim to provide superior technological medical facilities, Fujifilm India has launched various campaigns to educate and spread awareness of chronic illnesses. The company has been able to install more than 50,000 medical devices across the country. Besides, it has a focus to expand strategic key products in the medical division, photo imaging, image capturing and graphic arts division. Chander Shekhar Sibal, Executive Vice President & Head of Medical Division at Fujifilm India reveals more about the companyâ??s India plans in an interaction with BioSpectrum India.



Recently you have expanded your product portfolios in pulmonology and cancer care segments etc. How optimistic are you when it comes to launching products in the Indian market? How much revenue could be gathered from these new products?

Fujifilm India has always been at the forefront of healthcare innovation. We have recently launched a new slim video bronchoscope called EB-710P. With the launch of the new bronchoscope EB-710P, we are expanding our pulmonology portfolio. The aim is to provide superior technological medical facilities that can help save lives and encourage patients to become more engaged in their care. In line with our vision to provide the best-in-class technology, we aim to never stop innovating and working towards making India a healthier place to live in.

We have equipment like Full Field Digital Mammography, Computed Tomography (CT) scanners, MRI and Ultrasound Systems for the early detection of cancers.

Fujifilm has recently opened health screening centres in India. What are the long-term goals for this development?

Fujifilm's commitment is aimed at spreading awareness about the importance of regular medical tests to eliminate the chance of chronic health ailments and highlighting the significance of timely health checkups for people of all ages to prevent diagnostic delays. We have been launching campaigns to educate and spread awareness on the same and will be moving forward along the same lines.

On the same lines, we have launched two NURA health screening centres in Gurugram and Bengaluru in partnership with Dr Kutty's Healthcare to focus on cancer and lifestyle disease screening in India. We are aiming to launch another centre in Mumbai soon. With the addition, we will be offering screening in a total of three NURA sites.

We have also collaborated with leading hospitals such as Paras Healthcare and Manipal Hospitals, amongst others. Through the partnerships, Fujifilm supplies a wide range of high-end and sophisticated medical devices including artificial intelligence (AI)-based machines to the network of hospitals.

We have successfully installed more than 50,000 medical devices across India, ranging from top metropolitan cities to remote areas such as Leh, Ladakh, Northeast India, and across Jharkhand and Bihar, amongst other regions. Since 2008, Fujifilm has striven to bring the best of its medical imaging and solutions systems to India for the betterment of the country's health. We are available with our CR, DR, and Imagers in the smallest of small villages of India for digitising the X-Rays. With this milestone, we hope to continue the legacy of innovation and never stop innovating and providing the best-in-class products and services.

Are you planning to hire more talent in India? Please elaborate.

The sentiment in the healthcare industry is very positive and we are working to develop the availability of high-quality health infrastructure products and solutions across the country. In the process, we are gradually upscaling our manpower as well as hiring people in service, application and product sales so that we can expand our geographic horizons and exceed customer expectations in the fields of service and application.

How is Fujifilm assisting in the TB elimination target of 2025? What strategies have been chalked out?

In line with the government's call to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets related to TB by 2025, five years ahead of global targets, Fujifilm India aims to raise awareness on TB.

Fujifilm is a diamond member of the Corporate TB Pledge (CTP), which is being implemented by the International Union Against TB and Lung Disease (The Union) as part of USAID supported iDEFEAT TB project. The Corporate TB Pledge initiative was jointly launched in 2019 by the Government of India and USAID to galvanise corporate support in the fight against TB. More than 230 corporate partners have joined the Corporate TB Pledge initiative.

We have launched the "Never Stop: Screening to Reduce Diagnostic Delays" campaign aimed to create awareness of regular screening for tuberculosis. With the campaign, we ran a mobile screening van across 27 cities in North India and screened over 721,000 people at the mobile van and shared a total of 8,104 X-ray reports in six months.

We have also launched the second phase of the campaign aiming to increase awareness on TB as a curable disease and promote screening and early diagnosis among tea sector workers, difficult-to-reach people residing in rural and urban areas including the tribal population in selected districts of Gujarat, Kerala and Assam.

Under the campaign, Fujifilm India will support three mobile handheld X-ray machines and the implementation of the project in community settings. With the campaign, we aim to reach more than 5 million people and screen around 30,000 of them by using handheld X-ray machines. The project will also facilitate TB testing of identified presumptive cases. In association with The Union, the project aims to demonstrate a model for promoting early diagnosis of TB by utilising newer solutions in community settings. Fujifilm will also offer door-to-door awareness and provide mobile digital X-ray services along with Qure.ai's computer-aided radiology software application designed with deep learning for the intervention.

How challenging is the regulatory market in India for Fujifilm? What are your expectations from the Indian government?

The regulatory system in India is at a nascent stage compared to global standards, however, it has made giant leaps in the recent past. As far as Fujifilm India is concerned, we are not facing any challenges as of now and our mission is to work together with the regulatory bodies for a robust ecosystem. India's regulatory system is developing well and with The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) and Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), it is going to be at par with the best in the world.

Our expectation from the government is to make the regulations at par with global standards so that a high-quality healthcare ecosystem can be created in India.

What more plans are in store for the Indian market for the next five years, in terms of investment and product launches?

India is witnessing a fast-economic growth. Under these circumstances, we are focusing on expanding strategic key products in the medical division, photo imaging, image capturing and graphic arts division.

Indian Medical Devices Industry is Asia's fourth-largest market and one of the top 20 in the world. According to a forecast by the Indian Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF), India's medical device market will expand at a 35.4 per cent compound annual growth rate (CAGR), with a market value of $11 billion in 2020 and $50 billion by 2025. Imports, on the other hand, currently supply the majority of the medical device market in the country, accounting for 80 per cent of total sales.

We are witnessing a promising future for ourselves in the Indian market. Each category that Fujifilm has a presence in is driven by a long-term commitment towards our customers and partners. Our growth drivers are coming from new-age customers who are well aware of what they want and are quality conscious.

What is the future of the technology-driven medical devices market in India? Please highlight the challenges and investments associated with it.

The Indian healthcare sector will experience rapid growth in the coming years due to increased government initiatives and public awareness of health issues. India is well on its way to becoming a major global player in the medical sector, as it has learnt from its challenges and is preparing for everything that may come. People are getting their regular annual health checkups and have become more aware and alert regarding minor health issues as well, especially after covid.

Therefore, it is inevitable that the industry for medical devices used in the examination/diagnosis of all minor and major health issues will also grow manifolds. In fact, in the last few years, the market for medical devices has expanded significantly and is essential to every stage of the healthcare continuum. Despite its important role in increasing healthcare access and affordability, several ecosystem constraints have resulted in a high dependence on it.

Fujifilm India has always been committed to bringing innovations to the healthcare sector. To deliver better healthcare services, we have begun integrating cutting-edge technologies like AI into our products. For instance, we have created specialised AI platforms like REILI to address the needs of patients right now. Through this, specialists can use technology like image processing and artificial intelligence to provide their patients with more accurate diagnoses. We have tied up with Qure.ai for proving TB Screening through a combination of X-Air and AI for early detection of tuberculosis.

Recently, we have launched a new software version of ‘CAD EYE’, a function that supports real-time detection of colonic polyps during colonoscopy utilising AI technology. This updated and advanced function will be essential for colon polyp detection and characterisation, which will be achieved by utilising a type of AI called deep learning.

We have also made significant contributions to the field of radiography and mammography along with promoting the early detection of breast cancer. We are dedicated to providing our customers with cutting-edge solutions that are the utmost easy and convenient, assisting them with early/timely diagnosis and treatment.

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