

'Logistics is a crucial enabler'

09 January 2012 | News

image not found or type unknown



Interview

BioSpectrum | Christoph Remund

Mr Christoph Remund,
CEO, DHL

India manufactures majority of the world's total vaccines. Domestic biotech companies are aggressively looking to tap the biosimilar space, with the help of a strong logistics set up that is based on collaborations and partnerships. DHL, along with the Organization of Pharmaceutical Producers of India, recently came out with a white paper, which draws on this strong connection between biotech companies and their need for logistical support.

In conversation with BioSpectrum, Mr Christoph Remund, CEO, DHL global forwarding, India, throws light on the logistics scenario in the country and the company's plan for India.

What are the salient features of the white paper on 'Transforming Life Sciences Logistics in India'?

'Transforming Life Sciences Logistics in India' delves into the competitive landscape of the life sciences industry and analyzes how logistics can be a crucial enabler of the growing life sciences sector in India. The study focuses on fundamental issues and offers solutions with thought leadership. The study highlights 12 assets and enablers that need to be implemented in order to achieve world-class life sciences logistics in India. Some of these include setting up dedicated pharmaceutical zones at airports, goods and services tax implementation, faster co-ordination amongst all ground handling agencies, multi-user warehouses and shared reefer vans and ocean freight containers, maintaining the supply chain integrity by using latest technology, such as RFID, GPS and anti-counterfeit equipment.

How can public-private partnerships transform the dynamics of the life sciences logistics sector in India?

Encouraging existing public-private partnerships helps achieve stronger momentum on life sciences logistics infrastructure. These partnerships could be leveraged in areas such as construction of connecting roads to link pharmaceutical hubs to major highways; multi-user temperature controlled warehouses in strategic areas and promoting free trade zone (FTZ) facilities at key locations.

The government and pharmaceutical companies could also work towards making India a hub for secondary manufacturing of pharmaceuticals, including activities like packaging and labeling.

What opportunities does India offer to DHL?

In India, the manufacturing of generics, biosimilars, vaccines and biotech products has increased significantly. There has also been a major expansion in the export outflow as well as domestic consumption. Although a cold chain is prescribed for just 11 percent of ethicals and generics, it is crucial for biologicals, including vaccines and biosimilars, due to their extremely sensitive nature.

At DHL, the material is moved in international IATA-approved packaging and it offers the widest range of packaging options. Temperature controlled logistics (TCL) is an end-to-end logistics solution and covers the entire supply chain of clinical trials. DHL has the capability of managing the entire supply chain of clinical trials.

What investments has DHL made in the life sciences sector in India?

We continue to invest in developing our capabilities across the logistics value chain and will be adding new infrastructure in terms of build-to-suit warehouses, a FTZ facility in Hyderabad and Mumbai, and new solutions for temperature controlled ocean freight.

Nayantara Som in Mumbai