

Future looks bright for Indian biotech

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Participation from 20 countries, 700 delegates and 800 B2B meetings made the Bangalore India BIO 2010 a notable one

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'Biotech for a better tomorrow' was the focal theme of the 10th edition of Bangalore India BIO 2010, the rechristened form of India's biggest biotech show Bangalore BIO. The three-day event (June 2-4, 2010) held in Bangalore comprised multi-track conferences, international trade show, biopartnering, CEO conclave, bio excellence award and a host of other events. The multi-track conferences consisted of 25 sessions with

Participation from 20 countries, 700 delegates and 800

The event organized by the Department of Information Technology, Biotechnology and Science and Technology, Government of Karnataka, Vision Group on Biotechnology and MM Activ Sci-Tech

Communications was inaugurated by BS Yeddyurappa, Chief Minister of Karnataka.

The other dignitaries present during the inauguration included Rob Norris, Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Labor, Government of Saskatchewan, Canada; SV Ranganath, Chief Secretary, Government of Karnataka; Richard Hyde,

addressing challenges in biosimilars.”

Dr Eric Grund, Senior Director, Biopharma Applications, GE life sciences, said, “As the regulatory pathway for biosimilars in Europe and the US becomes clearer, manufacturing of these products still remain challenging. There is a pressure in increasing the efficiency and there are market uncertainties.”

There is a geographic shift from west to east

A session on 'Meeting the challenges and actualizing the potential in clinical trials' was chaired by DA Prasanna, Managing Director and Founder of Ecron Acunova. He said “India is engaged in clinical research for the last 15 years, reason being the size of the population, English communication, diseases burden, naive patient's advantages, and western medical education.

Dr Ferzaan Engineer, CEO of Quintiles India, said, “The landscape is changing and the new models of business are emerging. There is geographic shift from west to east and there is a need to adapt and evolve. Change is the need of the hour. There is a need for potential reverse innovation in the pharmaceutical industry.”

Regulatory issues for biopharma industry

The event also had a session on “Regulatory issues for biopharma industry”. The speakers urged the Biotechnology Regulatory Authority of India to keep up with the rapid technological developments in the industry.

Dr KK Tripathi, Adviser and Member secretary, RCGM of the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India, who presided the session, said, “As the regulators are not very clear on the latest issues of the industry, industry should take active initiative to bring their concerns to the regulatory authorities.”

Dr Tripathi added, “Present regulations do not permit phase-I trials of any pharma product that is not developed in India. As the scenario is changing and in order to save the lives of many people we need to address such issues. Regulators are stressing for a change in this matter and the industry can expect good news soon.”

Dr Smita Singhania, Head, Regulatory Affairs and Project Management, Cadila Healthcare; Dr Vibha Ahuja, General Manager, Biotech Consortium India; Teresa Stanek Rea, Partner, Crowell & Moring LLP, US; Martin B Cox, Business Development Manager, Faculty of Medical sciences, New Castle University, UK; and Brijesh Patel, Deputy Manager, Licensing, Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency, UK, were also part of the discussion.

Issues in vaccine development

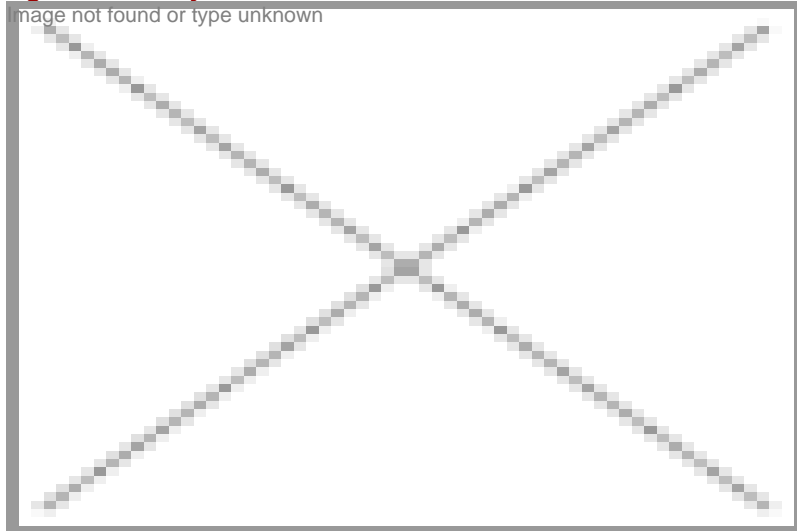
A session on vaccines for emerging medical conditions, neglected diseases and pandemic preparedness was organized on day two.

Dr SD Ravetkar, Senior Doctor, Serum Institute of India, began by saying, having been in this industry for the past 40 years, he has observed that vaccine industry was not growing much but he predicted that vaccine is definitely the future of India.

Anjali Nayyar, Country Program Leader, PATH, said, “Pandemic has a social and economic cost and there is a need to have better preparedness for it. Over 300 infectious diseases have been identified so far, however, no vaccines are available for some of the diseases of public importance. Some vaccines exist but they are not optimally used.”

Dr Vinayak, President, Biopharmaceutical Research Center, Panacea Biotec, said, “The challenges in this industry are business environment, scientific environment, traditional vaccine industry and competitive environment. In 2008, the vaccine market was estimated at Rs 96,977 crore (\$21 bn). Companies invested about 15-20 percent in R&D in 2008. The cost to develop and license a new product is Rs 3,924-4,155 crore (\$850-900 mn) in developed countries.

Agribiotech day



On the third day, a session was held on “New age

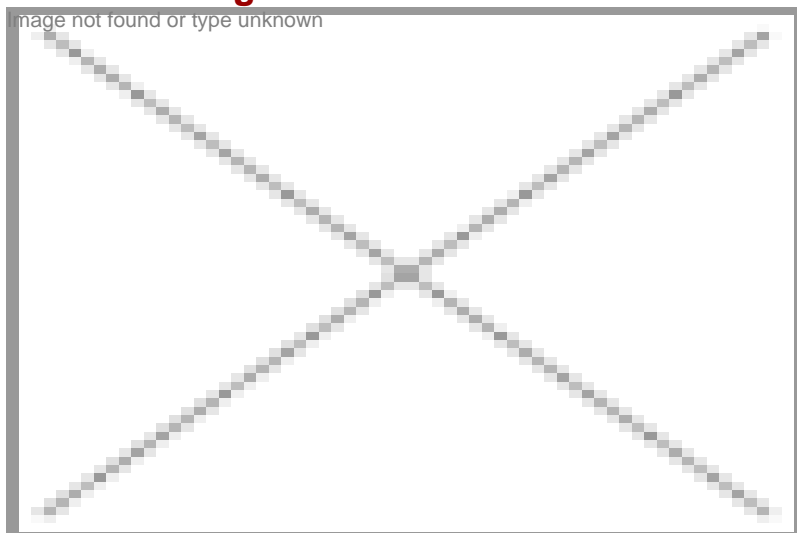
Dr KK Narayanan, MD, Metahelix Life Sciences, began the session by saying, “Most of the new age technologies are still in the lab and not on the field.” Further he added that the discussion would address serious problems faced in agriculture, whether we have the right ecosystem in India to support technologies, and if not, what changes can be made to make farmers access new age technologies. Discussions would also be on regulatory systems in India, its increasing uncertainty, issues regarding what Indian farmers

Prof. G Padmanabhan, NASI Platinum Jubilee Chair, Department of Biochemistry, Indian Institute of Science,

Bangalore, said, “Traditional techniques of agriculture like crop rotation can tackle lots of issues, but India should not seclude itself from the experience and knowledge of the rest of the world. One of the arguments in the Bt brinjal case is that it has been developed by Mahyco in which Monsanto has 26 percent stake. China on the other hand has followed a dual policy; it has approved GM from MNCs and is also developing its own Bt rice.”

He closed the discussion with the following recommendations – “Limited release of Bt brinjal seeds, decision on GM crops to be taken in Parliament based on scientific data, decisions to be taken on case-to-case basis.”

GIM attracts global investments



Karnataka wooed global investors with its ambitious Global Investors Meet (GIM) held on June 3-4, 2010, in Bangalore. The event aimed at showcasing the vast potential of investment in the state. Over thousand investors from all across the world took part in the two-

GIM helped Karnataka government to ink healthcare projects worth Rs 4,500 crore. Chief Minister of Karnataka, BS Yeddyurappa announced that the State Government has signed 361 MoUs with investors for a

The Government plans to establish a system to monitor and review the progress of the projects for which MoUs