

Biocon ranked 6th in top twenty biopharma employers list

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Speaking on the occasion at Biocon's press meet, Ms Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Chairman & Managing Director, Biocon, said, "This rating has been done on various attributes based on research quality, clear vision and social responsibility. We are the only Indian and Asian company to make it to this list. Globally, that's a big recognition for what Biocon stands for today."

The event was also attended by Mr Peter Bains, Director, Syngene International, along with Biocon's key management team including Dr Arun Chandavarkar, Mr Murali Krishnan, Dr Abhijit Barve and Mr Rakesh Bamzai.

Dr Kiran also declared Biocon's earnings for the first half of the fiscal year during the event. She added, "Our biopharmaceuticals sector has grown significantly through our immuno-suppressants and Insulin products. It is gaining a lot of momentum in the emerging markets. Our research services has been a stellar performer in revenues, which has grown 46% in the quarter and 36% at the half year level."

Talking about ALZUMAb's launch in August 2013, Ms Shaw said, "ALZUMAb is not just a first-in-class drug, but also a potential best-in-class. We are very encouraged by its early acceptance in the Indian market. Only time will unravel how powerful the drug is."

Dr Kiran also added that diseases like multiple sclerosis will provide Biocon with a big opportunity for research, along with Vitiligo, for which it will conduct clinical trials in India.

Commenting on Biocon's performance amidst various challenges, she opined, "The last two quarters were challenging for the entire Indian pharma sector because of issues in drug regulations, trade, price control, and other disputes. This has actually hit every single pharma company, and Biocon was not spared either. So we've seen 12% growth in the H1 FY14."

Ms Shaw said that Biocon now is the #1 Indian Insulin company, and also gaining visibility as the 4th largest globally. She said, "We are seeing a strong growth of our Insulin business worldwide. We are doing our best to maximize the supplies of our Insulin from India, until the opening of our Malaysian facility."

Currently Biocon's Asia's largest integrated Insulin manufacturing facility is coming up at Johor, Malaysia, which according to the company will address the increasing Insulin demands from emerging and global markets.

Responding to a question posed by *BioSpectrum India* in this regard, Dr Kiran responded, "The manufacturing plant facility is coming up on track. It'll be ready to operationalize by FY15. Currently we've issues with demand. The new Malaysian facility will help us mitigate this."

Dr Kiran expressed that India is becoming an unattractive place for clinical trials in the area of drug innovation. She said, "If India doesn't become a responsible country in terms of clinical development, then we can't expect new drugs to come out of India. It has to be developed elsewhere and we can't take the credit for doing it in India."

"If drugs have to be developed in India, then Indian patients need to be trialed, making sure that this is understood well in the Indian patient environment and other parts of the world," she explained.

Dr Kiran further added on the role of media and judiciary in the area of clinical trials. "Every country recognizes the importance of trials and India should play a role. Activism should not overtake science and evidence-based medicine. It is important for our judiciary to understand the importance of clinical developments for a country like India. The judiciary mainly seems to be hearing only one side of the story."

While speaking on Syngene's performance, Dr Kiran added, "Syngene is a partner of choice in this part of the world, differentiating it as an innovative research provider, making it a clear market leader. However, Syngene, this quarter, has taken a hit, but still it has achieved growth. Clinigene too is on track with modest growth."

Ms Shaw concluded by talking about the company's future outlook. "Looking ahead, we are certainly focusing on innovation-led programs and making ALZUMAb a big success globally. Our outlook for the rest of the year remains positive, and we will continue with our R&D investments, delivering another stellar set of numbers for the next two quarters and beyond," she expressed.