

## Drug discovery – How is India doing? : Mr J B Gupta

02 November 2013 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau

### Drug discovery – How is India doing? : Mr J B Gupta



Titled, 'Drug Discovery - How is India doing?', the topic was presented by Mr J B Gupta, Senior VP, GVK Biosciences.

In his presentation, Mr Gupta presented the major milestones achieved based on which drug discovery progress is measured.

He mentioned the following milestones: Post TRIPS and focus on drug discovery (1994); out-licensing of proprietary molecules (1998); discover progress collaboration (2003); and launch of proprietary molecules (2012).

He said, "Drug discovery process and expertise should address the issues and challenges. When there is an unmet need, you need to understand the disease pathology, and then you discover a molecule and carry out trials."

Mr Gupta said that new drug R&D has been started by several Indian pharma companies but it has been very difficult to discover a molecule up to the launch.

Talking about the issues and human resources challenges faced in the Indian drug discovery scene, Mr Gupta expressed,

"We have very good academic network and graduates who are going for master's and PhD programs and not getting properly trained. We don't have good infrastructure to train them."

He continued, "Human resource crunch is a major issue here. We are trying to fill this gap through getting people from US and Europe."

Mr Gupta considers that funding and investments by very few companies isn't sufficient. "There is hardly any funding provided. We do not see any risk- based venture capitalists available in the country or outside India. The government has started funding, but they are in no way adequate to meet the challenges we have. We only invest 0.8% of our GDP in our R&D," he said.

Addressing the poor quality of academic research in the country, Mr Gupta stated, "Our publication volume and quality of research is very less and we are lagging behind US and China. The quality of journals and research articles in India is not that great. We have made substantial progress in the past 15 years. But we still have miles to go."