

“India can be promoted as a diagnostics hub”

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Q: The recent budget 2015 has put emphasis on preventive healthcare. What is SRL doing to reach out?

It is a very interesting question. We are not proud of being the largest diagnostic firm as much as having been able to reach out to the masses. I can say that we have even reached hinterland. We are present in 350 districts and our labs are located even in remote places such as Silchir, Aizwal, Imphal and so on. Secondly apart from these labs, we have created over six thousand collection points. We are demolishing the myth that rural areas don't have access to healthcare. 60 percent of the samples are collected and taken to lab in 6 hours.

Q: Have you tied up with the government for making diagnostic technologies available to the marginal sections of society?

We are the first company in the country to tie up with the Himachal government. We are running 24 labs in the state despite the fact that we are cut off in winters and other initial hiccups. We are delivering quality at an affordable cost. In future, we are open to tying up with state governments. The private sector has to work hand in hand with the public sector to create healthcare benefits for all.

Q: Innovation for affordable technologies is going to be the next stage for companies. Where do you stand on that?

We have a highly evolved innovative research and development laboratory. Our highly trained 25 scientists are working in the R&D center, round the corner to make a difference. It has a three fold agenda: First is to create the tests that are accurate and not available in India. Second is using innovative techniques to bring down the cost. Third is to improve the cutting edge technology for the turnaround time.

Q: What kind of innovation should happen to make these diagnostic kits affordable?

First of all, we should know what the requirements are. Our analysis was invariably more based on the western world. There has been lack of research on that front earlier. We are going to make sense out of the data that has been gathered over the past 5-6 years. That will help us to fulfil the requirements what the people need in our country. The gene profile of Indians is so vast and there is so much of variety and we are working a lot on that. Going forward there is going to be disruptions. We need to ask ourselves a question that whether today is better than yesterday. If I claim to be a thinking company, I have to be a step ahead of what competition says in terms of thought process.

Q: How are you doing as a company and what is your target market?

We are the largest in the network that we have. On the revenue side, we have a CAGR of 18 percent and EBITDA of 30 percent. We are leveraging the operational edge and cutting costs without cutting corners. We are bringing new innovative technologies. While the margins are getting narrower due to competitions, we are proud of the fact that we have quality workforce. We have created a 5 acre large technical training centre at Beas for the training of resources. 700 out of 6000 strong employee workforce are pathologists and doctors.

We have amazing history of last 16 years and we are gung ho about the future. We are sure India can be made a place with great medical value and promoted as a diagnostics hub. Opportunities are plenty and it is just that we should be doing the right thing.