

ABLE gives voice to biotech firms

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Around 160 biotechnology companies with a combined revenue of over \$150 million encompassing diverse domains of biotechnology covering industrial enzymes, plant biotechnology and diagnostics to bio-therapeutics, have come together to create a new platform, to highlight the sector's interests. The companies are offering a plethora of products and services based on agri-biotech, bioinstrumentation, bioengineering and bioinformatics.

The executive board of ABLE headed by Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, chairperson and managing director, Biocon India as president, comprises of Varaprasad Reddy, managing director, Shantha Biotechnics as the vice president, Vijay Chandru, chairman, Strand Genomics as the general secretary and Villoo Morawala Patell, CEO, Avesthagen as the treasurer. The association has set up support teams across the country for the member ship drive.

According to Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, president of ABLE, it will play the same role for the biotech industry as Nasscom does for the IT sector. "It will become the collective face of the biotech industry," Shaw said.

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The main objective of ABLE is to accelerate the pace of biotechnology in the country by enabling strategic alliances between the researchers, governments and the global biotech industry. It will showcase breakthrough technologies and cutting edge biotech initiatives that will take the Indian biotech sector new frontiers and promote biotechnology in both the industry and academia, and forge a stronger link between research and the commercialization of emerging technologies.

ABLE will seek to equip an entrepreneur, a scientist, a student, a government, an industry or an investor with inputs in any sphere of Biotechnology that he/she requires. From guiding emerging technological breakthroughs to presenting job opportunities and enhancing the potential of commercializing biotech research, ABLE will represent the interests of all stakeholders of biotechnology in India.

In addition, it will act as a single point of reference for exclusive and comprehensive information relevant to the Indian Biotech industry. It would generate access to policies of the Indian government towards biotechnology, including transitory changes in the regulatory and patenting framework.

Narayan Kulkarni