

Offering right choices

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With an estimated turnover of Rs 180 crore, HiMedia Laboratories is a leading player in culture media and peptones market in India.

HiMedia Laboratories, established in 1976 as Hindustan Dehydrated Media and as a company to provide ready-to-use culture media to scientists, researchers and small companies, who used to prepare their own media from purchased ingredients, has come a long way. HiMedia, today, has developed its own technology for manufacture of culture media and is an ISO 9000 company. HiMedia clocked a total turnover of Rs 180 crore in fiscal 2007-08, registering 20 percent growth from the previous year's total sales of Rs 150 crore. The company's sales turnover in 2005-06 was Rs 120 crore.

Today, HiMedia exports its products to over 100 countries and has a strong foothold in the BRIC countries like Russia and Brazil. It is also actively tapping the US market. "If we do well here then the rest of the world will be easier," commented Dr Vishal Warke, director, R&D, cell culture, HiMedia Laboratories. In order to fulfill the demand for culture media products, the company is beefing up its production facilities. It is coming up with facility at Ambarnath to produce protein hydrolysis products. Dr Vishal Warke said, "The facility will help in bridging the supply shortage gap. We have been dealing with many reputed companies in India and realized that we have been falling short of protein hydrolysis in India. Globally too there is a demand for such products." The company is also looking at a US FDA certification and GMP compliance. This facility, which will be an entirely vegetable facility, will provide ultra-filtered hydrolysis and ultra-filtered vegetable peptones. "Our facility provides around 20 vegetable-based peptones and we are making around 1,000 culture media. The estimated investment for this facility alone is around Rs 35-50 crore," added Dr Warke. HiMedia is also looking at setting up manufacturing operations in the US.

VWR, a US-based distribution company, has tied up with HiMedia for vegetable-based media and vegetable-based peptone and these would be included in their catalogues. "VWR is selling HiMedia products as a joint label and this partnership is really important to us as it can change the face of HiMedia and contribute significantly to our growth in the next few years." HiMedia earlier had a tie-up with Sigma. But its products were marketed under the Sigma label.

HiMedia is also coming out with kits for detection of MRSA and also VRSA in collaboration with the scientists from Yale University, which has given exclusive rights to HiMedia to manufacture these kits for global use and at an affordable cost. HiMedia will soon be offering Serum free media too. Another area where the company has plans to enter is the stem cell culture and primary cell culture.