

"BioAsia has emerged as the powerful forum for life sciences sector in India"

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By : Rahul Koul - February 8, 2019



The annual [BioAsia](#) international conference is an exclusive, customized partnering forum that brings together U.S. and European drug development companies with Asian biotech and pharmaceutical companies interested in research collaborations and licensing agreements. The conference features private, pre-arranged one-on-one meetings between senior-level executives, using proprietary, state-of-the-art computer software.

The BioAsia 2019 is all set to be held on 25-27 February in Hyderabad. In this exclusive

interaction with the BioVoice, Mr Shakthi M. Nagappan, Chief Executive Officer, BioAsia and Director (Life Science and Pharma), Government of Telangana shared detailed insights about the BioAsia 2019 and many other aspects related to life sciences sector. Read on:



What will be the key objectives of BioAsia 2019? What makes it different from the previous years?

BioAsia is now seen widely as a catalyst for the life sciences industry, providing a platform for B2B meetings, advocating policies and discussing the roadmap for the Industry. BioAsia is an annual flagship convention of the Telangana Government, organized in partnership with Government of India and Federation of Asian Biotech Associations [FABA]. Over the years the event has gained significant stature and prestige and witnesses participation from Industry and Scientific leaders from over 50 Countries year-on-year. The event has emerged as the biggest event in the country in every perspective, in terms of footfalls, B2B meetings, business transactions, working group discussions, participation of global thought leaders etc.

16th edition of BioAsia is scheduled from February 25-27, 2019 in Hyderabad. The State Government is committed to utilize this global platform to advocate the concerns of the industry and help build a conducive ecosystem for businesses to thrive. The event will be organized in partnership with Ernst and Young, Invest India, among others. The theme for this year BioAsia is “Life Sciences 4.0 – Disrupt the Disruption”, under which there will be a focus on healthcare being re-imagined as a result of technological disruption and rising customer expectations, while deliberating the ramifications for life sciences companies’ market offerings, business models and the new capabilities needed.



Last year at BioAsia, Hyderabad was pitched as the new capital for biotech industry. How has the Sector performed since State formation?

Since June 2015, when the state announced TS-iPASS, a new system for industrial clearance, about 700 investment proposals in life sciences sector were approved. These include more than 100 R&D proposals. Telangana’s life sciences sector has attracted over Rs 10,200 crore in investment during the last four years, including Rs 3,000 crore in research and development. 80 per cent of these projects have already commenced execution. These envisage about 20,000 high value R&D jobs and around 50,000 manufacturing jobs in the State.

The contribution of life sciences sector to the overall product export value from Telangana is about 36 percent, which has almost doubled during the last four years. The life sciences product exports in the state grew at 2.41 times over the last four years, compared with the national average of 1.18 times. Life Sciences continues to be high on the priority of the Government and a number of new initiatives have been planned.



Over the years, what have been your expectations from the BioAsia? What kind of improvisations have happened to the event for making it more inclusive?

BioAsia was originally instituted by the Government in 2004 as a platform for showcasing the capabilities of the State & the Country, and attracting investments in biotechnology. The event today serves as an industry platform for networking and policy advocacy in addition to investment promotion. The event has gained quite high recognition and has come to be recognized as a pre-eminent meeting in Asia for the life sciences sector. The event has successfully attracted delegates from 92 Countries to the Country, helped organize over 15000 partnering meetings, facilitated investment announcement to the tune of about USD 14 Bn, etc.

Over the years, the event has truly evolved to be more inclusive in its participants' profile and has the right balance between Multinational companies as well as domestic companies – full-fledged Generic companies, API manufacturers, CROs / CDMOs, biopharma players, devices and diagnostics companies, which clearly highlights the blurring boundaries between industries. With the companies looking at fundamentally reforming their business models with focus on the ability to successfully navigate an extensive and constantly changing ecosystem and entering into alliances – including with market participants or competitors from other sectors, the efforts of BioAsia has been to bring together the traditional life sciences companies and the new entrants like technology companies, start-ups, etc.

The event provides a great opportunity for an emerging Indian company to network with the leaders of both global and established domestic companies who could be their potential customers or partners and also provides them with an opportunity to learn from the very best in their journey.



How do you look at the overall Life science industry scenario in the country?

The Indian Life Sciences sector has performed remarkably well in the last few decades. The country accounts for 20% of the global generics export and meets approximately 40% of the generic demand in the US. India is one of the leading global pharma producers supplying more than 50% of the global demand for vaccines. It is the second-largest contributor of the global biotech and pharma workforce. Today, life sciences companies are currently operating in an evolving business environment that is characterized by cost pressure, technological progress and disruption caused by new, innovative market participants.

Customers are changing, the nature of the products and sales models are changing, and the companies are facing new kinds of competitors. Epidemic of life style diseases, aging population and increasing healthcare costs are resulting in pricing pressures. Digitization has already started featuring fully across all stages of the pharma value chain – Digital technologies are streamlining drug discovery, personalized and accelerated clinical trial

recruitment, enhanced patient engagement and automated collection of real-world evidence. In order to drive profitable growth in the future, Indian companies will have to rethink the way they do business today and embrace technological advancements.

It is in this context, the programme of BioAsia has been designed to deliberate and build cross industry collaboration. BioAsia would focus on the skills to be acquired and capabilities to be built in order to ready us for what lies ahead and what can define the winning strategies in serving the billion-patient population.

*BioVoice is one of the media partners at the BioAsia 2019 being held at Hyderabad on 25th-27th February.