



Publication : Express Pharma
Date : January 1-15, 2014
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Biopharma sector to continue on growth path

The biotechnology industry in India continued to see strong growth in 2013 on the strength of biosimilars; in terms of domestic market growth, exports, product/clinical development, new product launches and product-based partnerships. This trend is expected to strengthen further in 2014. At the same time, the industry has had to face several challenges in 2013, particularly with price erosion, greater competition, constraints in capital markets, currency depreciation and more stringent regulations for biotherapeutics. The industry would continue to face these challenges in 2014.



KV SUBRAMANIAM,
 President and Chief Executive Officer,
 Reliance Life Sciences

Biotechnology is changing India in several ways:

- a) Making India largely self-sufficient in the critical medical product category of vaccines, plasma proteins and biosimilars
- b) Bringing biopharmaceutical (biosimilar) products and vaccines at affordable prices, thereby helping affordability and preventing use of sub-optimal dosages
- c) Bringing novel proteins and vaccines to address unmet medical needs
- d) Developing stem cell therapies to not only address unmet needs, but also to bring about a new era in regenerative medicine
- e) Enabling high-end molecular diagnostics and molec-

ular genetics to enable superior health care at competitive prices and obviate the need for patient samples to be sent to developed countries for testing

- f) Creating new export opportunities for India
- g) Enabling a contemporary innovation node in India
- h) Above all, helping improve the quality of health care in the country

India has been able to make a mark in the world of biotechnology as a large producer of public-health vaccines and biosimilars at very competitive costs for global supplies.

Reliance Life Sciences and biotech

Reliance Life Sciences has

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created a strong foundation in medical biotech with a range of products and services across plasma proteins, biosimilars, specialty pharmaceuticals, regenerative medicine, molecular medicine and novel proteins. It is now scaling up its product-market play. There are several products in clinical development, some novel proteins in pre-clinical stage and a host of product registrations in overseas countries that are currently underway. Concurrent with this, Reliance Life Sciences is

expanding manufacturing capacities consistent with the need for higher scales of production.

In case of biosimilar products, Reliance Life Sciences has the distinction of launching three of the world's first biosimilars - interferon beta, human chorionic gonadotropin and reteplase. It currently markets eight biosimilars and has 20 more under development.

Some of the innovative work that Reliance Life Sciences has been doing is in de-

veloping therapies that meet unmet needs relevant to India - cord blood stem cell transplant for beta thalassemia and other blood disorders, siRNA molecules for anti-cancer and anti-viral (dengue fever), melanocyte stem cell therapy for pigmentation disorders, novel fusion proteins for head and neck cancer and biomarkers for oral cancer.

Future roadmap

The biotech industry in India has the potential to grow at 20 to 25 per cent per an-

num. Within the biotech sector, the prospects are undoubtedly bright for vaccines and biosimilars, given the strong position that India has created, its competitiveness and the fact that a large majority of people in the world have limited or no access to biotech products.

In order to achieve full potential of biotech sector, there is a need for partnership between industry and government, which recognises opportunities for the Indian biotech industry to be a global

leader, particularly in vaccines, biosimilars and regenerative medicine, and institutionalises policies that enable faster market entry at lower costs, without compromising product quality, safety and efficacy.

2014 outlook

Reliance Life Sciences looks forward to 2014 with expectations of higher growth and profitability, on the basis of the depth of its product pipeline and diversity of its market participation.