

Call for reforms in ease of doing science

New Delhi, Sep 17: Principal Scientific Adviser, Government of India, Prof. K Vijay Raghavan has called for reforms in the space of ease of doing science, regulation, university functioning in research, and industry-academia linkages and stressed the need to connect the lab ecosystem to industry and bring research into the broader ecosystem.

Inaugurating the third edition of 'Life Sciences Conclave' organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), he expressed confidence that India's population, its network of labs, and the fundamental simplicity of research that is undertaken in the country will help it grow as compared to similarly placed countries. "There is an extraordinary desire to do high-end research that is globally competitive, and the industry has no shortage of capital but a shortage of risk capital", he added.

Secretary, Department of Biotechnology & Department of Science and Technology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Dr. Renu Swarup, said that India has been able to see breakthroughs in silos and the boundaries have gotten blurred between academia, industry, and startups. "Moving ahead, India will not just be the pharmacy of the world but also the research lab of the world," said Dr. Swarup.

She called for the creation of an industry strategized research partnership platform intending to encourage new IP generation and new innovative research and for greater industry collaborations with both academia and startups. She noted that the bio-strategy document was in place that will lead India to become a USD 150 billion market by 2025. "Our focus should be on achieving scalability that is matched with sustainability", she added.

On the occasion, CII launched a report titled "Taking India's Life Sciences to the Global Stage - "Make in India" to fuel 4x growth in Biosimilars and Vaccines by 2026." The report maps out the measures needed for growing the biosimilars market from USD 550 million to USD 5-6 billion, and accelerating vaccines from USD 2 billion to USD 4-5 billion.

Executive Chairperson & Founder Biocon, Dr. Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, called for building a biotech sector that is truly vertically integrated and said that access to the supply chain for reusables, reagents in biologics and manufacturing was imperative, and India needed to indigenize a lot of these requirements, so that there were no supply chain disruptions.

Chairman & Managing Director, Bharat Biotech International Limited, Dr. Krishna Ella, emphasised the need for clinical trial centers across the country and to forge partnerships with countries all over the world especially in South East Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Chairman, CII National Biotechnology Committee and Managing Director, Panacea Biotec, Dr. Rajesh Jain, and Vice Chairman, CII National Committee on Pharmaceuticals and Managing Director & GM EPD – Abbott Specialty Care, Abbott Healthcare Private Limited, Mr. Vivek Kamath, called for greater support to the biotech industry in the country.

Keywords: regulation, university, research, industry, academia, Confederation of Indian Industry, CII, silos, startups, pharmacy, partnership, platform, innovative, scalability, sustainability, Make in India, biosimilar, vaccine, supply chain, reusables, reagents, biologics clinical trial

ISW/SP/Biotech/17/09/2021