

Make in India is about declaration of an attitude

Mumbai, 18 February 2016: “Make In India is about declaration of an attitude,” said Dr M K Bhan, Former Secretary, Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, Government of India, while delivering the inaugural address at a seminar on ‘Indian Biotechnology Industry – Realizing the Make In India Vision’ at the week-long mega event that concluded here today. The seminar was organised by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in collaboration with the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, and the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India. “Attitude is extremely important,” Dr Bhan went on to add, explaining that it involves leadership with justice, dealing with fundamental contradictions and learning how to seize opportunities. “Scale and quality is what Make In India is about,” he added.

He expressed happiness that while India started the 21st century well behind Russia, France, Italy and Canada in terms of new drug applications, it now leads them all by healthy margins. “Be aware of what needs to be done, but once in a while celebrate some things that are beginning to happen. You need motivation to make in India. And that motivation comes from celebrating positive steps as well as worrying about negative steps.” He was of the view that biotechnology is global. We cannot do biotechnology in isolation. It is about intellectual property landscaping and collaborative networks. There is no need to shy away from attractive collaboration.

His biggest concern for India was about scale and productivity. “The top layer of productivity is missing.” He cautioned the industry to recognise that all nations are progressing simultaneously. He felt that agriculture offers phenomenal possibilities. Powerful technologies are available, but they concurrently need a public understanding of the science involved.

Earlier, Dr Cyrus Karkaria, President, Lupin Biotech, welcomed the gathering and set the stage for the proceedings. He said that informally, India is known as the ‘pharmacy of the world’. “India has made a significant dent in the global economy,” he said, adding that the Indian pharmaceutical industry is currently valued at 22 billion dollars, and is expected to touch 50 billion dollars by the end of the decade. The Indian pharma industry is the third largest in terms of volume and the 13th largest in terms of value. Branded generics constitute about 70 per cent of its total market. “The Indian vaccine industry has also put us on the world map. We supply about 75-80 per cent of vaccines to the developing market.” All this has made India emerge as a biotechnology player. The size of the Indian biotechnology industry has reached about 7 billion dollars, driven by growing demand and increased R&D activities.

But Dr Karkaria felt that “Generics, which is what we’ve been very good at, requires demonstration of safety and efficacy.” Hence regulations are important and call for lengthy clinical trials and significant investment across the value chain. Proper standards are needed for good manufacturing and clinical practices. “To be able to become a biotechnology hub at the global level, India needs to ignite and take off to the next level.” This can be achieved with innovation in research labs that create a compelling research environment, so that hi-tech solutions can be obtained in an affordable manner.

On behalf of FICCI, Dr Karkaria presented Dr Bhan with a ‘Green Certificate’, whereby a number of trees will be planted on his behalf in an ecologically sensitive area.

Dr Bhan also interacted personally with the audience through a question-and-answer session.

Dr Karkaria presented a vote of thanks at the end of the session.

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