

Pharma companies keen to invest in Punjab

State govt offers incentives to woo captains of industry

CHANDIGARH, DHNS: Punjab has potential to move from 'Farmer to Pharma' and was the right place to develop full holistic pharmaceutical hub of the country.

So said K G Anantkrishnan, President and Managing Director of the pharmaceutical company, Merck & Co Inc, in his address on the first day of the Progressive Punjab Investors Summit on Monday, held here by the Punjab government to showcase Punjab as the most preferred state that offers best incentives in the health-care

sector.

His views was echoed by all the major health sector players like Biocon, Ranbaxy, Max, Merck who are eying the state for their major investment plans in next three years.

In the summit's second session of 'Biosciences and Healthcare', Kiran Mojumdar Shaw, MD Biocon Limited, Bangalore, said that Biocon is looking for investment of Rs 3,000 crore for expansion of its facilities, especially in the area of oral insulin, and setting up of a integrated bio-pharmaceutical company with research focus on diabetes, oncology and auto-immune diseases.

Anantkrishnan said Merck was contemplating to set up Diabetes Control Centre in Punjab to train general physicians in diabetes management.

Shaw said that her pet project was regenerative medicines-used and tissue repairs and said that research institutes in ISSER, Mohali, could play a significant role in furthering research in this sector.

Expansion plan

Max Health Care, MD and CEO, Dr Ajay Bakshi said that Max was already having substantial presence in Punjab and has chalked out a comprehensive expansion programme for the state.

He said Max India has launched door-to-door drive in the state to identify and screen cancer patients on early stage so that their rehabilitation and treatment could be started at the earliest.

Unveiling the health-care policy offering a plethora of incentives for the investment,

Punjab Health Secretary Vini Mahajan said the state was the only one that offers best incentives to the pharma industry and health-care sector and provides single window service for fast track clearances of such proposals.

She sought proposals from investors for digitalisation of health-care records of all government hospitals and also sought investment proposals in massive health policy of BPL families of the state.

Shaw said that she was impressed with the focus of Punjab on human resource development that is the backbone of knowledge-based industry and added that after making the country self-sufficient on food security front, Punjab has potential to make India self-sufficient in pharma sector by focusing on genetic industry.

Industry.