

INTERVIEW: PANCHAPAGESA MURALI

MD & CEO, EVOLVA BIOTECH

Biotech sector to grow 5 fold by '15

Global biotech market is close to \$300 billion with several fragmented players. But massive consolidation drive has already begun due to dry discovery pipelines of incumbent pharma players. Smoothering over Germany for \$20 billion is the most recent example. Though, at present, India's share in the global biotech segment is very small, but by 2020 it is expected to increase to 15%. In an exclusive interview with FE's R Ravichandran, Panchapagesa Murali, managing director and CEO, Evolva BioTech, talks about the prospects and opportunities for Indian companies.

Where does India stand in the global biotech market?
At present, the country's share in the global biotech segment is very

small. However, due to several advantages, the country is likely to capture its share to 15% by 2020. One of the key advantages is its bio-diversity. The country has one of the largest agriculture sectors in the world, and varied climatic zones that can help in research and development of different agri-biotech products applicable worldwide.

What is your overall perspective on global biotech industry in general and India in particular?
The global biotech market is estimated at \$300 billion with several fragmented players. But due to dry discovery pipelines of existing pharma players, a massive consolidation drive has already commenced. From the Indian standpoint, the size of the biotech industry as of 2010 was about \$3 billion and this is poised to grow five times more by 2015.

Are there any facts and figures to substantiate the growth trend of the industry?
At present, this segment broadly comprises of bio-genetics, biopharma, contract research (CRAMS), bio-agriculture, bio-industrial and bio-informatics. Bio-pharma sector contributes about 60% of the total revenues. Also, the country is one of the largest vaccine producers in the

world, a large English speaking population, largest number of Food and Drug Administration approved plants outside the US are some of the advantages. In medicine, this field has become an integral part in diagnostics, gene therapy, clinical and contract research and trials, bioactive therapeutic, stem cell research, genetic engineering and in the development and production of new drugs for treating various life threatening diseases.



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Can you throw light on your company, including its growth pattern and future plans?
Evolva Biotech is a cutting edge synthetic biology company with diversified applications in many avenues that can improve human wellbeing. Evolva's Synthetic biology is all about creation of artificial pathways and organisms that does not occur presently. The company's business model rests on partnering innovative projects with key players in each of the domains. Evolva's drug pipeline has relevance to a number of diseases prevalent in this region. This includes a broad area from TB to Onychomycosis to Dengue and Malaria. Evolva's molecules have tremendous application here. Since there are no players in India in the synthetic biology segment, a lot of the competition has to come only from very developed countries like the US. This in a way puts Evolva's Indian operations ahead of the curve. We have recently announced our collaboration with Roche on novel cancer and anti-infective targets, with international Flavours and Fragrances (IFF) on bio-Flavours.

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