

Andhra Pradesh invites biotech entrepreneurs

The second Global Bio Pharma Conference began here Thursday with Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy inviting entrepreneurs to invest in the state, especially in Hyderabad, which is emerging as the biotech hub of India.

The four-day conference with the theme 'synergies in the global biotechnology industry' is being organised by Global Bio Pharma Conference Group (GBPCG), comprising biotech professionals, in collaboration with the University of Buffalo and the State University of New York.

He said the government was committed to providing world-class infrastructure for biotech companies. The Indian government has already decided to give the status of a special economic zone (SEZ) to Genome Valley, a biotech hub for life science research, training and manufacturing activities spread over 600 sq km on the outskirts of Hyderabad.

Minister for Major Industries Geeta Reddy said with the first two phases of Shapoorji Pallonji Biotech Park fully occupied, the government had decided to build a third phase.

The first phase spread over 144 acres and the second phase over 162 acres have together attracted 330 companies, which have invested Rs.7 billion and provided employment to 3,000 people.

She said 26 companies including multinationals invested Rs.4 billion to set up their laboratories in the ICICI Knowledge Park, which offers hassle-free environment to business-driven research.

Geeta Reddy said 27 agri biotech companies would set up their units in the agri science park coming up over 200 acres in ICRISAT (International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics) near Hyderabad. A rice biotech park is also planned in accordance with a recommendation of eminent scientist M.S. Swaminathan.

D. Purandhareswari, union minister of state for human resource development, said India accounted for only two percent of the \$41 billion global biotech market. The revenues of the Indian biotech market during 2004-05 grew by 37 percent to \$1.1 billion. However, 75 percent of the revenues came from biopharmaceuticals.

The Association of Biotechnology Led Enterprises has set for the industry the targets of \$5 billion in revenues and one million jobs by 2009.

The conference has brought together speakers from US, European Union and Asia representing leading biotech companies, government agencies and research institutes to discuss the potential of the sector.

Stephen M. Sammut of venture partner Burrill and Company will conduct biotech entrepreneur boot camp to provide a total overview of the business models, approaches to strategy development adopted by companies to generate value-added products and revenues. This is the first time that such a camp is being organised outside US and Japan.

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