

Trade-Technology E-Zine 15
(Centre for International Trade in Technology)

Biocon buys out Cuban co in manufacturing JV

Biocon Ltd has entered into an agreement to acquire 49% equity stake held by CIMAB SA, the exclusive representative of the Cuban biotechnology institute Centre of Molecular Immunology (CIM), in Biocon Biopharmaceuticals Private Ltd (BBPL), a manufacturing facility held jointly by the two firms.

BBPL, which was engaged in manufacturing products based on the monoclonal antibodies, will become a wholly-owned subsidiary of Biocon after the completion of the deal.

“The JV, BBPL was meant to serve as a manufacturing support to our Cuban partner programme, which we use for Biomab (oncology drug), and the Anti-CD6. But this requires a small portion of the capacity, which leaves a large part of the facility unutilised and becomes financially unviable. We need this capacity for our growing bio-similars business. The takeover will be a beneficial to both parties, since we will continue to support our Cuban partner, and additionally cater to our own growing needs,” Biocon CMD Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw said.

(The Financial Express, 6 April 2010)

Indian SMEs to benefit from Proposed CEPA between India and Canada

The proposed Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) comes as great news to Indian industry, especially for the SMEs. It will lay the foundation for MSMEs from India and Canada to enter into joint ventures, sub-contracting and franchising arrangements. Close cooperation between the SMEs of the two countries will allow greater technology transfer and facilitate higher volumes of business, especially manufacturing process, to India. This interaction will help Indian MSMEs gain a competitive edge in the international arena.

(The Financial Express, 6 April 2010)

Small, medium units turn more efficient: Ministry

The labour-intensive micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) sector is becoming more efficient in terms of production versus persons employed. According to the *Annual Report 2009-10* released by the Ministry of MSMEs, the percentage rise in production in 2008-09 compared with the previous fiscal is double the percentage rise in the number of persons employed.

In 2008-09, production in the MSME sector went up 11.4% to Rs 8,80,805 crore, while the number of persons employed rose 5.2% to 659.35 lakhs. In the same fiscal 12.37 lakh new enterprises were added to the sector.

In terms of value, the sector accounts for 45% of the manufacturing output and 40% per cent of the exports of the country. The sector manufactures over 6,000 products, ranging from traditional to high-tech items.

(The Hindu Business Line, 5 April 2010)

FICCI seeks Rs 1,500 cr for capital goods sector

The Government should earmark Rs 1,500 crore for modernisation of the capital goods sector and development of industrial parks for them to reduce India's dependence on imports, FICCI said.

A Rs 500-crore fund should be set up for technology modernisation, including R&D, and Rs 1,000 crore should go towards developing capital goods parks, said FICCI.

"The development of capital goods parks is required to overcome infrastructure deficiencies faced by Indian capital goods sector," it said, adding that the demand comes in the wake of increasing competition from rising imports.

The proposed fund should be used for productivity enhancement through technology transfer, support to R&D projects, climate change, common facility centres and market development support, it added.

India's capital good imports have increased by about five times in the last six years to \$30 billion in 2008-09 from \$6.5 billion in 2003-04.

(The Economic Times, 3 April 2010)

Manufacturing zones will lead to tech development

Asserting that the share of manufacturing in GDP must go up, the Commerce and Industry Minister, Mr Anand Sharma, said that the proposed national manufacturing and investment zones will lead to infrastructure and technology development in the country.

"This is a decade when the world will see new technologies... Many countries will benefit for decades to come, and many who fail to catch-up will be disadvantaged for decades to come. We do not want India to be left behind. Through the national manufacturing policy, under discussion, we hope we will incentivise investment and create national manufacturing and investment zones," Mr Sharma said while addressing a CII event here in New Delhi.

(The Hindu Business Line, 2 April 2010)

Scientists must aid growth: PM

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh asked premier scientific institutions in the country to contribute to the creation of wealth in the society and align their priorities to national needs.

"It is our scientific capabilities that will determine our ability to overcome challenges which lie ahead in areas such as climate change, clean energy, environment friendly technologies, water management, affordable health care, food security and biotechnology," he said at the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of the National Chemical Laboratory (NCL).

Noting that the government had declared 2010-2020 as the 'Decade of Innovations', he said, "We need to instill the spirit of innovation in our young minds so that they could.

"Our competitive advantage in the R&D sector may be lost unless we ensure that the country produces on a continuing basis an adequate number of competent and motivated young people who could lead our national laboratories, science agencies and knowledge based industries," PM said.

(The Hindu Business Line, 2 April 2010)